

**Women's Commission
County of Santa Cruz**



**The Status of Women and Girls Report
(SOWAG Report)
for the County of Santa Cruz
March 2011**

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Women's Commission of the County of Santa Cruz

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1. INTRODUCTION

Inspired by grass roots efforts for the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)¹, the Santa Cruz County Women's Commission began to document the status of women and girls in our County. This report on the status of women and girls in Santa Cruz County ("SOWAG report") is the first of its kind. We gathered local statistics collected by government agencies, nonprofit organizations, schools and volunteers in six areas of concern: Health Care, Criminal Justice, Economic Justice, Education, Political Participation, and Violence against Women. This information provides a guide for our policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors to improve the status of women and girls.

Since the commencement of the work on this report, California, along with the nation, has experienced unprecedented financial hurdles due to current the economic downturn, which includes massive unemployment, the collapse of the housing market and the widespread failure of financial institutions. Because women and girls, especially poor, non-Caucasian women and girls, are among the most vulnerable in this kind of economic situation, cutbacks in services affect women and girls disproportionately. For example, about 90% of CalWORKS participants are in families with female heads of household.

The recommendations in this report reflect a best practices approach. It is acknowledged that Santa Cruz County will be facing budgetary challenges imposed by cutbacks in State and Federal budgets. The data and recommendations contained in this report can be used to view services with an understanding of the unique needs of women and girls and to help prioritize services in Santa Cruz County.

It is important to note that, as many local agencies do not compile statistics by gender, some of this report is based on focus groups and interviews held by the Commission. For this reason, we recommend that County departments and other institutions begin collecting and reporting key data by gender and critical subgroups. This would allow better monitoring on the impact each policy, program, and budgetary decision has on women, as well as on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability.

2. HEALTH CARE

Health care is very much a women's issue. Women experience significant reproductive health needs, typically manage their children's health care and nutrition, and have greater longevity than men. Women make 80% of all family health care decisions. Income is a key factor in health care for women, affecting awareness, access, disease prevention and treatment. Preventive care is critical for women and children, yet it is difficult to access.

¹ **The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, or CEDAW, is described as an international bill of human rights for women.** 186 nations have ratified the treaty to date. Surprisingly however, the U.S. remains the only industrialized nation that has not done so. Despite Congressional inaction since 1980, many local jurisdictions around the country have begun to implement CEDAW's terms independently, resulting in noticeable improvements for women and girls.

The community's economic and social resources are drained when women are forced to rely on disease care rather than health care.

In Santa Cruz County, the major diseases affecting women are diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, cancer and heart disease, and are related to women's socio-economic status. Santa Cruz's proportion of migrant and agricultural workers to total population is the largest in the state, and the women and girls in this population have unique issues and needs. Asthma and other pulmonary diseases are more prevalent in the heavily agricultural areas: South County and along the north county coast. Although the teen pregnancy rate is declining overall, Watsonville continues to be a hot spot for teen pregnancy. Countywide teen birth rates, while declining, are still disturbingly high. There is also an increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS among young women, ages 19 through 24. Lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (LBT) women, senior women, and women with disabilities also have unmet special needs.

The greatest needs are for health care, education and access to preventive health screenings and treatment. These needs are particularly acute in cases of breast and cervical cancer, HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases. In the case of cervical cancer, regular exams can identify this disease early, while treatment is most effective. Due to budget cuts, the HPV vaccine to prevent cervical cancer is no longer available for free. County health clinics provide the vaccine for a \$15 fee for women up to the age of 24. Clinics also offer a sliding scale and financial assistance for those who cannot pay. However, cultural barriers and lack of knowledge about available and affordable tests and treatments may work against critical early diagnosis. Cost, education, and cultural barriers continue to be the major factors that keep women from accessing preventive services.

Too often, oral health is not seen as a component of physical health, yet, inadequate oral and dental care can have far-reaching implications for general health. Proper dental care, especially in the formative years, is essential; many infectious diseases can be traced to its absence. Only 75% of our children see a dentist regularly, and the trend is downward. Accessing such care, especially for low-income people, is very difficult.

Mothers are the main source of health education for families, and they serve as role models for children's hygiene and health habits. Therefore, it is critically important to support health education programs for women and girls.

Lack of adequate health insurance is one of the greatest challenges to the well-being of women in Santa Cruz County, as it is nationwide. Women are the major consumers of health care, due to their reproductive health needs, greater longevity and higher rates of chronic illness than men. Yet women are at greater risk than men of having inadequate health insurance or being uninsured. The median income for women in California is approximately \$37,000, compared with \$45,000 for men. One out of five women in California receives health coverage through her husband's employment. Such coverage is threatened when women are widowed or divorced, when their spouses lose their jobs, and when an older spouse receives Medicare.

Two thirds of the 2.5 million uninsured women in California are from low-income backgrounds. In addition to income, women’s ethnicity, age and employment status also affect access to health care coverage. Cuts to public programs only increase disparities, as women are more likely to receive their health coverage through such programs. Young single mothers especially carry an enormous burden, as childbirth, exhaustion, lack of funds and other obstacles can be overwhelming.

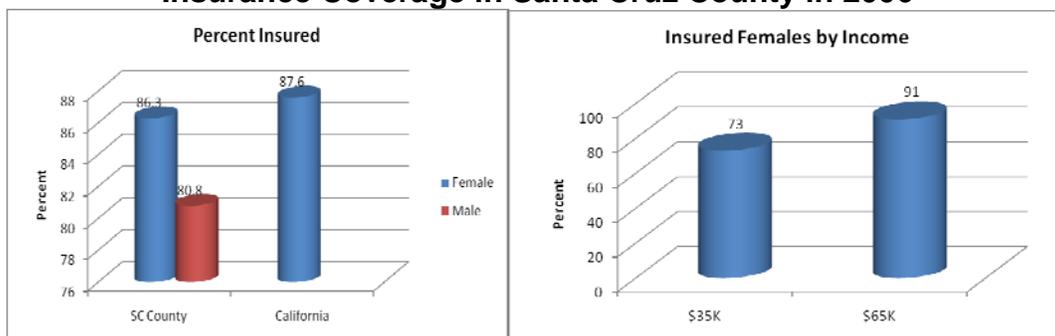
The Santa Cruz County Women’s Commission has prepared the Health Care section of the SOWAG Report as an overview of the health care picture for women and girls in our county. It represents research and input from many sources, individuals and organizations. The most current and relevant obtainable data were used, although data from different published sources was not always consistent. While interviews and focus groups in various areas yielded valuable information, we were unable to obtain adequate statistical data to include some groups, such as women with disabilities, in this report. Statistical comparisons with other counties were not made in this section, as Santa Cruz’s relatively small population with its large economic disparities makes meaningful comparisons difficult.

2.1. Insurance and Access

In 2006, 86.3% of Santa Cruz females reported having access to health care and a regular source of health care, compared with 80.8% of males. The statewide percentage for women is 82.6%. However, the high rate can be deceptive, as men usually have much broader insurance coverage. More women are insured because they are single mothers with dependent children who are covered by Medi-Cal, which provides much less comprehensive coverage.¹

Excluding coverage under poverty programs, women are at greater risk of being inadequately insured than men. Income is a factor: where the household income is below \$35,000 per year, the rate of insured females goes down to 73%; in the \$65,000 per year income bracket, the rate is 91%. Single and minority women are uninsured at particularly high rates and, therefore, experience a lack of affordable health care.² Cuts to public programs will only make this worse, as more women, who tend to have lower incomes, will depend on subsidized programs for their health care. Testing and other preventive health care measures are out of reach for uninsured women and girls, costing society at large considerably more in the long run.

Insurance Coverage in Santa Cruz County in 2006



However, while only 8% of Santa Cruz County residents overall report having no health insurance, 31% of Pajaro Valley residents are not covered. 15% of Pajaro Valley residents reported being unable to receive needed health care in 2008, compared to 6% in the balance of the county. And while the overall diabetes rate is 3.5%, 8.2% of Pajaro Valley residents have been told they have the disease.³

Many women qualify for Medi-Cal benefits or other assistance if their income is below the poverty line and there is an incapacitated parent or if they are single parents whose children are U.S. citizens under the age of 18. Pregnant girls and women are also eligible. MediCruz is generally available for low-income permanent county residents aged 21 to 64 who have a current medical need but are not eligible for Medi-Cal. It may also cover those not enrolled for Medi-Cal due to immigration issues.⁴

MediCruz covers a number of medical needs but not routine physicals, preventive services, psychiatric, dental or eye care. Due to eligibility requirements for these programs, the 13.7% percent of women working part-time are the least likely to have health benefits. The costs of childcare and transportation also prevent many single mothers from holding down full-time jobs that offer health insurance.⁵

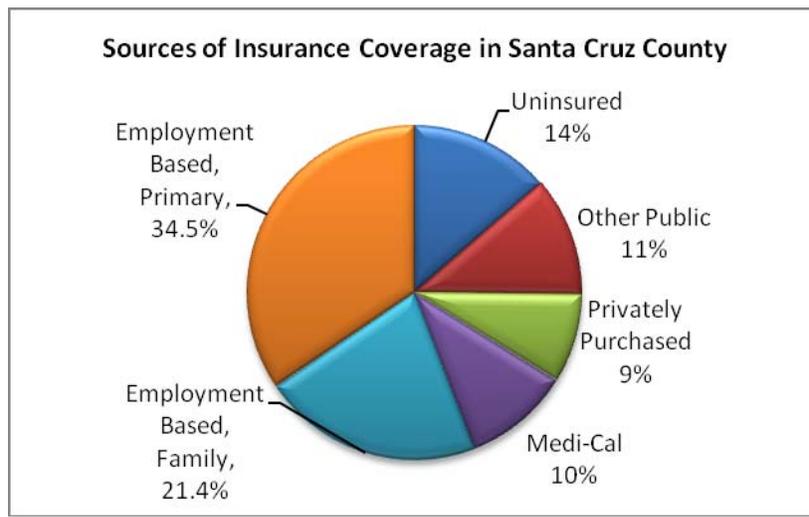
Planned Parenthood Mar Monte provides Medi-Cal primary care and reproductive health care services, medically accurate and age-appropriate sex education in schools, and advocacy on legislation concerning women's reproductive rights. The majority of Planned Parenthood's work is in primary and prenatal care; it also offers rapid HIV testing. Three percent (3%) of its services are abortion services. The organization provides approximately 32,000 scheduled patient visits per year, as well as walk-in services. The Santa Cruz office also offers services for transgendered individuals.⁶

Santa Cruz Women's Health Center provides primary care for 5,000 women and children, including males up to age 18 every year; almost half of these clients are uninsured.⁷ WomenCare gives free support services to any woman with any kind of cancer, as well as her family and friends. The Katz Cancer Resource Center offers free education, materials and support for those with cancer diagnoses.

As many as 5,000 Santa Cruz County children under the age of 19 are growing up without access to health care because their families cannot afford health insurance. Healthy Kids of Santa Cruz County has developed the Healthy Kids Health Plan, a collaborative effort on the part of more than 20 community partners that offers insurance to children in families with incomes at or below 300% of the federal poverty level of \$56,000 for a family of four.⁸

Employer-provided health care coverage is common for most major employers in the county. A survey of some of these employers found that comprehensive health insurance is offered to full-time employees by the County of Santa Cruz, Plantronics, Seagate, Driscoll, UC Santa Cruz, the Seaside Company, and Safeway. This includes physical, mental, dental and vision care. However, over 30% of all employed women in the county work part time and/or are employed by small businesses that claim they cannot afford to

offer their workers health care coverage and only hire workers for 20 or fewer hours per week. Approximately 77% of these women qualify for state or federal medical assistance.



2.2. Special Populations

2.2.1. Homeless Women and Girls

Health care for homeless women is by no means readily available. Although the U.S. government adopted a goal in 2001 to end homelessness within 10 years, the number of chronically homeless people has actually increased in the recent past. Homelessness severely impacts the health and well-being of all family members. With twice as many women as men heading homeless families, women are directly affected. Women housed in shelters have access to some health care. However, many homeless women have no shelter or coverage; many are not even aware of the services available to them. Mental illness, alcohol use, and drug use are key issues for homeless women and may also keep women from seeking or continuing some services. The barriers to service make it difficult to obtain a complete picture of homeless persons' access to health care.⁹

The Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency has provided exemplary health care for the homeless through its Homeless Persons Health Project. The Project served 5,738 individuals in 2006; approximately 20% were women. This number increased to over 6,200 in 2008. Still, many homeless individuals fall through the cracks for various reasons, including overloaded facilities, non-citizen status, and lack of awareness of available services. The Homeless Persons Health Project provides some outreach programs, but with 83% of homeless people in the county living unsheltered, it is difficult, if not impossible, to reach a majority of those most in need.

Almost 57% of the women in the Santa Cruz Homeless Shelter indicated a disabling condition. More than 25% cited domestic violence as the initial cause of their homelessness. 38% reported that they had not received health care when needed since becoming homeless. Adults in homeless families are found to experience high rates of

substance abuse, depressive disorders and attempted suicide. However, in Santa Cruz County this data is not disaggregated by gender.

Of the children assisted by the homeless service, 31% are diagnosed with mental health issues. Another significant health problem, suffered by 15.5% of homeless children, is childhood obesity. Children without homes are in fair or poor health twice as often as children with homes and have higher rates of asthma, ear infections, and stomach and speech problems. They experience more anxiety and depression and are twice as likely to experience hunger.¹⁰

2.2.2. Farmworkers

Women represent at least one third to one half of the county's farmworkers. At least 60% of these workers are undocumented; most are in their thirties, and speak neither English nor Spanish. With an average annual income of \$15,000, they are below the lowest qualifying level for economic assistance, but undocumented farmworkers are not eligible. As they work both in the fields and at home with insufficient rest and sleep, their health deteriorates. They are also exposed to the health impacts of agrochemical spraying and application.¹¹

Some health care is available for undocumented immigrant women through the following organizations and services:

- Planned Parenthood - reproductive health, family planning, education;
- California Department of Health Family PACT - comprehensive family planning services to 1.5 million low income individuals;
- Salud Para la Gente - full medical services to the low-income population of Watsonville 90% of staff and most clientele are Latino, many from the farmworker community of the Pajaro Valley, for most, Salud Para la Gente is the sole care provider);
- Medi-Cal - pregnancy and emergency services;
- Dientes - oral health care for underserved children and adults of Santa Cruz County and neighboring communities.

2.2.3. Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Women

With regard to health access, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered women face the economic challenges presented by low incomes and part-time employment. In addition, employer-based health insurance does not generally cover domestic partners, increasing the burden when one partner is ill or hospitalized. Appropriate health care may be unavailable if medical personnel do not recognize the unique needs of LBT individuals, especially in the areas of sexually transmitted diseases, reproductive health, and transgender health issues. Planned Parenthood in Santa Cruz County has one of the few programs in the U.S. providing health and hormone services for the transgendered community. There is a perceived lack of services appropriate for LBT elders, especially Latinas.¹²

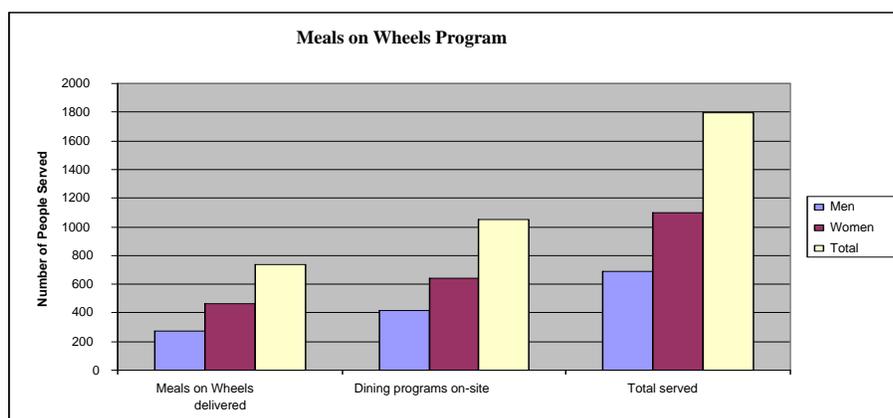
2.2.4. Senior Women

Health care availability for senior women is a very special challenge. Between the ages of 55 and 64, women may fall into the gap between employer-based insurance and Medicare eligibility. Also, many are widowed and have special economic challenges due to reductions in pensions and Social Security upon the death of a spouse. In most cases, spousal death cuts the family income almost in half, while the cost of living for the household remains nearly unchanged. The inadequate rate of Medicare reimbursement in the county is based on an outdated payment formula from the 1966 Geographic Practice Cost Index (GPCI), which keeps local reimbursement artificially low. Low reimbursement rates, high costs of living and high rates of student debt result in decreased access to medical practitioners locally.

Senior centers exist in almost every community in Santa Cruz County. For some senior women, the social interaction at a center is their only contact with other people. Some seniors may not take advantage of the programs and services the centers offer because of physical or mental health challenges. Resources for seniors are plentiful; they are listed in telephone directories and online as well as in libraries. Phone calls to resource centers receive helpful, quick responses. However, language and cultural differences may prevent senior women from accessing these services.

For senior women, a major obstacle to accessing services is lack of public transportation, especially in the San Lorenzo Valley, South County and the north coast areas. Many senior women do not drive. Owning, insuring and maintaining a vehicle on a low, fixed income poses a financial challenge. Health and vision problems that keep a woman from driving also increase her isolation, if transportation is not readily available.¹³

High-quality on-site meals are provided at the Live Oak, Watsonville and Ben Lomond Highland Park Senior Centers and Loudon Nelson Community Center. Meals on Wheels provides both food and a friendly visitor who checks on the recipient. Grey Bears offers bags of food. Of the 1,792 people who were served regularly through the programs in fiscal year 2007-2008, many more women than men received these services. Recipients are tracked by three age categories: 60-74, 75-84, and 85+. With the economic downturn and current crisis, more seniors aged 60-74 are in need of the food programs.¹⁴



2.3. Maternal and Child Health

In 2003, 62% of California women in the individual market had maternity coverage. By 2008, over 600,000 Californians, nearly 26% of childbearing age, were enrolled in insurance plans without maternity services.¹⁵

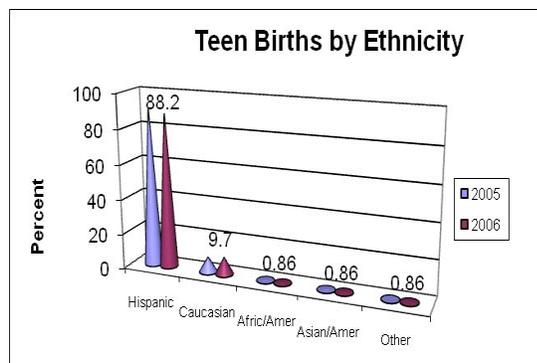
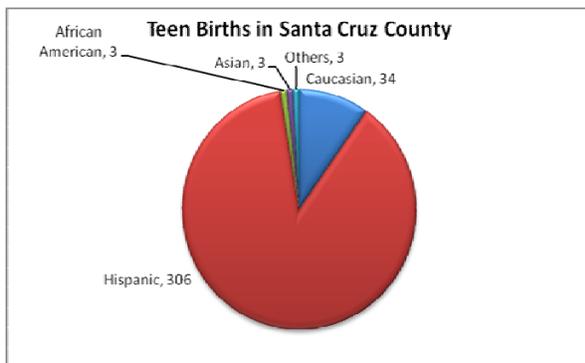
Santa Cruz County has 57,206 children under age 18, less than 1% of California's child population. Of the 58 California counties, ours ranks second in the percentage of children covered by health insurance; 98% of our children are covered, compared with 93% statewide. Countywide, Medi-Cal funded births increased from 50% of all births in 2007 to 52% in 2008.¹⁶

2.4. Teen Pregnancy

The statistics on teen birth are alarming. Teens are having babies they are not prepared to raise. Many of these teens will be heads of single-parent households, with all the accompanying economic disadvantages. As a result, many of their babies will face health challenges and live in poverty.

As a percentage of all births in the county, teen births show a steady decline from a high of 11% in 1998 to 8.5% in 2008. Of the 378 teen pregnancies in Santa Cruz County in 2005, 341 resulted in births. 29 (8.5%) were to Caucasian teens, 308 (90.3%) to Hispanic, 2 (<1%) to African American, and 2 (<1%) to Asian American teens.¹⁷

In 2006, the number of teen births was 349, up slightly from 2005. 34 (9.7%) of those were to Caucasian teens; 306 (88.2%) to Hispanic; 3 (<1%) to African American; 3 (<1%) to Asian American, and 3 (<1%) to other teens. In both years, the county birth rate was 31 per 1,000 teens, compared with 37 statewide.



15% (or 51) of the 349 teen births were the teens' second births, and 6 were third births; 45 were pre-term (<37 weeks). Low birth weight (less than 5.5 pounds) was a factor in 5% of the deliveries.

In 2008, there were 304 teen births: 203 to mothers aged 18-19; 99 to mothers 15-17; and 2 to mothers 14 or under. Of the births to mothers aged 18 to 19, 167 were first

births; 29 were second births; 7 were third. 14.1% were to mothers having their second or third child. Teens, especially in Watsonville, had higher rates of less-than-adequate prenatal care and pre-term birth. 9% of all teen births and 11% of Hispanic teen births in 2006 were pre-term.

In 2006, 83%, and in 2008, 81%, of teen deliveries were funded by Medi-Cal. In 2006, 23% of Medi-Cal funded births received less-than-adequate prenatal care compared with 14% of births that were privately insured. In 2006, 28% of all teens and 32% of Hispanic teens had inadequate prenatal care. Between 1999 and 2008 the percentage of mothers receiving early and adequate prenatal care has continued to decrease.

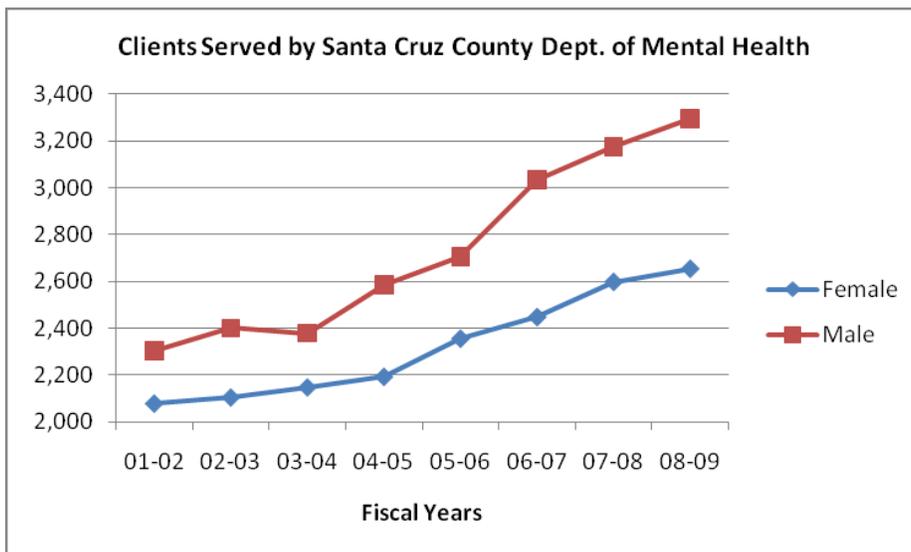
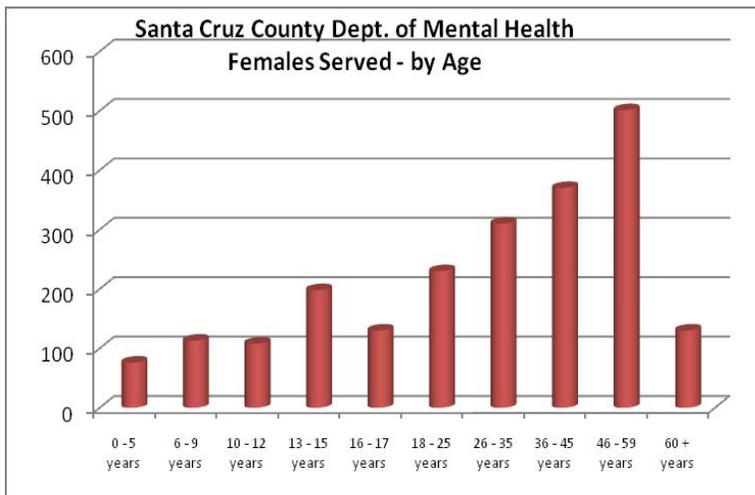
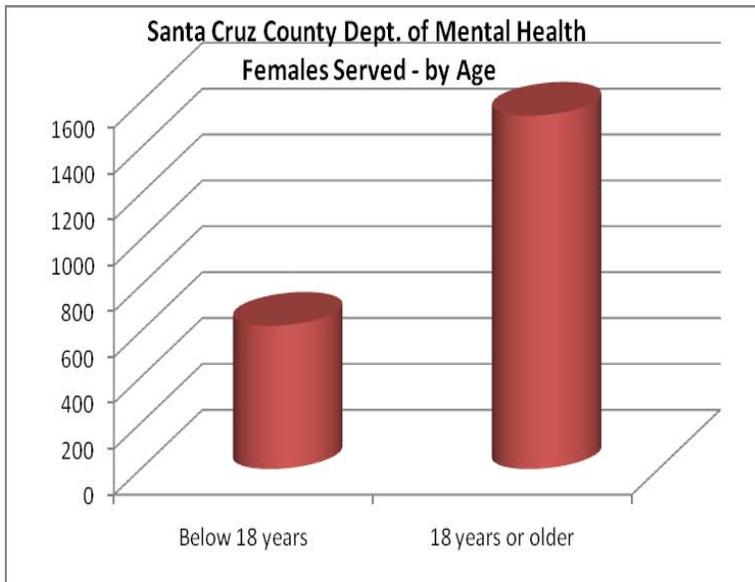
Early onset of puberty, which begins for some girls as young as age eight or nine, puts girls at risk for more than adolescent and teen pregnancy and STDs. Earlier exposure to estrogen increases cancer risk; girls who start menstruation before age 12 are at a 50% higher risk than those who start at age 16. There may also be a connection between formula feeding, higher obesity rates and early puberty.¹⁸

These findings have serious implications. They suggest that many girls do not see independent futures for themselves, that they aren't learning or heeding culturally appropriate education on safe sex and family planning, and that it will be more difficult for them to achieve economic self-sufficiency than it is for other women.

2.5. Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Many women and girls in our county are at risk for mental illness, and many who are mentally ill do not get all their needs met. Passage of Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act, offers important additional supports and parity between mental and physical health care, but over the past few years, budget cuts have resulted in a backlog of unmet needs. Currently, even deeper cuts are planned for the upcoming fiscal year. These reductions may cut service capacity as needs might actually increase for women affected by job losses, possible housing foreclosures, and other economic stressors. This vicious cycle may worsen the mental health of women in our community.

Women can access a wide range of services through the Santa Cruz County Department of Mental Health, but mental health and substance abuse services are not reported according to gender. Suicide and crisis services provide emotional support and crisis intervention as well as community education about the level of suicide and suicide prevention. In 2006-2007, the County Health Services Agency served 2,166 women and children. 66% of these were 18 years old or older, and 34% were below age 18.



The graph above represents the unduplicated number of individual clients served, and does not reflect multiple visits by the same client. As with general health, use of services is not a direct reflection of need. It may appear that females have fewer mental health needs than males, due to behavioral differences and differences in presentation. Women in need of services may not be comfortable seeking services in a specialty mental health setting and may not be referred as frequently as males by other agencies.

Drug use and chemical dependency are major issues for women. In 2004-2005, 1,337 (45.6%) of those admitted into residential treatment programs were female. Two gender-specific residential treatment programs allow young children to live with their mothers while the mother is in treatment: Janus Mondanaro-Baskin Center in Santa Cruz and Hermanas in Watsonville. Janus also provides gender-specific day treatment and outpatient services. Another treatment center, Fenix House, offers a small perinatal outpatient program. Both programs provide childcare through vouchers.

2.6. Morbidity and Mortality

Santa Cruz County's HIV/AIDS rate has dropped dramatically due to the efforts of public officials, local organizations and concerned individuals. The number of new AIDS cases peaked in 1992 at 72 (nine of which were female) and has since declined substantially. The statewide number of new cases per 100,000 population is 14.7. In 2005, Santa Cruz County reported only nine new cases; one was a woman. Fewer than 10% of all cases diagnosed during the 25-year period from 1983 to 2007 were females. The statistics are similar statewide, as well as in most California counties. While these numbers are very positive, ongoing education and testing as well as monitoring and diligence are essential.¹⁹

STDs are on the rise; for example, gonorrhea has increased by 138% in the last four years. Teens' lack of awareness poses a problem, as they are more concerned about pregnancy than about STDs.²⁰

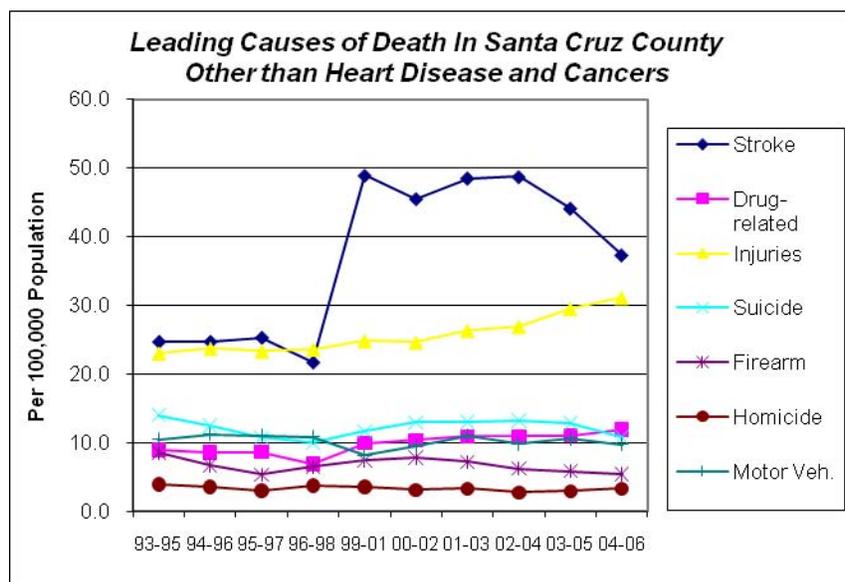
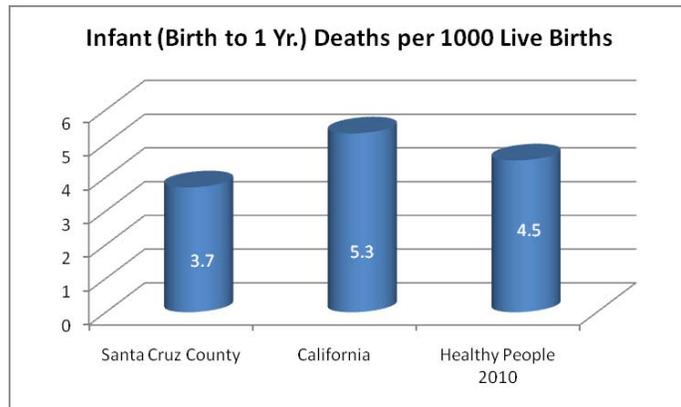
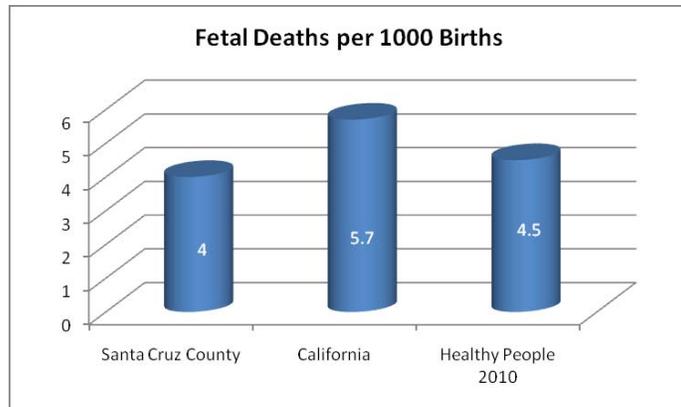
Chlamydia poses a grave threat to women. In 2008, females were 492, or 73% of the county's 668 cases. County rates are highest in the 15-24 age group, with 60% Latina/Hispanic and 36.5% white. Because most with the disease do not show early symptoms, it can easily spread to other partners and infertility may result.

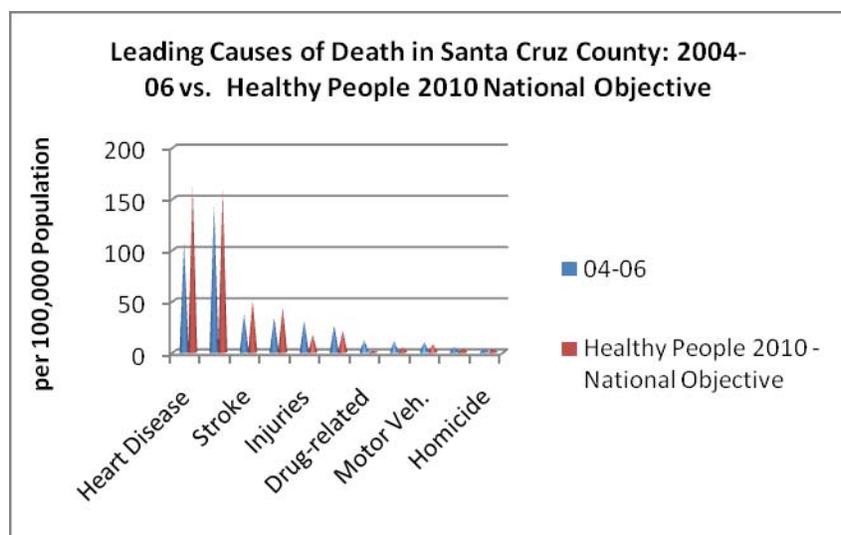
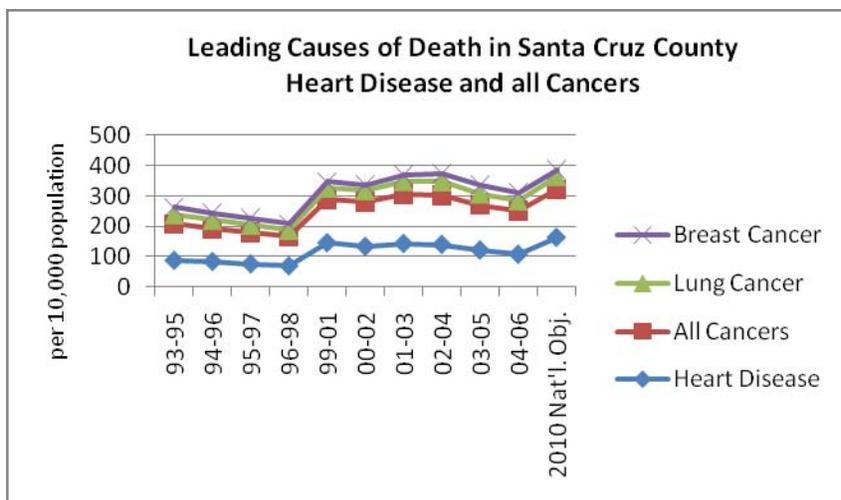
In Santa Cruz County, the number of female deaths was 882 in 2004, the last year mortality data was tabulated by gender. The majority of deaths were due to diseases of the circulatory system and various types of cancer.²¹

The number of female suicides in 2004 was 11.

Infant and maternal morbidity/mortality rates in the county have decreased in recent years. In 2004 the number of fetal deaths (stillbirths) per 1,000 births was 4, compared to 5.7 in the state of California. This number is lower than the Healthy People 2010 goal of 4.5 per 1,000 births. The infant (birth to one year) death rate was 3.7 per

1,000 live births. The state rate was 5.3; the Healthy People 2010 goal is 4.5. With low numbers of infant mortality and infant death, Santa Cruz County rates are better than both the statewide rates and the Healthy People 2010 goals. There was only one maternal death in the county, a number too small for meaningful comparison.²²





2.7. Conclusions

Health care is a women’s issue because women experience reproductive needs, pregnancy, responsibility for children’s health, and greater longevity than men. Health education and preventive care are critical for maintaining women’s health. Since women are typically the primary caregivers and manage the family’s nutrition, a woman’s health in turn affects the health of her children.

Income is a primary factor in the maintenance of women’s health, as it impacts women’s access to preventive medicine and treatment of illness. Income also plays a major role in determining choices about nutrition.

The national debate over health care coverage highlights the discrimination women face from the insurance industry; this discrimination manifests in many forms, from higher premium costs to denial of coverage when pregnancy is treated as a ‘pre-existing condition.’ The current economic crisis, which has caused women to lose 1.6 million jobs

since December 2007, presents daunting obstacles for women seeking health care coverage.

In researching this report it has been difficult, at times impossible, to obtain data disaggregated by gender. As a result, analysis of the status of women in those areas becomes merely anecdotal and impossible to quantify. For example, while we know the leading causes of death in the county, we do not know the numbers of women who have died from specific causes, as the data are no longer tabulated by gender. The county should assure that data is disaggregated by gender, and that policies, programs and budgets are looked at through a “gender lens” to consider their impact on women.

2.8. Recommendations

Santa Cruz County should promote a gender-responsive way of perceiving and defining health issues.

- Promote universal health care insurance that includes mandatory maternity coverage, and monitor the Federal Health Care Reform legislation.
- Support public health education and preventive care to lessen health care costs and improve well-being.
- Endorse programs that focus on independent and self-directing paths for girls, to encourage self-sufficiency and prevent teen pregnancy.
- Support programs that help identify the mental health needs of women and mental health services that reduce drug usage and promote self-sufficiency.

Santa Cruz County should support:

- Affordable, quality health care for all, including dental services, neighborhood clinics and mobile services.
- Partnerships in health and health education services, coordination between organizations such as the Central California Alliance for Health, Health Improvement Partnership and Healthy Kids, and programs such as AFLP and Cal Learn that benefit and improve the lives of teen mothers and their babies.
- The role of the Community Foundation in Santa Cruz County health care.
- Bans on smoking in public places and education about the health dangers of smoking and second-hand smoke.
- Stable funding for health care programs, and should urge federal support for children’s health care programs.
- Education and permanent employment, with health care benefits, particularly for single mothers.
- Family health awareness programs.
- Provision of service to clients who speak Mixteca and materials in Mixteca as well as in Spanish and English.
- Education about the connections between obesity, diabetes and heart disease, and encourage healthy foods and beverages in schools.

2.8.1. Insurance and Access

- Support funding for the Medi-Cal and Family PACT programs. Medi-Cal is central to providing a range of services for the state's poorest and most disabled populations. The Medi-Cal-funded breast and cervical cancer treatment program provides uninsured women with life-saving treatment. Family PACT, which provides family planning services to 1.5 million Californians, is also critically important.
- Train health care workers to recognize that both mental and physical health problems often present differently in females than in males.

2.8.2. Undocumented Women Farmworkers and Laborers

- Support efforts at education, prevention and testing in non-English speaking communities to help reduce the onset of diabetes and increase oral health.
- Promote early dental care for all children.
- Promote nutrition education to help prevent obesity.

2.8.3. Senior Women

- Recognize that the economic crisis is driving more formerly independent, younger seniors to seek services.
- Increase publicity about senior centers and programs available for senior women by involving as many organizations as possible in outreach and awareness.
- Support funding for Meals on Wheels.
- Promote awareness of the availability of medical transportation through Medi-Cal and other programs; support senior centers in providing transportation for daily living needs; and provide transportation to senior centers from all outlying areas.

2.8.4. Women with Disabilities

- Continue to monitor implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and enforce compliance.

2.8.5. Maternal and Child Health

- Support legislation that eliminates discrimination against women in health care coverage, such as denying coverage by citing previous pregnancy or C-section as a pre-existing condition.
- Support legislation that requires maternity care coverage in all health insurance plans.

2.8.6. Teen Pregnancy

- Support all girls to be independent and self-directing from a very young age and help girls to understand and analyze received ideas about gender.

- Support tutoring and mentoring programs that improve skills and self-esteem, such as Y-Teens, and facilities and programs that address teen pregnancy prevention, such as Girls' Task Force, Wise Guys, I Decide, Girl Talk, She Rocks, Young Warriors, Cal-Safe and YW Teens.
- Continue to support comprehensive sexuality education for youth in schools and for incarcerated youth, including the educational services provided by Planned Parenthood Mar Monte in the Monterey County Youth Center and Juvenile Hall.
- Improve awareness of, and access to, family planning education and contraceptive services, including emergency contraceptives, for teens.
- Support family awareness programs.
- Automatically refer pregnant/parenting teens to a behavioral health counselor.
- Support restoration of funding for the childcare section of the Cal-Safe program, which allows school-age parents to complete their education.
- Support restoration of funding for Adolescent Family Life Programs, which are effective in preventing teens' second pregnancies.
- Develop more culturally conscious educational programs in schools and other community facilities countywide.
- Study in depth and address the cultural and social reasons for the persistent high teen pregnancy rate in South County, despite the significant funds spent on prevention programs.
- Continue the GirlZpace program through the Probation Department, giving girls access to health insurance, referrals and transportation to needed community health care services, non-invasive drug testing, and drug and alcohol abuse programs.
- Promote and support such programs as the Male Involvement Program (MIP), a Watsonville-based pregnancy prevention program designed to reach 13 to 18-year-old males who are at high risk for becoming fathers.
- Continue providing the HPV vaccine for teen girls at no cost or low-cost.

2.8.7. Mental Health

- Assure parity between mental and physical health care services.
- Implement the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).
- Provide training and support for community-based workers to identify women and girls who may be in need of mental health services.
- Place mental health workers on-site at locations where women and girls receive services, including domestic violence shelters, WIC offices, reproductive health sites, Planned Parenthood clinics, food pantries, senior centers, etc.
- Increase available treatment and expand residential placements for women with children.
- Address co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders in girls.
- Provide gender-specific substance use treatment services for girls.
- Promote mental health education in schools, colleges, community centers, etc.

2.8.8. Morbidity/Mortality

- Continue HIV/AIDS and STD education and outreach in all communities.
- Restore data collection by gender to facilitate monitoring.

2.8.9. Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Women

- Educate health care providers about particular health issues for LBT women; for instance, providers should not assume that all persons use/need birth control.
- Train medical personnel to ask the gender of patients' sexual partners in order to improve appropriate services.
- Have LBT educational materials available in Spanish as well as English.
- Support the work of groups such as LyLyA and the Diversity Center in their health care awareness work.
- Urge health care providers to educate themselves about the medical needs and identities of transgendered people, and to expand their knowledge about medications that may interact with hormone treatments.
- Update health care forms to allow transgendered patients to list their preferred name and gender affiliation.
- Recognize that female-to-male transgendered persons still need PAP tests.
- Recognize that transgendered persons may be at higher risk for HIV and STDs from sex work and street hormones.

3. CRIMINAL JUSTICE

3.1. Introduction

Women and girls experiencing criminal justice in Santa Cruz County are a neglected minority. Drug crimes, particularly methamphetamine-related, are among the primary reasons for women's and girls' incarceration in the Santa Cruz jail system. Increases in white-collar crimes have caused an increase in the number of women in jail. Many women facing charges within the criminal justice system were involved in serious crimes. Although women and girls represent the minority in the jail system, they face complex and severe challenges. Proper resources must be made available to help the incarcerated gain the skills they need to stay out of trouble.

Statistics

Each week approximately 25 women are released from Santa Cruz County jails. Up to a third are homeless upon release. Three out of four are re-arrested and cycled back to jail an average of four times. Most women in this re-incarceration syndrome come from impoverished families, are victims of abuse, and have limited access to education and health care. At least half of the women incarcerated in Santa Cruz are mothers, typically lacking adequate resources to parent their children. As children, many of these women had a parent who was incarcerated. The children of these women are at an increased risk of becoming the next generation of inmates.

There are currently 79 women in jail, making up 16% of people in the Santa Cruz jail system. Nine percent of these women are incarcerated for robberies, 28% for property crimes, 10% for disturbing the peace, 9% for DUI charges, and 33% for drug-related crimes. 50% of women who have been in jail re-enter within one year of their release. This extremely high recidivism rate indicates that the resources allotted for women are minimal, are targeting the wrong issues, or both.

3.2. Facilities

The Santa Cruz County Jail and Blaine Street Women's Facility both house women. The Santa Cruz County Jail is a maximum and medium security facility currently housing 356 inmates; 90% of these are male. In this facility, approximately 38 women await trials. The Santa Cruz County Jail is overcrowded. As minorities in a prison lacking resources for the sheer number of prisoners, women face further setbacks. Blaine Street Women's Facility is a minimum-security jail for female inmates. The maximum number of beds available is 42. Rountree, a medium/minimum security jail located in Watsonville, houses only men.

3.3. Health Services in Jail

Both the Santa Cruz County Jail and Blaine Street Women's Facility supply prisoners with mental and physical health treatment. Due to high levels of drug abuse, and a corresponding high incidence of prescription drug use, there is a great demand for mental health services for women. 20% of female prisoners are on heavy medication, 20% are taking antidepressants, and 20% are taking other drugs. Therefore, many women are taking prescription medication, which is costly for the County and may lead to increased dependency and withdrawal issues when women cannot receive or afford the same medical treatment outside of prison. As a result of the recent budget deficit, outpatient follow-up programs have been cut. Psychotherapists are available for women in jail, but therapy programs are understaffed due to the high cost of health care, and therapists are overworked due to the high number of mentally ill people in Santa Cruz County. However, Santa Cruz County jails do provide sufficient physical health services for women. Prisoners have the opportunity to see a doctor weekly. Doctors and nurses are available at both jails. Dental care is available five days a week.

Families of incarcerated women face economic and emotional difficulties. No public funding ensures protection for the children of incarcerated women. Many of these children end up with members of their extended families or with childcare providers. Pregnant women receive medical attention from obstetrician/gynecologists. Pregnant drug users are given methadone and rehabilitation for the safety of their babies. Although pregnant women are sufficiently provided for, pregnancy can be difficult in the jail environment.

Nearly 40 women in jail await trials. Women's attendance at trials is a problematic issue. A lack of available transportation and inadequate communication regarding trials has led to recurring absences in court. Clearly, women cannot work toward resolution of their criminal cases without proper communication and support from the justice system.

3.4. Rehabilitation

Basic education is available in jail; women can take a variety of classes, including cooking courses, parenting lessons, and GED classes. Blaine Street Women's Facility provides women with support groups as well as courses in yoga, domestic violence awareness, gardening, English as a Second Language (ESL), knitting and crocheting, and computers. Every inmate takes classes at no charge; however, once an inmate is released, the courses are no longer free. The Farm, or Rountree (the Watsonville men's facility), provides men with a wide array of helpful classes in vocational training, anger management, AIDS and HIV awareness and testing, work release and family reunification. In addition, Cabrillo College courses are also available for these men. After their release, men are not required to pay for classes they started while incarcerated.

While women are provided the opportunity to take various classes, men's options are more sustainable in length, affordability, and practicality. Further disparity between services for men and women is evident: men in prison are divided into units appropriate to their crimes. Women, although segregated from men, are housed in two mixed units, in which the majority of inmates have mental illnesses.

3.5. Post-Incarceration Resources

Women have various options for help after jail, but these options are not entirely sufficient, as evidenced by the high recidivism rate. One option is Friends Outside, an organization devoted to helping families affected by incarceration. Their parenting program provides visitor centers on jail grounds. Temporary shelter, resources, and clothing are also available through Friends Outside. There are approximately four sober living environment houses available in Santa Cruz County, but are limited to a maximum thirty day stay—not enough time to fully recover from serious addiction. Gemma is a non-profit organization serving women incarcerated at Blaine Street Women's Facility, those released, and their families, that houses those in need for six to eighteen months, and provides classes in parenting, relapse prevention, job preparation, nutrition, empowerment, healthy relationships and housing preparation. Women are aided in securing employment. Enrollment in the program is free, but residents must contribute 50% of their income toward the program. This option is not available to every woman in need of help.

3.6. Recommendations

- An increase in the number of rehabilitation programs is necessary. Examine whether increased stays of 60 day may result in lower rates of recidivism.
- Women who are employed have less reason and opportunity to re-offend. Expanding programs aimed at helping women find jobs could help decrease recidivism.
- Basic support is available through existing facilities, but the recidivism rate proves that larger issues fail to be addressed. Life skills must be reinforced,
- and family programs must be strengthened for women within the criminal justice system.

- Funding and support for programs such as Friends Outside and Gemma should be increased.
- Post-incarceration follow-up programs need to be supported to help avoid recidivism and the cost incurred in re-incarceration.
- Allow incarcerated women the opportunity to benefit from UCSC Women's Center resources such as sexual harassment programs, legal aid, self-defense classes, and childcare and parenting programs.
- Men and women should be allowed equal access to opportunities and treatment.

4. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN*

4.1. Introduction

According to the United Nations, violence against women and girls is an international problem. Worldwide, one in three women have been victimized by domestic violence or sexual assault (UNIFEM, 2009). Countries throughout the world report high levels of domestic violence, yet it is difficult to determine the exact prevalence of violence against women. In a cross-cultural study of domestic violence around the world, the single most powerful risk indicator for being a victim of violence was to be a woman (Walker, 1999). Domestic violence is becoming a broadly recognized social and health concern with serious implications for the psychological and physical well-being of women worldwide (WHO, 2005).

According to the United Nations, violence against women is a violation of human rights (United Nations, 1996). Acknowledging this fact, 187 countries have ratified the United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which explicitly states that violence against women is a human rights violation. The United States is one of the only industrialized countries that have not ratified CEDAW. Countries compliant with CEDAW indicators of rights violations and discrimination submit an annual report on The Status of Women and Girls (SOWAG). Despite noncompliance from the United States, the Santa Cruz County Women's Commission has compiled data documenting the status of women and girls in Santa Cruz County in an effort to demonstrate the need for CEDAW ratification. Data was collected from police departments in each city within Santa Cruz County (Watsonville, Capitola, Scotts Valley, and Santa Cruz) as well as from the UC Santa Cruz campus police and the County Sheriff. Additional information was gathered from the Commission for the Prevention of Violence against Women (CPVAW), the Santa Cruz County Domestic Violence Commission, Child Protective Services, the District Attorney's office, the Walnut Avenue Women's Center and Women's Crisis Support-Defensa de Mujeres.

4.2. What Is Domestic Violence?

According to a 2002 report from the California Research Bureau, one family member on another defines domestic violence as the infliction of physical injury resulting in trauma. Most often, domestic violence is intimate partner violence. The batterer's behavior is an

* Sources for the Violence Against Women Section are listed after the endnotes

attempt to exert power or authority over his/her partner, and can include intimidation, economic control, and/or physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse. Violent or coercive actions perpetrated by one family member against another have a very negative impact on families and on society as a whole.

Domestic violence is a serious crime that affects all social classes and ethnic groups. It is prevalent among heterosexual couples, but is also common among same sex couples (Potoczniak et al, 2003). According to State of California statistics, 2,837 incidents of domestic violence occurred among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender couples in 2000. Yet a study of 120 staff members at a crisis center showed that same sex domestic violence was often perceived as less serious than heterosexual domestic violence (Brown, 2009). Intimate partner violence is also very prevalent among military personnel; 29% of women in active duty report domestic violence incidents in their lifetimes.

Drug users are three times more likely than non-users to be involved in intimate partner violence. Marital aggression is often linked with alcohol problems (Keller, 2009). Domestic violence is one of the main causes of female homelessness (29%) and is more widespread among women on welfare (30%). Domestic violence is common among immigrants because of cultural attitudes and socialization into traditional gender roles (Safe State, 2009). Undocumented women are more vulnerable to violence, sexual assault and exploitation through trafficking. They are less likely to report abuse to authorities because they fear the police, immigration officers and deportation. Language barriers, cultural differences and lack of knowledge about U.S. laws might also prevent immigrant women from reporting such violent crimes.

4.3. Prevalence of Domestic Violence

4.3.1. National Levels

A National Crime Victimization survey conducted between 1986 and 2000 reported that women were six times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner (California Attorney General's Safe State, 2008). According to a 2007 survey taken by the National Network to End Domestic Violence, 53,203 victims of domestic violence were served in one day by various agencies, such as crisis hotlines and local shelters, nationwide. These findings suggest that every year in the United States, approximately 20 million women seek help and need safe shelter for themselves and their children due to physical assault. Moreover, research suggests that violent episodes between couples often include sexual assault (Browne, 1993). A sample survey indicated that 14% of married women reported being raped or sexually assaulted by an intimate partner, and this is twice as likely as rape by a complete stranger.

Additionally, 1,858 females were murdered by males in the United States in 2005. In 92% of cases, the victim was killed by an acquaintance; two thirds or 62% of these victims were wives, ex-wives, or intimate partners of their killers (Safe State, 2008). Weapons such as handguns were used in 52% of the murder cases. The magnitude of the domestic violence problem is confirmed by FBI statistics estimating that nationwide,

approximately four women die each day as a result of physical trauma from domestic violence inflicted by a husband or boyfriend. According to hospital records in the United States, domestic violence is the leading cause of injuries to women between the ages of 15 and 44 (California Research Bureau Report, 2002). The financial cost of violence against women adds up to \$6 billion annually (Center for Disease Control and Prevention report).

4.3.2. State Levels

According to the Safe State domestic violence fact sheet, 6% of women in California experience domestic violence each year (California Office of Women's Health, 2006). The lowest reporting ethnic group is Asian women (4.8%), followed by Caucasians (5%); the highest reporting populations are Hispanics (7.9%) and African Americans (8.5%).

A 2007 survey conducted throughout California by the National Network to End Domestic Violence showed that 3,049 victims of domestic violence reported to local agencies, requesting services such as shelter, counseling, legal accompaniment and advocacy with social services. These figures suggest that over one million women per year, just in California, seek emergency assistance in violent life-threatening situations.

According to the California Attorney General's Safe State 2007 report, 110 women were murdered by their intimate partners as a tragic result of domestic violence. A 2004 study found that 44% of the women killed by their intimate partners had visited an emergency department within two years prior to the homicide, and 93% of these had a least one injury visit (CDC). Moreover, California law enforcement received 174,649 calls related to domestic violence incidents in 2007 (Safe State, 2009). According to written police reports, one third of these incidents involved firearms and other weapons, such as knives. In 2006, the police arrested 43,911 people in California for domestic violence, and 81% of these were men (Safe State, 2009). In 2007, the Department of Justice denied 423 firearm permits because of restraining order violations. According to the California Attorney General, as of April 2008, there were 246,444 domestic violence related orders on file with the department (Safe State, 2009).

4.3.3. Santa Cruz County Levels

On average, 1000 cases of domestic violence occur countywide each year, and about one third of the victims are served by two local shelters that provide safe housing (Domestic Violence Commission Report, 2006). These two major centers assisting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Santa Cruz County are the Walnut Avenue Women's Center, located in downtown Santa Cruz, and Women's Crisis Support-Defensa de Mujeres, which is located in Watsonville.

During the past five years, Santa Cruz has experienced a general reduction in domestic violence incidents, but felony and misdemeanor arrests have been on the rise. A convicted batterer must complete a domestic violence program, receive counseling and be tested regularly for drugs/alcohol. Protection of the victim with emergency, temporary and permanent restraining orders is a top priority. Local agencies such as the

Commission for the Prevention of Violence against Women and the Women's Crisis Support-Defensa de Mujeres are combining efforts to educate the community about prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault, targeting children in schools with self-defense classes, and informing at-risk women about their legal rights and community resources.

Because ending violence against women is a high priority for the City of Santa Cruz, the Commission for the Prevention of Violence against Women and the Santa Cruz Police Department published a joint report on sexual assault for the period from 2005 through 2007. Published in 2008, the report showed a significant decrease in sexual assault in the City of Santa Cruz. In Santa Cruz County, agencies such as shelters have been instrumental in encouraging women to report incidents of domestic violence to law enforcement. Hospitals and physicians are required to report domestic violence incidents to police and fill out reports. It has been the goal of the Administrative Office of the Courts and Chief Justice George to promote the safety of victims and their children, and to systematically prosecute perpetrators.

Domestic Violence Data from Law Enforcement

Women reporting domestic violence to law enforcement from 2003-2008

Santa Cruz

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
394	438	417	311	301	287

UCSC

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
2	5	10	6	2	7

Scotts Valley

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
115	38	54	33	34	26

Capitola

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
65	40	29	46	46	34

Watsonville

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
220	152	227	220	209	183

Number of Domestic Violence felony arrests from 2003-2008

Santa Cruz

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
30	25	18	17	N/A	N/A

UCSC

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1	1	3	1	0	1

Scotts Valley

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
8	3	11	9	5	4

Capitola

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
24	15	14	17	18	16

Watsonville

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
105	71	73	118	85	100

Domestic Violence Misdemeanor Arrests, 2003-2008

Santa Cruz County

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
397	391	355	337	N/A	N/A

UCSC

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
1	1	3	3	1	2

Scotts Valley

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
9	12	16	9	19	13

Capitola

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
24	12	6	13	13	13

Watsonville

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
40	30	67	98	84	68

Emergency Protective Orders (EPO) Issued, 2003-2008

Santa Cruz County

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
337	262	273	244	N/A	N/A

UCSC

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
0	0	1	0	1	0

Scotts Valley

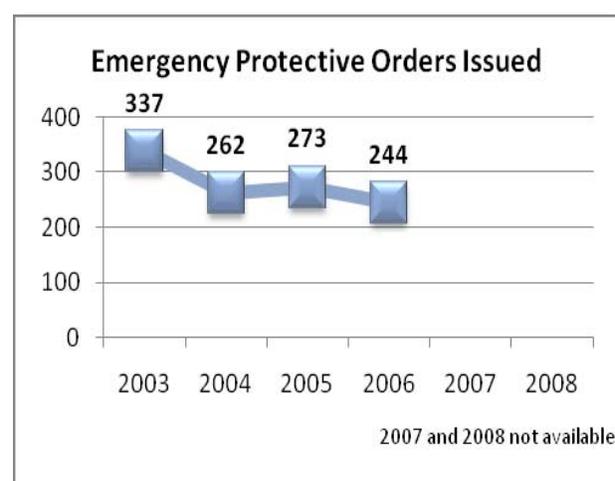
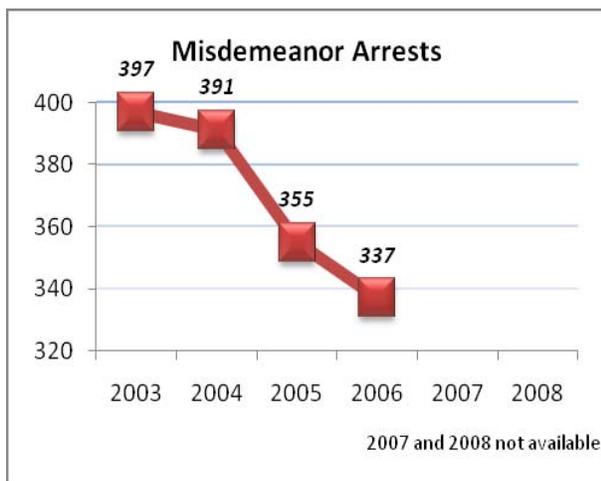
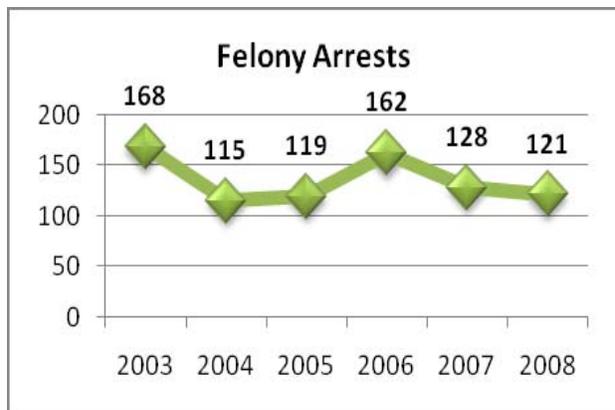
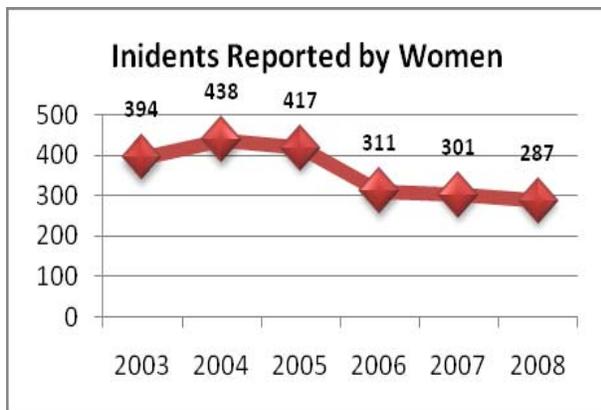
<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
6	2	15	8	3	5

Capitola

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
3	2	5	6	6	4

Watsonville

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
88	63	78	92	96	87



4.4. Domestic Violence Legislation in California

In 1945, the California legislature identified domestic violence as a crime, stating, “Any husband who willfully inflicts upon his wife corporal injury resulting in a traumatic condition is guilty of a felony.” But it was not until the 1970s that the law began to be systematically enforced, thanks to the Women’s Movement’s recognition that violence against women was a severe social problem. In 1974, the first services were made available to battered women in California. Over the past 20 years, archaic patriarchal laws have started to change in favor of women in our state. For example, spousal rape was finally recognized as a crime in 1979. The State of California increased the marriage license fee several times to fund domestic violence programs in the early 1980s.

California Penal Code 13700-13702 Sections define domestic violence as follows:
Domestic violence means abuse committed against an adult or a minor who is a spouse, former spouse, cohabitant, former cohabitant, or person with whom the suspect has had a child or is having or has had a dating relationship or engagement relationship.
Domestic violence is alleged criminal conduct and written policies encourage the arrest of domestic violence offenders. Specific standards policies clarify felony and misdemeanor arrests, and the enforcement of temporary restraining orders. The violation of a protection or restraining order is ranked among the highest priority calls.

In recent years, efforts have been made to protect potential victims of domestic violence by insuring that their calls are given immediate priority by dispatchers for police intervention. Since 2007, California courts have had the power to issue a protective order valid up to ten years upon a defendant's conviction for domestic violence, whether the defendant is sentenced to state prison or county jail, or placed on probation with a suspended sentence. Restraining orders (whether emergency, temporary, or permanent) are tools to prevent batterers from repeating acts of violence.

According to the 2005 Task Force Report, the District Attorney's offices prosecute most domestic violence cases as misdemeanors, punishable by a jail term of one year or less, rather than as felonies. Misdemeanors do not require that the batterer complete a 52-week batterer intervention program and a three-year probationary term. Batterers convicted of a felony are held accountable and must complete the 52-week batterer intervention program. However, there is a high rate of non-completion (50%) and currently there are few judicial consequences for non-compliance.

The law requires health practitioners to immediately report to police any injuries suspected to be the result of domestic violence, assault, or abuse of any kind. Within two days after making the initial report, practitioners must complete a standardized Office of Emergency Services (OES) report for domestic violence. The report includes the name of the victim, the name of the perpetrator, a description of injuries and the location of the crime.

4.5. Domestic Violence Services in Santa Cruz County

4.5.1. Shelter Services

Two major centers serve the needs of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Santa Cruz County: the Walnut Avenue Women's Center and Women's Crisis Support-Defensa de Mujeres.

The Walnut Avenue Women's Center, located in downtown Santa Cruz, provides safe housing as a means of crisis intervention. It is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The center offers a 30-day program for victims of domestic violence and their children. This program consists of counseling, support groups, medical and recovery program referrals, legal assistance and children's services. It helps battered women and their children receive emergency shelter and safe housing, seek government assistance, find employment and start legal processes in court. Each family is provided with its own room with shared bathroom, kitchen and living space. Food, clothing, toiletries and laundry are provided for a month at no cost.

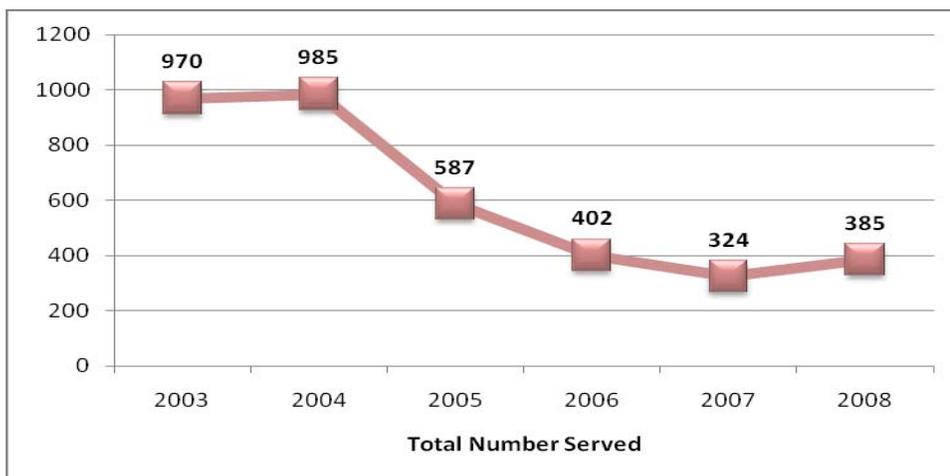
The Walnut Avenue Women’s Center can accommodate people with disabilities, who represent about 15% of clients. Of the women seeking services, approximately 75% have children, 25% have drug or alcohol problems, 25% suffer from mental illnesses, and 65% do not have medical insurance. Approximately 5% to 10% of the women who come for help are pregnant. The center rarely turns people away, but due lack of space, staff members might refer clients to another shelter. Most clients are walk-in (40%) or have called the hotline crisis number (35%); some were referred by social services (6%), law enforcement (5%) or local hospitals (3%). Other women are referred by friends, churches, schools, or advertising in the media. The Walnut Avenue Women’s Center serves women who are Caucasian (50%), Hispanic (40%, including 10% to 15% undocumented immigrants), African American (6%), Asian (2%), Native American (1%), and Middle Eastern (1%).

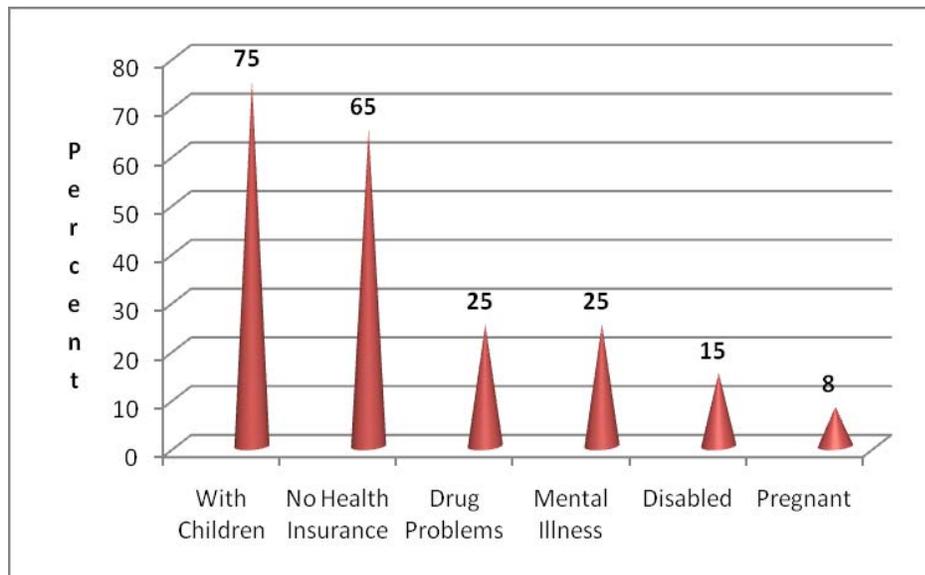
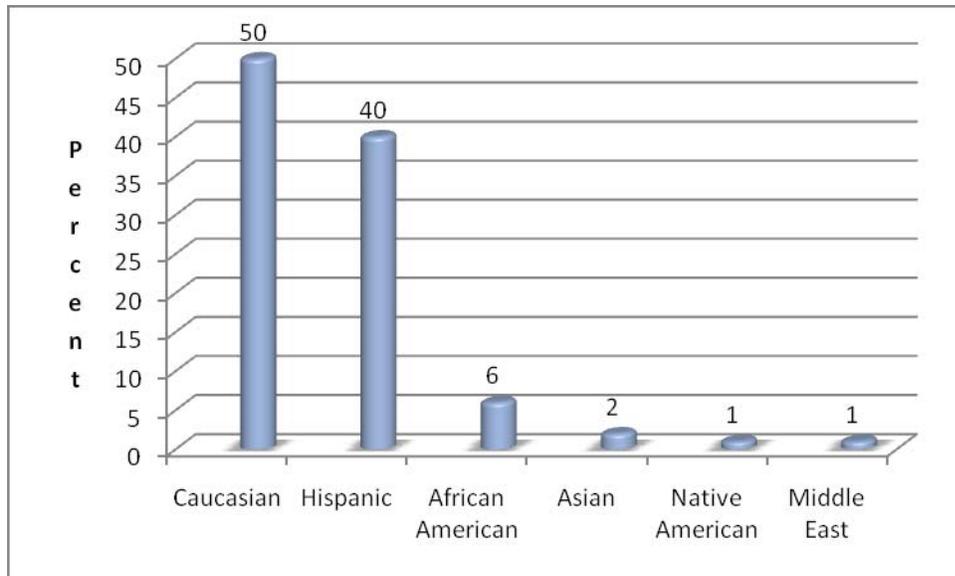
Women’s Crisis Support-Defensa de Mujeres, is a non-profit organization in Watsonville that contributes significantly to the community by helping victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Each year, it serves 1,500 clients for domestic violence and about 200 clients reporting sexual assault. Services include crisis intervention, peer counseling, support groups, advocacy, legal assistance, emergency shelters, teen and children’s services.

Women Seeking Services from Walnut Avenue Women’s Center, 2003-2008

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
970	985	587	402	324	385

Women Served by Walnut Avenue Women’s Center 2003 - 2008





4.5.2. Outreach to Domestic Violence Victims

These two non-profit organizations provide crisis intervention, peer counseling, support groups, advocacy, legal assistance, emergency shelter and children’s services. Other services include educational prevention programs, self-defense classes, culturally specific programs, and particular programs for teenagers. These advocacy agencies have made tremendous efforts in the past ten years to educate the public about domestic violence through outreach programs in the community and in high-risk neighborhoods.

4.5.3. Funding

Local shelters are funded partially by the State of California and by local government agencies. The Walnut Avenue Women's Center had a fiscal budget of \$434,521 in 2008. Its financial resources were funded by the state (50%), federal agencies (38%), the county (10.8%) and private donors (1.2%). Women's Crisis Support-Defensa de Mujeres is also funded by state and local government agencies. It receives federal money funneled through the state. Additionally, both organizations apply for private grants and receive individual contributions. Writing and applying for grants is time-consuming for the full-time staff. Competition for grants and lack of financial resources force these women's organizations to rely on volunteers to fill many positions.

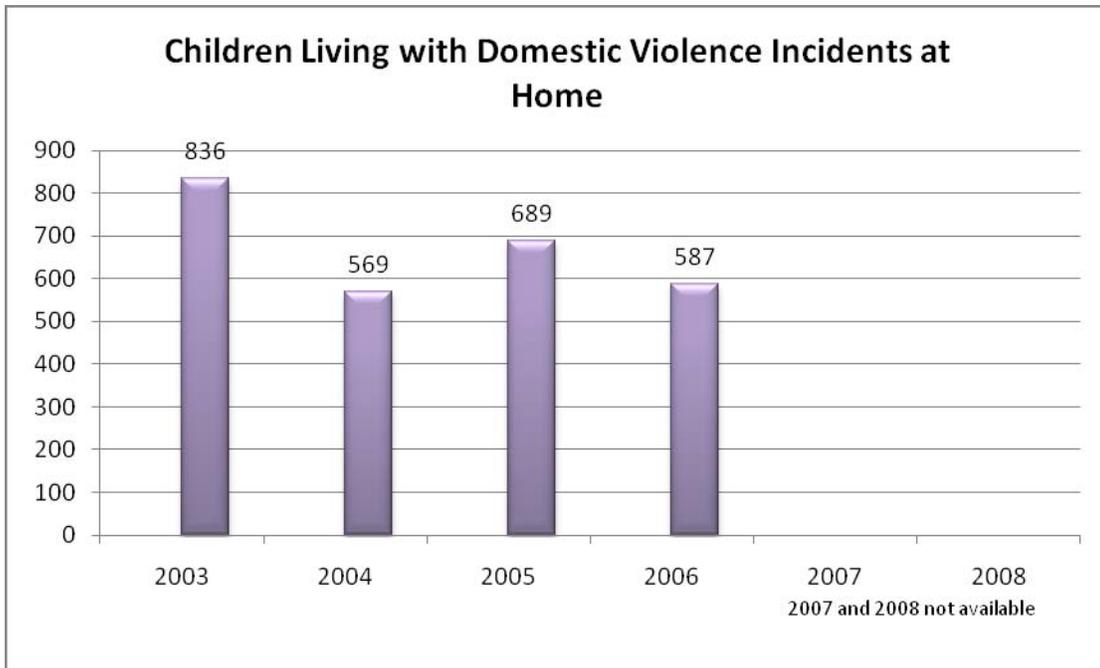
4.6. Domestic Violence and Children

According to state law, a child's exposure to domestic violence is considered abuse. Children who experience domestic violence might be temporarily or permanently removed from their homes. They also receive counseling to break the cycle of violence. It is estimated that 3.3 to 10 million children witness domestic violence in the U.S. each year. In California, 75% of intimate partner violence victims have children under the age of 18 (California Research Bureau, 2002). In 2006, law enforcement statistics estimated that there were 587 child witnesses in Santa Cruz County. Yet if only half or even one third of domestic violence incidents are reported to the police, the number of children exposed to violence at home is likely to be two or three times higher than this estimate. Lack of safety or protection in the home has negative psychological and emotional impacts on children who witness domestic violence. Over time, a child observing the violent behavior of a caretaker might interpret it as normal, and eventually imitate it.

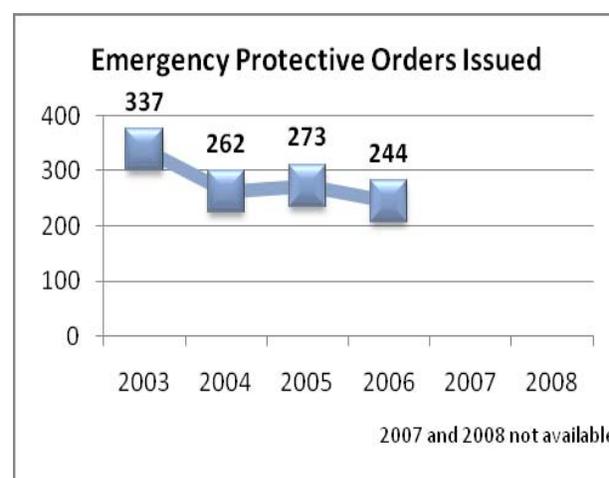
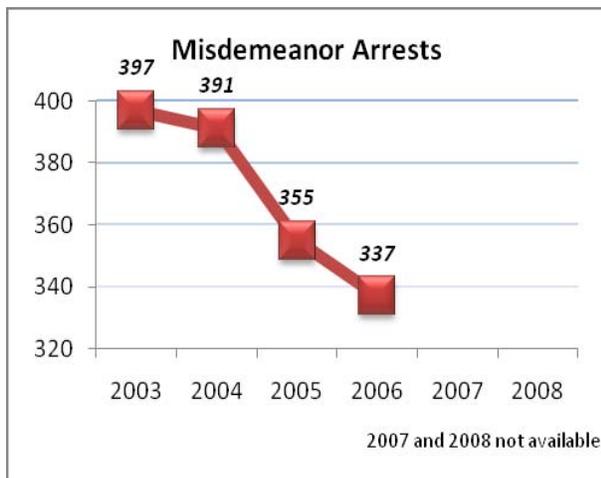
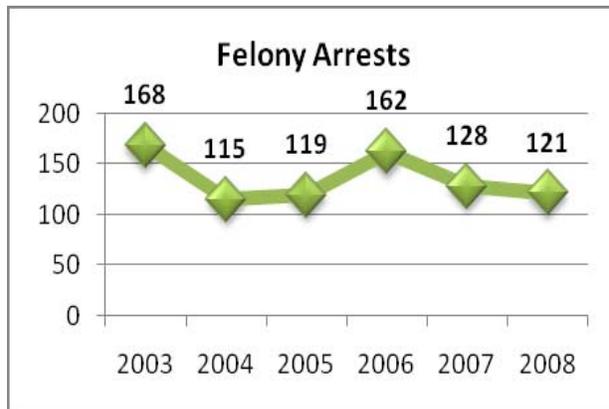
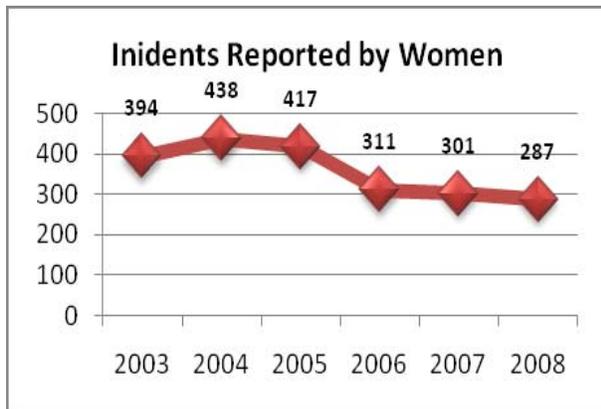
Child Witnesses in Santa Cruz County

Number of children Living with Domestic Violence Incidents at Home, 2003-2008

<u>Santa Cruz County</u>						
<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	
836	569	689	587	N/A	N/A	
<u>UCSC</u>						
<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	
2	4	6	1	0	2	
<u>Scotts Valley</u>						
<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	
75	23	34	19	31	11	
<u>Capitola</u>						
<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	
13	5	5	8	9	4	
<u>Watsonville</u>						
<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	
256	133	240	212	251	224	



Domestic Violence Data from Santa Cruz County Law Enforcement

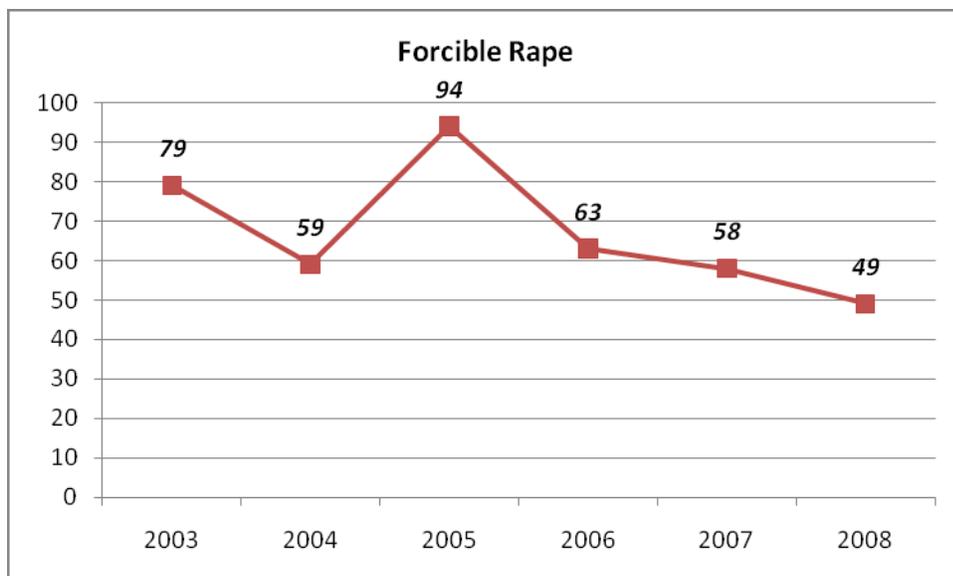


4.7. Rape and Sexual Assault

Rape is defined as sexual penetration without consent. Sexual assault refers to unwanted sexual contact and coercion to engage in sexual acts by using the threat of violence. Rape can be perpetrated by a stranger, but is often committed by an acquaintance of the victim. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, three out of four rape victims know their attacker. This same agency estimates that 91% of sexual assault victims are women, and 99% of perpetrators are men. The Bureau of Justice Statistics claims that guns, knives, or other weapons are involved in about 29% of sexual assault cases. Alcohol often plays a significant role. Findings from a community-based survey about violence against women reveal that 51% of sexual assault cases are committed against young women and minors between the ages of 16 and 21 (Randall, Melanie and Haskell, Lori, 1995).

The California Coalition Against Sexual Assault Rape Prevention Resource Center estimates that only one third of sexual assault cases are reported to police or other agencies, such as shelters or hospitals, or by phone to 24-hour domestic violence emergency hotlines. Rape is a significantly underreported crime, yet it is very prevalent, especially among young women and minors. The reasons for underreporting include shame, embarrassment, and fear of retaliation if the victim knows the perpetrator. The vast majority of sexual assaults (86%) against minors go unreported (Kilpatrick, D.G, Saunders, B.E et al, 2003). The U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey found that in 2006 in the United States, an estimated 272,350 sexual assaults occurred against victims aged twelve and older. According to Crime Clock calculations, a forcible rape happens every six minutes in the U.S. and every 56 minutes in California (California Department of Justice, 2006).

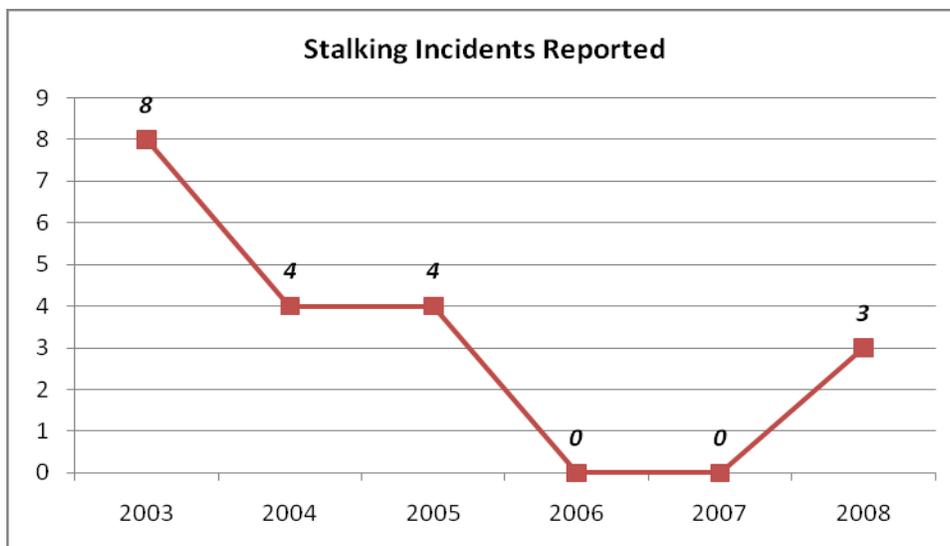
Sexual Assault Reported to Law Enforcement, 2003-2008



4.8. Stalking

Stalking can be a threatening experience and is considered a form of abuse. It became a crime in 1990 and can be prosecuted as a misdemeanor or a felony. California Penal Code Section 1708.7 defines stalking as follows: *A person is liable for the tort of stalking when the plaintiff proves all of the following elements: The defendant engaged in a pattern of conduct the intent of which was to follow, alarm, or harass the plaintiff. As a result of that pattern of conduct, the plaintiff reasonably feared for her or his safety or the safety of a family member if the defendant has made a credible threat verbally or written including by means of electronic communication device or has violated a restraining order.*

According to the Uniform Crime Report from the Santa Cruz Police Department, the number of stalking incidents reported to law enforcement has been on the decline. Most often, these incidents related to the violation of a restraining order.



Number of Stalking Incidents Reported in Santa Cruz, 2003–2008

2003: 8
2004: 4
2005: 4
2006: 0
2007: 0
2008: 3

Number of Restraining Order Violations in Santa Cruz, 2003–2008

2003: 123
2004: 106
2005: 108
2006: 35
2007: 37
2008: 16

4.8.1. Sexual Assault Legislation in California

Sexual assault is a general term, which refers to unwanted sexual touching or sexual groping, sexual battery or attempted rape. The criminal designation of sexual assault covers a range of crimes, such as forced oral copulation, penetration of the anal or vaginal area with an object, touching an intimate part of a person, and rape.

4.8.2. Rape Legislation in California

Rape is non-consensual sexual intercourse involving the threat of force, violence, or threats of future retaliation and duress. It is considered rape when the victim is not capable of giving consent because she or he is too intoxicated from alcohol or drugs, or is asleep. It is deemed rape if the victim is disabled by a mental disorder that prevents her from giving consent.

California Penal Code Sections 261-269 define rape as follows:

Rape is an act of sexual intercourse accomplished under any of the following circumstances: a person is incapable, because of a mental disorder or developmental or physical disability, of giving legal consent. It is a sexual act including penetration accomplished against a person's will by means of force, violence, duress, menace, or fear of immediate and unlawful bodily injury on the person or another. It is considered rape if a person is prevented from resisting sexual intercourse by any intoxicating or anesthetic substance or any controlled substance or when a person is at the time of the sexual penetration asleep or unconscious of the nature of the act. Rape consists of a sexual act involving penetration accomplished against the victim's will by threatening to retaliate in the future against the victim or any other person, and if there is a possibility that the perpetrator will execute the threat to kidnap or falsely imprison, or inflict extreme pain, serious bodily injury, or death.

According to the Joint Report on Sexual Assault to the Santa Cruz City Council, the age group most at risk for rape is 20-29 years old, and the second age group most at risk is 11-19. This report, compiled by the Santa Cruz Police Department and the Commission

for the Prevention of Violence against Women, confirms with local data that two thirds of sexual assault victims are younger than thirty years old. The ethnicity of the reporting victims is predominantly Caucasian women. Alcohol consumption was involved in at least 50% of sexual assault cases. In many cases, the victims were raped while intoxicated.

Sexual Assault Reported to Law Enforcement, 2003-2008

Forcible Rape

Santa Cruz

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
48	59	49	39	28	23

UCSC

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
2	1	2	2	3	3

Scotts Valley

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
4	2	2	2	2	4

Capitola

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
2	7	7	3	9	N/A

Watsonville

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
23	25	17	17	16	14

4.9. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment refers to any unwanted sexual attention perceived as offensive or hostile, such as sexual advances or comments and inappropriate touching or gesture. It can also take the form of sexual coercion by means of verbal or physical intimidation or threat. Sexual harassment dehumanizes women, turns them into sex objects, and validates sexist behavior as socially acceptable.

In 2003, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission received 13,566 sexual harassment reports, of which 85% were filed by female victims against male harassers. The commission estimated the cost of sexual harassment cases in 2003 at \$50 million. Major risk factors in the business environment include lack of sexual harassment policies and lack of employee knowledge of company policies (O'Hare and O'Donohugh, 1998). Sexual harassment is most common in male-dominated fields and in work environments with larger percentages of men than women. According to law enforcement statistics, California is one of three states in the U.S. (the other two being New York and Texas) where the prevalence of sexual harassment is highest.

4.9.1. Sexual Harassment Legislation

According to the California Penal Code, sexual harassment is defined as follows: *To “harass” means a knowing and willful course of conduct directed at a specific person that seriously alarms, annoys, torments, or terrorizes the person.*

Sexual harassment occurs when a person is the target of unsolicited and unwanted behavior or comments. It includes sexual advances or physical, verbal, or nonverbal behavior that is sexual in nature, and is humiliating or threatening. It may be expressed in many ways, including sexual jokes, gestures, oral or written comments about a person’s body or sexual conduct, cartoons that ridicule a person’s sex, or condescending terms of endearment.

Sexual harassment is common among teenagers and in school settings, where teasing is ongoing. The City of Santa Cruz funds preventive education in some local schools about sexual harassment and sexual assault; this has been successful in reducing rates of violence against women.

4.10. Teen Dating Violence

Teen dating violence is defined as a pattern of behavior in which a minor is threatened or subjected to physical, emotional or sexual abuse by a partner who is attempting to control him or her. According to the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), schools are the sites of much gender-based violence, which is often sexual violence. In a study of 342 high school students in the Midwest, the researchers found that 87% of girls experienced sexual harassment. Female students reported being pressured to date, labeled with sexually pejorative names, or sexually assaulted (Fineran & Bennett, 1999). Teen dating violence primarily affects girls between the ages of 12 and 18. It can compromise their grades, educational goals and academic performance.

Teen dating violence is a growing problem, yet it is mostly concealed from the victims’ parents. Because of a knowledge gap about modern communication devices, teens’ parents are not aware of dating violence. Teens do not tell their parents about the harassment they experience because they are afraid to lose phone or computer privileges.

According to a 2007 national online survey, *Technology Abuse in Teen Relationships*, conducted by TRU and funded by Liz Claiborne, researchers found that an increasing number of dating teens are being abused and controlled through technological means such as text messages, emails and social networking sites. A high number of teens (65%) are vulnerable to rumors, blackmailing, or the posting of embarrassing photos on Internet networking sites like MySpace and Facebook. Some suffer from technological harassment and stalking, constant monitoring by phone, and even physical threats. Internet-based sexual harassment is rampant among female teenagers. The Liz Claiborne study showed that 82% of underage women have been pressured to engage in sexual activity. Teens have also been reporting an 8% increase in incidents of physical abuse such as slapping, hitting, punching or kicking.

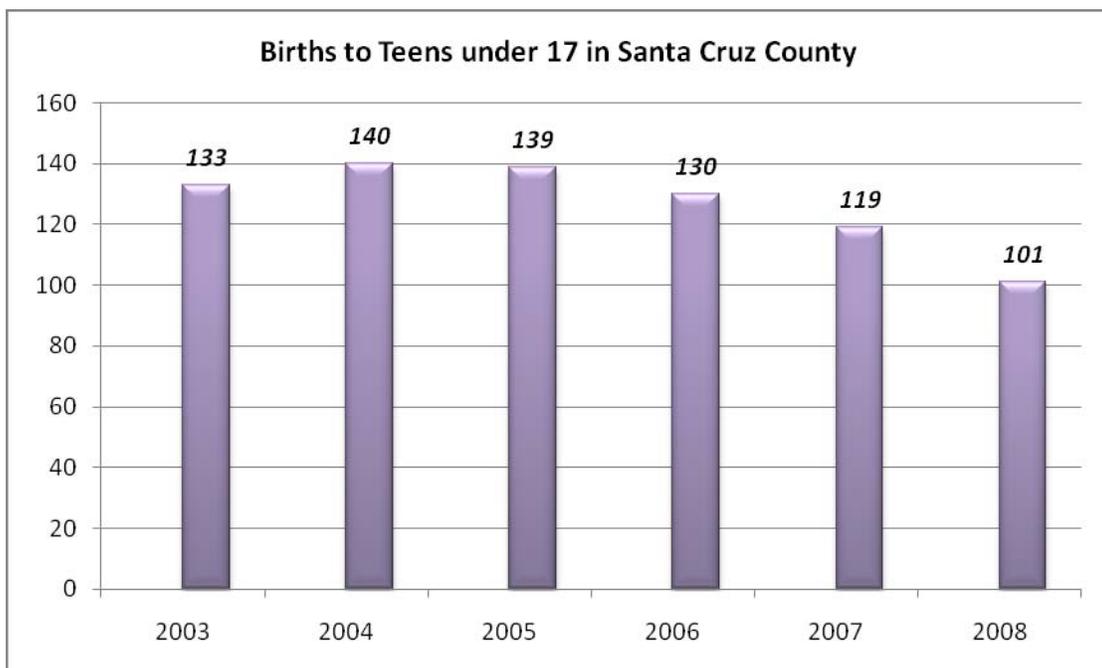
Schools are held legally responsible for the safety of teens who are present on campus. Article 1 of the California Constitution asserts that it is the duty of the State of California to provide safe schools and protect students from sexual harassment on school campuses by funding age-appropriate instruction on dating violence prevention. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), in 2006 approximately 1 in 11 adolescents experienced physical abuse in the U.S. Nearly 3 out of 4 teens (72%) report that relationships with a boyfriend or girlfriend begin at age 14 or younger. Only half of all teens interviewed in a survey recognized the indicators of an abusive relationship (Liz Claiborne Survey, 2007).

A 2001 report by the American Medical Association reports that 1 in 5 schoolgirls have been sexually abused by a dating partner. Sexual intercourse with a minor (statutory rape) is illegal; the victim is considered incapable of giving legal consent because she or he is seventeen years old or under, even if the intercourse is consensual. If the person engaging in sexual intercourse with a minor is no more than 3 years older than the minor, the crime is a misdemeanor. However, if the person is more than 3 years older than the minor, the crime is considered a felony.

According to statistics gathered by the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency from birth certificate data in 2008, Santa Cruz County teen births have been slowly decreasing. Yet the percentage of Latina teens giving birth is still extremely high (over 80%) compared to percentages for other ethnicities.

Number of Births to Teens under 17 Years Old in Santa Cruz County, 2003-2007

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
133	140	139	130	119



4.11. Child Protective Services

In past decades, research on the effects of domestic violence on children and teenagers has indicated that repetitive exposure to partner violence at home might result in aggressive and high-risk behavior in adulthood (Hall, 2006). According to a recent scientific study, 15.5 million American children are living in violent households in which domestic violence incidents have happened at least once within a year, and 7 million American children live in homes where severe intimate partner violence occurs regularly (McDonald, 2006). The pain and suffering caused by domestic violence leads to high rates of neglect and child maltreatment. In a study on child abuse and neglect, researchers found that “among mothers reported to Child Protective Services (CPS), almost half of them had experienced physical violence from their partner” (Casanueva et al, 2009). They further concluded that there is a strong relationship between women at risk of domestic violence and reports of child maltreatment associated with intimate partner violence. The abuse and neglect of children has been estimated to cost over \$25 billion each year, nationwide. Gender-specific statistics are not available, but we can estimate that about half of the children are girls.

In California, the child population is close to 10 million. According to the California Child Welfare Agency, over half a million children come in contact with the welfare system each year, costing the state about \$ 4 billion. Additionally, more than 76,000 children live in foster care (3%) and about 20% of children are being referred to California Child Welfare at least once during their first 7 years of life. Half of the children who enter the welfare system are under the age of 5, and 36% of these children are placed with a relative in California for an average of 3 years. Rates of reunification with the family are high (58% of children return to their families within one year). After reunification, rates of recurrence of maltreatment have been declining in Santa Cruz County.

In Santa Cruz County, police call Child Protective Services to refer a domestic violence case. This referral is investigated by a social worker who assesses whether the child’s life is in danger, and whether he or she is at risk for involvement in future domestic violence episodes. The social worker screens for predictors of further violence and determines whether the child should be removed from the home. In general, CPS makes an effort to keep siblings together and tries to place children with family members, rather than in foster care with a stranger. The child’s preference is taken into consideration, especially if he or she is a teenager.

In 2007, the child population in Santa Cruz County was 63,502, within a total population of 250,000. There were 3,401 referrals to CPS in the same year. On average, the county’s incidence rate per 1,000 children is 53.6, higher than the California state average of 50. Over the past five years, the county has seen a 10% rise in referrals of Hispanic children due to population growth.

There were 225 entries into the foster care system in Santa Cruz County in 2007. The goal of foster care is to ensure children’s safety from neglect and abuse and to ensure placement stability. The number of adoptions from foster care (53%) has exceeded the national average (36%) and the state average (32%).

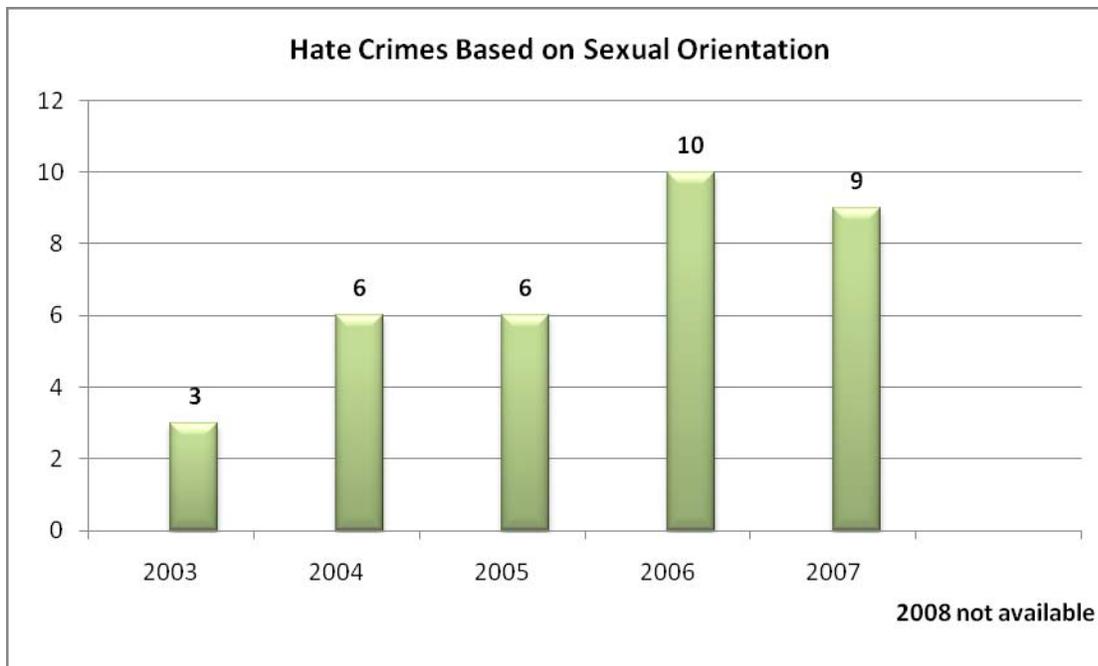
4.12. Violence against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Individuals

According to a 2004 report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) individuals has been increasing significantly in certain locations, such as Houston, Los Angeles and Colorado, but has decreased in San Francisco and Columbus, Ohio. In the mid 1990s, sexual violence against lesbians and gays rose by 13%, twice the average percentage of violence against heterosexuals. According to police reports nationally, there appears to be a decline in rape among LGBT individuals, from 37% in 2001 to 20% in 2003. But previous studies indicate that 1 out of 4 LGBT victims had been mistreated by law enforcement, which could explain their reluctance to report hate crime cases and sexual assaults (Meyer, 2000). More than 50% of American lesbians report having been victims of verbal hate crimes, sexual harassment or physical assault.

In Santa Cruz County, hate crimes are still committed; in fact, they are on the rise despite tolerant attitudes toward same sex couples in the city of Santa Cruz. A hate crime is considered to be any crime motivated by hatred of the victim's sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, religion or disability.

Hate Crimes Based on Sexual Orientation in Santa Cruz County, 2003-2007

<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
3	6	6	10	9



4.13. Violence against Homeless Women

Homeless women suffer from social exclusion in housing, employment and access to safe public places. Indigent street youth, especially girls and young women, are particularly vulnerable to criminal victimization, such as coercion into prostitution (Gatez, 2004). Violence is a pervasive aspect of life for all women living on the streets. They are particularly vulnerable to sexual assault and robbery because of their lack of protection. According to the Santa Cruz County Community Assessment Project (CAP), 29% of homeless women are typically runaways who have left abusive situations, either with parents (if they are minors) or with violent domestic partners. Homeless women are more at risk for unprotected sex and for contracting HIV/AIDS and STDs.

Violence against homeless women in Santa Cruz County is a source of concern because of the growing transient population in downtown Santa Cruz and the fact that the city's population doubles in the summer, bringing an influx of tourists who are strangers to the community. It is difficult to estimate the number of homeless women in Santa Cruz; however, only a limited number of beds are available in local shelters for homeless people of both genders (approximately 200 beds in the summer and 300 in the winter).

4.14. Trafficked Women

A modern form of slavery, human trafficking has increased with economic globalization, which requires border crossing. Worldwide an estimated 2.2 million people are being sold as indentured servants, sweatshop laborers, prisoners in debt bondage, or sex trade workers. A majority of them are women and children. They are often living in poverty and are lured into profitable work abroad.

The U.S. State Department estimates that approximately 20,000 people are trafficked into the United States every year, but since trafficking is an underground crime, the numbers are probably much higher.

California is a major destination for human trafficking because of its proximity to the Mexican border, easy access to harbors and airports, and a growing economy around the Bay Area and in Southern California. The central coast, with its booming agriculture industry, is a corridor between Los Angeles and San Francisco. No statistics are available on trafficked women; however, it is very likely to be occurring in our state.

The federal government passed the Trafficking Victims' Protection Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-386) to protect victims and to prosecute traffickers. In California, the first anti-trafficking law was enacted in 2005 (Assembly Bill 22, Lieber) to combat trafficking. In 2007, Senate Bill 1569 created state-funded programs to offer trafficked victims access to refugee status (T-visa). Organizations such as the California Central Coast Coalition to Stop Enslavement (CA-CCC-SE) have been doing community outreach through the media to raise public awareness about the issue. A Global Forum on Human Trafficking took place in October 2009 in Carlsbad, California.

4.15. Discrimination against Women in Santa Cruz County

In 2007, the Santa Cruz County Community Assessment Project conducted a telephone survey asking community members if they had felt discriminated against by gender in the past 12 months. An equal percentage of men (18.1) and women (18.2) said they had been discriminated against. In this same survey, more people felt discriminated against by age, particularly those between the ages of 18 and 44.

4.16. District Attorney

It is the role of the District Attorney to ensure the victim's and the community's safety by filing charges against the perpetrator and provide rehabilitation. According to the Santa Cruz County Domestic Violence Commission, there were 1,059 domestic violence referrals received by the District Attorney's office in 2006, of which 653 were filed with the court, 186 as felonies and 467 as misdemeanors.

The Family Protection Unit makes the decision to file a case based on the severity of injuries, the presence of children in the home, previous history of domestic violence and intoxication levels. They enact a vertical prosecution from arraignment to sentencing, and often conduct a follow-up investigation. They refer victims to local agencies, such as shelters, for assistance. Victims of domestic violence are unwilling to cooperate with law enforcement for a variety of reasons. Law enforcement videotapes interviews with victims, documenting their injuries and the damage at the scene of the crime. Repeat offenders are charged with the maximum sentence, which can be up to 7 years (Santa Cruz County Domestic Violence Commission Report 2006).

4.17. Conclusion

Violence against women is a serious issue in Santa Cruz County. Despite a reduction in reported cases over the past 5 years, and despite efforts to educate the community, domestic violence and sexual assault are still prevalent. Data collection is difficult and statistics are inconsistent between various departments. Underreporting is a concern, yet some victims might be counted more than once. It is therefore impossible to determine the exact number of cases of violence against women beyond an approximation from data collected by various agencies, such as police departments and shelters.

The SOWAG Report does not include local data about teen dating violence in Santa Cruz County; this area could be the subject of future research. Violence against women in prison and trafficked immigrant women in Santa Cruz County are other areas that need further investigation and data collection. It is the goal of the Women's Commission to keep up-to-date local statistics on the Status of Women and Girls through the SOWAG Report, in order to combat all forms of violence against women in Santa Cruz County.

4.18. Recommendations

- Continue community education and outreach
- Work toward uniform reporting criteria in all jurisdictions
- Collect data on teen dating violence and rape
- Support restoration of funding to shelters and organizations dealing with Violence Against Women
- Collect data on violence and sexual assault by gender
- Survey the community to ascertain actual (rather than the reported) levels of teen dating violence, senior elder abuse, human trafficking and violence against incarcerated women
- Develop consequences for non-completion of the Batterers Intervention Program
- In 1945, domestic violence cases were prosecuted as felonies versus now being prosecuted as a misdemeanor. Work towards offenders being held more accountable.
- Support restoration of funding for prevention programs and a 24 hour hotline responsive to the needs of the victim
- Collect data to determine the effectiveness of Domestic Violence agencies

5. EDUCATION

5.1. History of Education for Women

“The key to success in America is a good education.”
- Sonia Sotomayor, U.S. Supreme Court Justice (quoting her mother)

Over the last three decades, our country has made great strides toward gender equality in education. The dreams of the Women’s Movement have begun to become reality as women have gained access to schooling, challenged the status quo, and redefined themselves both intellectually and physically. However, more work remains to be done; certain accomplishments in the educational system and the workplace do not translate into equal access and equal pay for men and women.

Before women gained the right and privilege to higher education, they were considered lower-class citizens, not worthy of voting, owning property or enjoying other “inalienable rights”. People feared that the social system would break down if women were educated—a belief that sparked the Women’s Movement and its focus on equal education. Today, women still battle with conflicting social values. Many mothers experience a social stigma if they go to school or work and enroll their children in day care. They are forced to choose between the dream of receiving an education and the choice to fulfill society’s expectations about women’s roles.

Following are highlights that demonstrate women's progress in education over the last 30 years in our country:

- In each year since 1982, more women than men have earned bachelor's degrees.
- 30 percent of women aged 25 to 34 have 4 years of college education, compared with just 18 percent in 1975.
- Women hold one third of all faculty positions in colleges and universities.
- A component of the 1972 Education Amendments to the Civil Rights Act, Title IX prohibits gender discrimination in education at any level. Conditions have improved for girls on the playing field and in the classroom, as Title IX addresses activities in all of education. This law extends protection to more than 53 million elementary and secondary school students and nearly 15 million college and university students. On college campuses, it has affected everything from admissions to financial aid and housing. Title IX elevated the status of women in society and paved the way for other civil rights legislation.

It is critically important to address gender equity in education. Education is the greatest predictor of income level, and higher income levels translate into higher levels of self-sufficiency, quality of life, and confidence. Gross inequalities still divide women from men in the workforce. Nationally, women's income is between 65 and 80 percent that of men.²³ The total career "wage gap" in California is \$291,000.00.²⁴ This "wage gap" must be addressed as a component of gender equality. Education gives women greater opportunities for work and earnings, yet some women do not have access to education, especially when they are caring for children. Financial pressures and budget cuts make it difficult for these women to attain an education at any level, whether vocational, community college, university, or apprenticeship.

5.2. Education in Santa Cruz County

5.2.1. Public School: Lower Education (Ages 0-18)

Santa Cruz County's school enrollment data is similar to that of other counties in California. In 2007, total school enrollment in our county was 71,000. Nursery school and kindergarten enrollment was 6,600, elementary and high school enrollment was 36,000, and college and graduate school enrollment was 29,000.²⁵

Census data shows that women and girls in Santa Cruz County have attained higher levels of education than their male counterparts in the lower age group.

According to the 2008 CAP (Community Assessment Project):

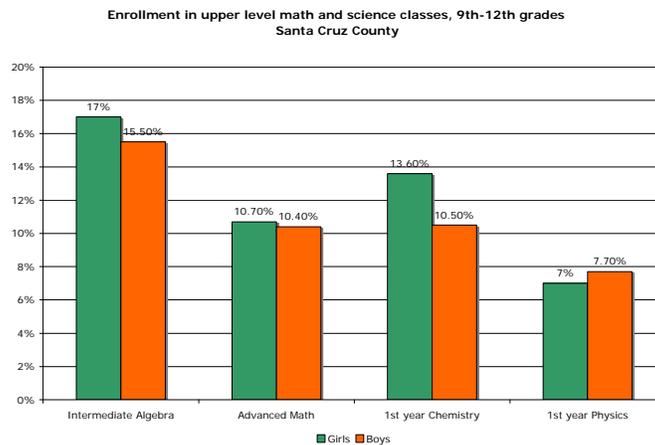
- During the 2006/2007 school year, 51.4% of Santa Cruz County high school graduates who completed college prep courses were female.
- 4.1% more women than men have attended college, and 7% more have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.
- For ages 25 and over, 16.2% of all men have achieved a master's degree or higher, compared with 13.7% of all women.

5.2.1.1. Science and Math

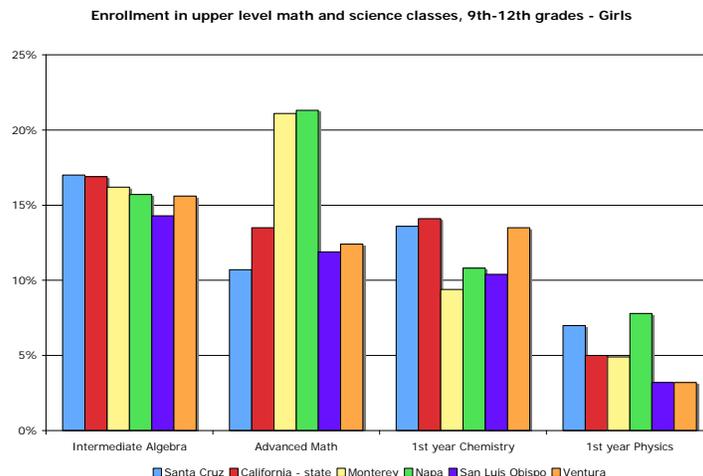
In Santa Cruz, girls' enrollment in upper level math and science classes in grades 9 through 12 is similar to enrollment in other counties. In all counties, and at the state level, approximately 2-3% more girls than boys are enrolled in the classes, excepting first year physics, which tends to have equal enrollment of boys and girls.

Santa Cruz County offers a unique educational experience for girls studying science. Our educators have recognized that because of gender discrimination, women have difficulties entering and remaining in science and engineering professions. Many Santa Cruz educational programs promote an equitable education regardless of students' gender, race, and sexual orientation.

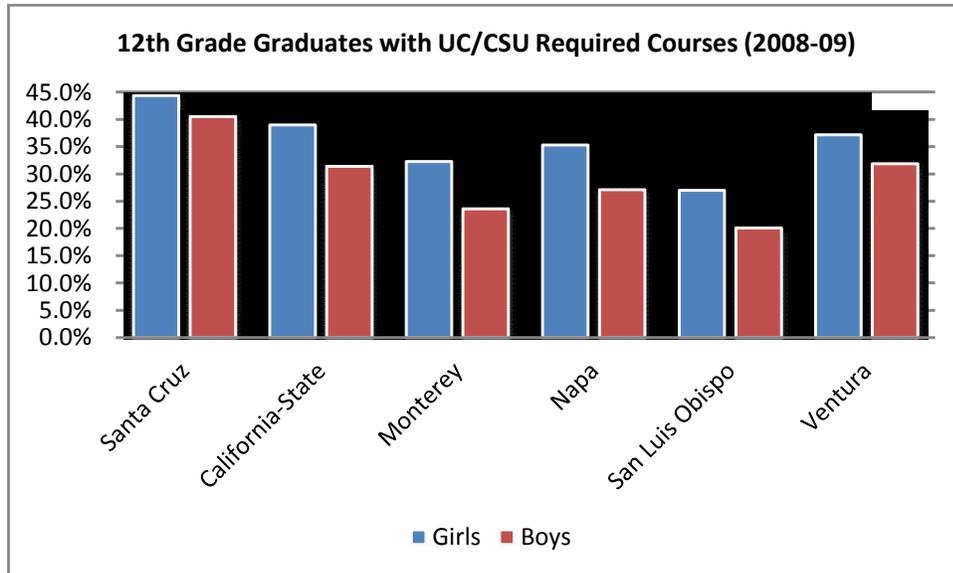
Girls are often encouraged to enroll in upper level math and science classes. However, enrollment numbers do not reflect girls' success in class. There may be a correlation between math/science enrollment and UC/CSU required courses; high school girls may take math and science classes to ensure their entry into a four-year college, but they may not gain mastery of the subjects. As a result, very few female students become science and math tutors who can serve as role models for younger girls.²⁶



(California Department of Education: <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>).



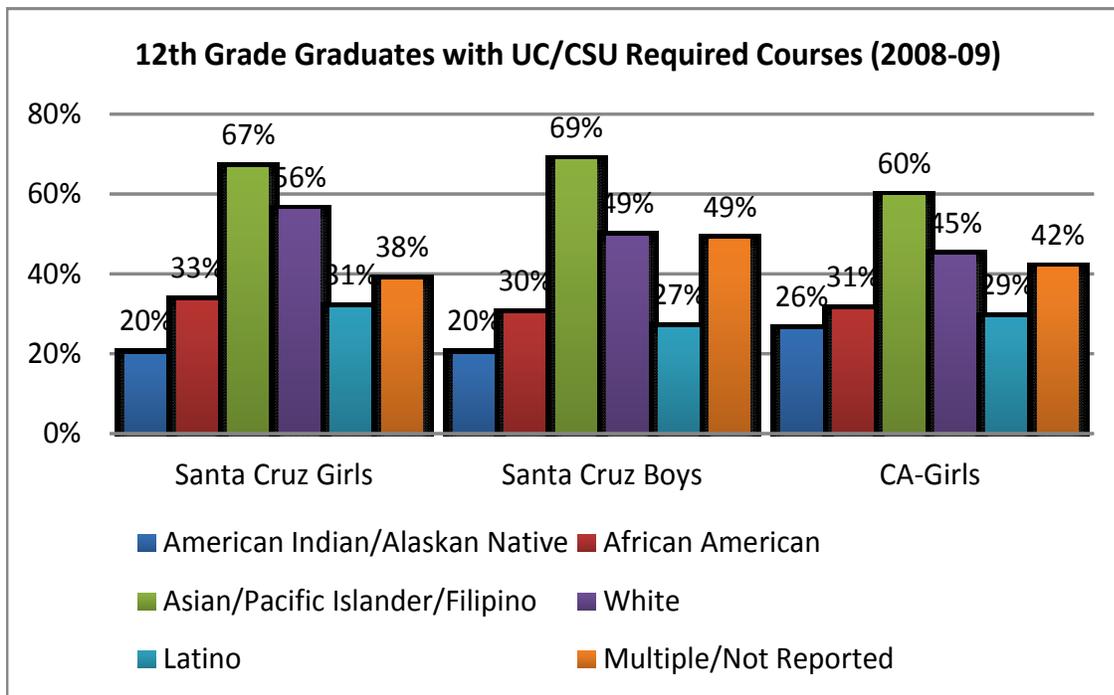
(California Department of Education: <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>).



The UC/CSU Subject Requirements are a path of 15 units in 7 areas of study students must complete in order to be eligible for admission to these systems. Students must score either a C or better in each unit (about a year’s worth of high school classes) at the CSU level, or a 3.0 or better in the Subject Requirements overall. ²⁷

Santa Cruz County had a higher rate of graduates who completed UC/CSU required courses for college eligibility than several comparable counties at the close of the 2008-09 academic year. 44.4% of girls and 40.6% of boys completed the Subject Requirements (“A-G” requirements), for a county average of 42.5%. The state total was 35.3%, with 39% of California girls completing requirements, and 31.4% boys’ completion upon graduation. The numbers are encouraging, but in a county with a University of California campus, having close proximity to two California State Universities, and with several private colleges to pipeline our students to, they should be over the 50% mark.

A deeper cause for concern appears after inspecting the ethnic breakdown of the county graduation rates with UC/CSU required courses. On the surface, observe that each group is closely parallel to the state percentages on the “A-G” requirement completion rates. Santa Cruz girls rank within 6 percentage points of the statewide records; except for Native American and undeclared girls, all other groups are above the state average. Over half of the White (56%) and Asian/Pacific Islander/Filipino (67%) female students graduated with completed “A-G” requirements. The other ethnic groups ranged from 20-38%. This means these young women either did not take all of the Subject Requirements or did not pass them with a 3.0 average, C grade or better. Further research must be conducted to learn causes for the distances between the ethnic groups in Santa Cruz when it comes to academic achievement and college preparatory work.



Source: 2008-2009 data compiled through the California Department of Education Educational Demographics Office (<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>)
Data as of: 10/22/2010

5.2.1.2. SAT Scores

Most students with ambitions for higher education take the SAT Reasoning Test as part of their application process. It is a standardized test, which purportedly assesses a student’s aptitude for academic success in higher education. In 2005, the College Board, the not-for-profit organization that created the original Scholastic Aptitude Test on 1600-point scale, added a writing component to the exam, hence the change in title to SAT *Reasoning* Test. The exam is now on a 2400-point scale, with 800 being the highest score possible in the Mathematics, Critical Reading (formerly Verbal), and Writing sections.

The 2009 state means (averages) for SAT Reasoning Tests show near-parity between girls and boys (referred to as “females” and “males” in College Board literature) in the Critical Reading and Writing sections, but a wide gap in the Mathematics section, continuing a long trend in education. The College Board’s 2009 College-Bound Seniors’ California Profile Report showed that, among the 92,858 males and 114,443 females who took the SAT, the males had merely a nine-point higher mean in Critical Reading: 505 out of a possible 800; whereas females scored an average of 496. In Writing, the difference was even smaller and trended towards the female, with a mean of 501 to the males’ 495. The Mathematics scores, then, are a stark contrast: the female mean was 495, while the male mean was 536—a 41-point gap. Though female students may be doing well in math and science classes, they may not be as successful in translating those lessons to their standardized tests.

<i>2009 CA SAT Scores</i>	Critical Reading	Writing	Math
Females	496	501	495
Males	505	495	536

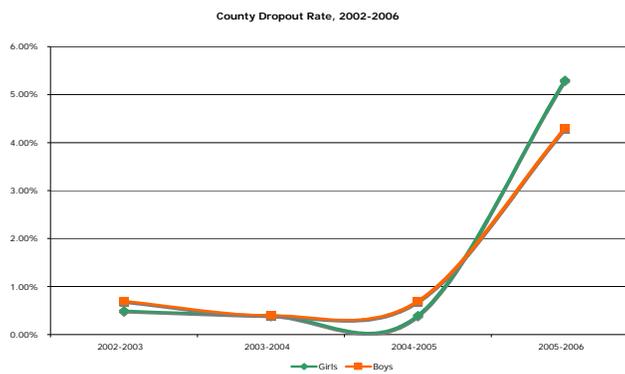
There is currently no available data on SAT results by gender at the county level. 32.37% of county students took the SAT, which is less than the state percentage of 34.68%. Santa Cruz County's mean Critical Reading Average was 521, higher than the state average of 495; the county's Writing average was 529; the state's was 513. The county's Math average was 515, over 20 points higher than the state average.²⁸

5.2.1.3. Post-Secondary Education

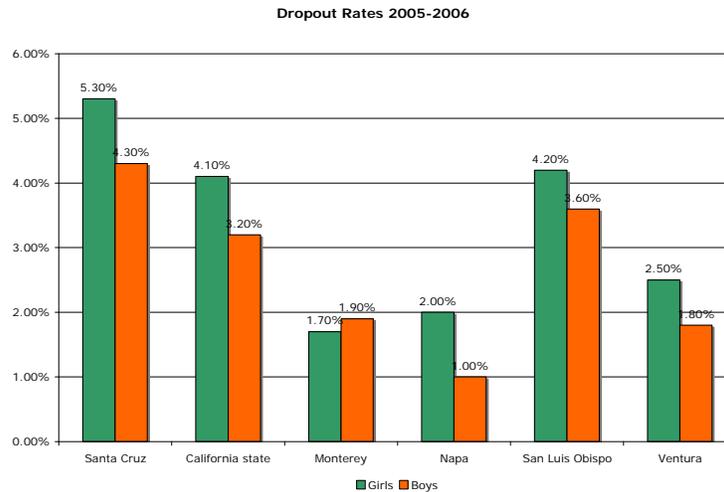
Women's enrollment at the college level has remained overall steady at Cabrillo College through the past 10 years. In the spring semester of 2008, women's enrollment was at 54.7% while men's was at 44.6%.²⁹ At the UCSC campus, similar figures are seen. Women's enrollment comprises 53% of the university and men comprise 47%.³⁰

5.2.1.4. Dropout Rates

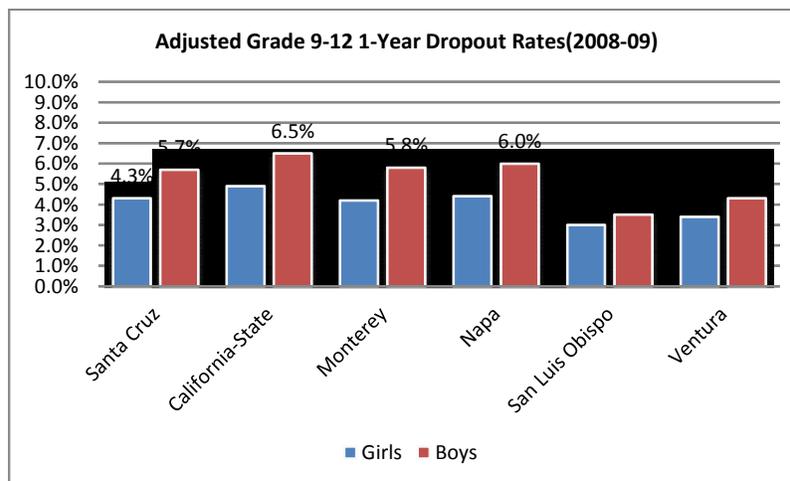
From 2002-2003 through 2004-2005, girls' dropout rates were consistently lower than or equal to boys'. Yet during the 2005-2006 school year, the dropout rate significantly increased across the state, as well as in comparison counties and Santa Cruz County. At the state level, girls dropped out at a rate 0.8% higher than boys, and Santa Cruz girls had the highest dropout rate of all comparison counties at 5.3%, which is 1% higher than the boys' rate and 0.2% higher than the difference at the state level. The only county to match these rates was Napa County, where girls dropped out 1% more often than boys; however, both were still more than 2% lower than their counterparts at the state level. Information on dropout rates was not available in cross sections of education level with gender, nor race/ethnicity with gender. This seemed to be an aberrant year within the past decade.³¹



California Department of Education: <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>



In the 2008-2009 school year, Santa Cruz County student dropout rates were close to those of comparable counties. 4.3% of the girls registered in school districts in Santa Cruz County dropped out, which was about 0.6% less than the state average; and 4.9% of the boys dropped out, significantly less than the state percentage of 6.5%.



Source: 2008-2009 data compiled through the California Department of Education Educational Demographics Office (<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>)
Data as of: 10/22/2010

5.2.1.5. Educational Support Programs for Girls

Santa Cruz has several programs aimed at helping girls remain interested in education and maintain good grades. These programs include Girls Moving Forward, The Girl Game Company, and Girls in Engineering. Alternative forms of education that supplement or replace traditional learning also aid girls' success; these include the Boys and Girls Club's Smart Girls program and the DeWitt Anderson Court School. While Girls Moving Forward and Smart Moves offer emotional and self-esteem support, other programs focus specifically on these needs: YWTeens, offered through the YWCA, and Triangle Speakers.

5.2.1.5.1. Dewitt Anderson Court School for Girls

Located in Corralitos, this school has one teacher and one teacher's aide. The court places girls there; they stay for a short period, and usually transfer to other schools within the Alternative Education programs. Alternative education, also known as non-traditional education or educational alternative, includes a number of approaches to teaching and learning other than mainstream or traditional education. The school's primary goal is to help girls pass the CAHSEE (California High School Exit Exam). As an all-female school, this institution prevents girls from being distracted by boys, and therefore provides a greater focus on education.

5.2.1.5.2. YW Teens

Based in the Watsonville YWCA, this is an after-school program that runs for several weeks at middle schools in Watsonville.

5.2.1.5.3. Girls in Engineering

Founded in 2006 and administered through the UCSC Educational Partnership Center, this program brings seventh- and eighth-grade girls together for two weeks of hands-on practice and instruction in engineering at the university campus. The program is free and transportation is provided to and from the campus, making it accessible to students who don't live nearby. The program aims to encourage girls to pursue careers in engineering, a field in which women traditionally have been underrepresented.

5.2.1.5.4. Girls Moving Forward

This is an educational and empowerment service that is dedicated to ending gender-confidence gap in school. This is done through hands-on tutoring and empowerment. Academic tutoring coupled with social and emotional support help to integrate each girl's scholastic performance and overall self-esteem for overall support. Girls Moving Forward develops customized programs designed to address the specific needs of public schools, independent schools, and community-based organizations. Workshops or assemblies, a drop-in tutoring program, a small-group program targeted at supporting specific students, a structured test preparation program, or a girls' empowerment group, can build a program that meets your needs and budget.

5.3. Emotional Life of Girls in Education

Although more school administrators are women, no support systems are in place to keep them in leadership positions or to nurture their skills. Diane Siri explained that she sees women leaders as different from men; they sometimes internalize society's pressures to please everyone, and thus they need unique validation and reassurance that it is very rare for leaders to please everyone.

Most of the educators who were interviewed—including Linda Cleavenger, Director of the San Lorenzo Valley Teen Center, Michael Watkins, Superintendent of Santa Cruz County

Office of Education; Lacy Asbill and Elana Metz of Girls Moving Forward; and various people at the Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance Center (PVPSA)—talked about the need for girls’ empowerment and the tendency for girls to act as victims or to fall into victim-like situations or behavior. This tendency begins in middle school. In elementary school, girls are still competitive with boys academically and socially, but once they reach middle school, their confidence and performance drastically diminish. Aware that this decrease can place girls in harm’s way, Michael Watkins confidently acknowledged, “If we are going to see a change, we need to provide the services.”

In conversations about empowerment, race, ethnicity, and culture need to be readily recognized so that the issues can be understood and solutions can be offered. According to the PVPSA Safe Schools Healthy Students organization, girls from traditional households, particularly Latina girls, feel added pressure because of their need to navigate between multiple worlds. They have to be bicultural, and are constantly forced to make decisions that put them at odds with one culture or the other. This tension often occurs when girls pursue higher education. A family may value education, but may not understand the need or desire for higher learning, especially when it involves leaving home to attend an institution that is not near the family. The culture may have expectations that require women to work within the home, cooking or servicing the head male figure. Every staff member at PVPSA Safe Schools Healthy Students recommended that girls’ support services would not be useful unless cultural issues were considered. In south Santa Cruz County, cultural literacy must be practiced by program directors, integrated into curricula, and applied to program timing and accessibility.

Elana Metz and Lacy Asbill of Girls Moving Forward, a tutoring and empowerment agency for girls, commented that high school graduates who want to work with younger girls acknowledge that they have done well in upper level math classes, but do not feel confident in tutoring for them.

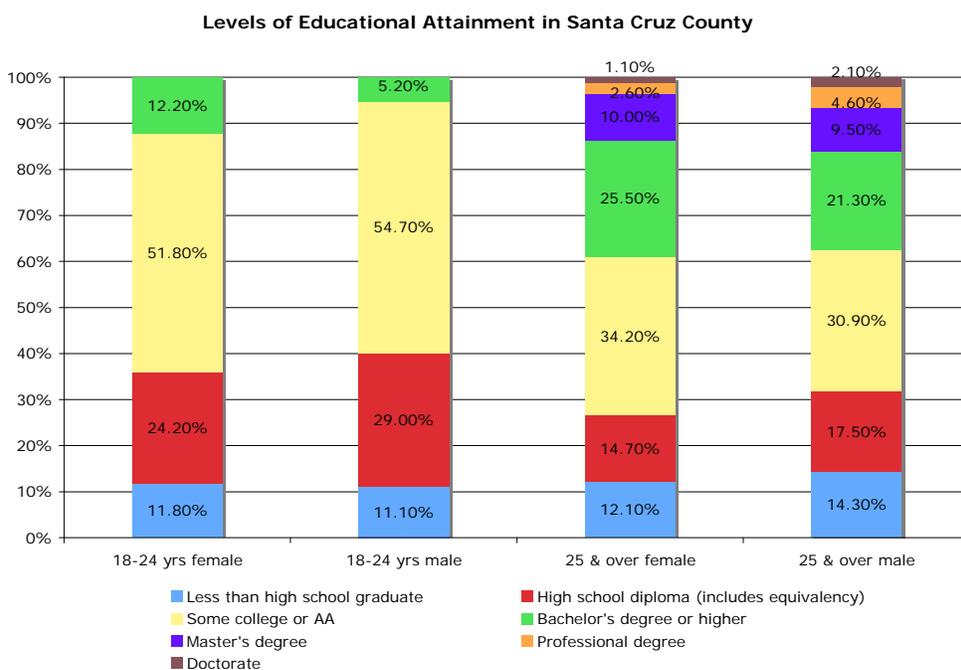
5.4. Title IX Complaints

Data collection about Title IX included phone calls to all of the districts and inquiries about recent or past complaints filed under Title IX. Some district personnel did not know what Title IX was; most stated that they had not heard of any complaints. The most informed district was in the midst of settling a complaint. The Assistant Superintendent, commenting about the

complaint, explained what the district would do differently if a similar situation were to arise, and said that all personnel were trained to appropriately handle a similar situation; at the same time, she acknowledged the reality of district personnel turnover. Since Title IX legislation is generally associated with sports rather than all aspects of education, and since it is not a focus of education in recent times, it is not a high priority for school districts.

5.5. Santa Cruz County Education Levels

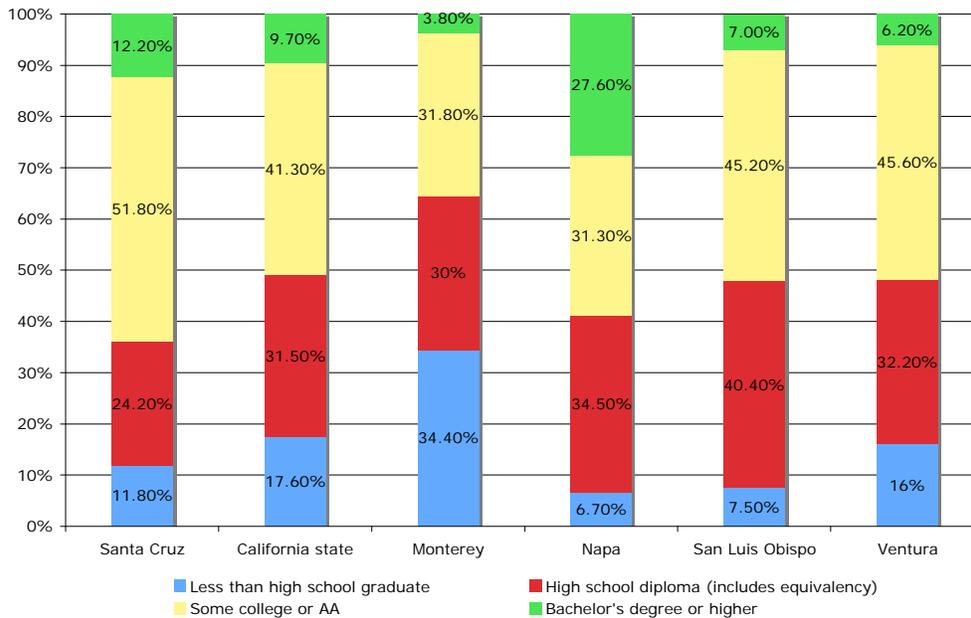
Women in Santa Cruz County have attained higher levels of education than their male counterparts in the 18-24 age group; 4.1% more women than men have attended college and 7% more have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. In the next age group, 25 and older, discrepancies are notable but not great, with 16.2% of all men holding a master’s degree or higher, as compared with 13.7% of all women.³²



American Community Survey: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>

Compared with other counties and the state as a whole, Santa Cruz County comes in second after Napa County for the highest percentage of women age 18-24 with a bachelor’s degree or higher. Our county comes in first for the percentage of women who have attended some college (64%), with Napa in second place (58.9%).

Levels of Education Attainment for Women, Ages 18-24, 2005



5.6. Support Systems for Re-Entry Women in Higher Education

5.6.1. EOPS

Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) is a state-funded effort designed to provide financial, counseling and academic support services for full-time Cabrillo College students identified as educationally and economically disadvantaged.

5.6.2. Fast Track to Work

The FTTW staff works closely with the Santa Cruz Human Resources Agency to address the issues facing CalWORKs and WIA (Workforce Investment Act) recipients. In addition to receiving Cabrillo College's financial aid services, CalWORKs students may qualify for childcare and assistance with books, supplies, lab fees and transportation. WIA Training Benefits include payments for Cabrillo registration and lab fees, books, supplies and transportation. Fast Track counselors help students with their needs and make referrals to other supportive programs.

5.6.3. UCSC Women's Center

The Women's Center's work focuses on retaining students, staff and faculty while promoting their successes within academia and beyond, doing this in a safe and welcoming environment. They strive for an inclusive and equitable campus community through advocacy, education and support services. Support services include referrals to resources on campus such as the Educational Opportunities Program, Services for Transfer and Re-entry Students (STARS), Financial Aid and Campus Life offices.

5.7. Adult Education

Females are more likely than males to participate in adult education. In 2001, the overall participation rate of females in adult education activities was higher than that of their male peers (53 percent vs. 46 percent; indicator 32). However, when examined by type of activity, the only significant gender difference was in participation in personal development activities. The percentages of males and females who participated in basic skills and work-related adult education were similar.

5.8. Interview with Superintendent of Schools

In an interview, former Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Diane Siri discussed the topic of women working in education. Although more women work in higher positions, she explained, "They need different support systems than their male counterparts... leadership is lonely." She recommended formal and informal mentoring or coaching. Siri suggested that women might take longer to develop a thick skin and learn how to deal with controversy. In terms of the effects of Title IX, Siri believes that Title IX has helped provide more opportunities for girls, but barriers remain in areas that can't be legislated. For example, jobs and education may be accessible, but not supported or feasible. Programs are available, but a focus on girls needs more consideration so that young women can access these programs.

Siri believes that sex education and drug/alcohol education work for some women and girls, but not many. She explained that schools might not be the best places for sex education, because they are not conducive to girls' comfort in talking about the subject. Girls and boys have different needs related to drug and alcohol awareness. Siri said that we are making progress, but we still have a long way to go; although statistics have improved, strategies are missing.

Interviews with staff members of Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance Center and Safe Schools Healthy Kids yielded interesting insights. They emphasized the importance of empowering girls and developing cultural understanding when working with youth, since the population is almost exclusively Latino. They also highlighted the importance of having Latina staff members in order to provide models of successful education and self-sufficiency. The staff member who works with bullying prevention said this issue is very different for boys and girls; girls' bullying is less physical, and more mental/emotional; it also tends to be repeated, unlike boys' bullying, which can consist of just one fight. The program is tailored to address these gender differences. The female staff person from the district's teen parent program explained that this program is growing; this growth reflects an increase in the number of clients using the resources, despite a decrease in the teenage birth rate. The male staffer who leads conflict resolution at the middle and high school level said that more girls than boys are going through the program, demonstrating the need for conflict management and the willingness of girls to participate in such a program. These girls are not necessarily limited by cultural expectations encompassed in machismo. The group as a whole called for more programs exclusively for girls.

5.9. Conclusion

Various indicators have been presented here to examine the extent to which males and females have access to similar educational opportunities, take advantage of those opportunities, and have similar educational outcomes. By most of these measures, females are doing at least as well as males.

Males and females begin school with similar preschool experiences, although females may have an advantage in early literacy participation experiences. Females outperform males on reading and writing assessments at fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grades. Throughout their elementary and secondary education, females are less likely than males to repeat grades and seem to have fewer problems that put them at risk.

Over the last 30 or more years, women have made gains in postsecondary education in terms of enrollment and attainment. Female high school seniors often have higher educational aspirations than their male peers and are more likely to enroll in college immediately after graduating from high school. Females also account for the majority of undergraduate enrollment and the majority of bachelor's degree recipients.

Gender differences in college majors persist, however, with females still predominant in somewhat lower paying fields like education, and males more likely to earn degrees in engineering, physics, and computer science.

An examination of equity in education requires considering the benefits that males and females receive at the end of schooling. Higher levels of educational attainment are associated with certain labor market outcomes, such as higher labor force participation rates, higher rates of employment, and higher earnings. Labor market outcomes are not the only important outcomes of participation in formal education, but they are the most readily measured with available national and international data.

The gap between male and female employment rates has narrowed since the 1970s. Both the decline in employment rates of males who did not attend college and the increase in the employment rate of females across all education levels contributed to the overall narrowing of the gap. In 2002, the gender gaps in employment rates were smaller among people with higher levels of education compared to those with a high school diploma or less. However, males continued to have higher employment rates across all levels of education (indicator 35).

Females with bachelor's degrees tend to earn less than males with the same level of educational attainment, but the gap is narrowing. Among young people ages 25-34, the median annual earnings for full-time, year-round workers are lower for females than for their male counterparts with the same level of educational attainment. In 2001, females age 25-64 had lower labor force participation rates than males at all levels

In 2007 women made 78 cents for every dollar a man earned, according to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a think tank in Washington, D.C. The overall wage gap among all workers is significantly more when low-paying, female-dominant job sectors

are factored in. According to the National Committee for Pay Equity: "The wage gap exists, in part, because many women and people of color are still segregated into a few low-paying occupations. More than half of all women workers hold sales, clerical and service jobs. Studies show that the more an occupation is dominated by women or people of color, the less it pays. Part of the wage gap results from differences in education, experience or time in the workforce. But a significant portion cannot be explained by any of those factors; it is attributable to discrimination. In other words, certain jobs pay less because they are held by women and people of color.

In terms of outcomes, the findings are mixed and depend somewhat on factors beyond the scope of the education system. Females age 25-34 are less likely than their male counterparts to be employed, but it is unknown to what extent this is by choice. The gap between males and females in employment rates has narrowed over time, and females with higher levels of educational attainment are employed at rates more similar to those of males than are females with lower levels of attainment. Females tend to earn less than males with similar educational attainment, but this may be partly a reflection of different patterns of labor market participation and job choice.

5.10. Recommendations

- Write local legislators.
- Support organizations and individuals that strive to achieve equality in education
- Encourage young women to mentor girls in STEM classes at earlier ages so that they will continue in STEM courses at the secondary and post-secondary levels
- Fund educational programs that help incarcerated or recently-released women gain academic skills
- Create extracurricular study opportunities in low-performing school districts (public/private/civic partnerships)

5.11. Methodology

In research for this report, it was nearly impossible to find information on the number of girls who participated in sports or other extracurricular activities, including leadership opportunities. Locating such information would require contacting the sports coaches and government teachers at all local schools.

Information about the number of teen parents, and the effectiveness of their parenting, is not readily available through educational statistics or databases in Santa Cruz County. However, several staff members at the Teenage Parent Project, an alternative education program through the County Office of Education, and the Teenage Mother program through Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance Center and the Pajaro Valley School District were available to answer questions.

Race/ethnicity is an important factor within all aspects of this report, yet statistics that intersect race, ethnicity, and gender are not accessible. This area should be explored more in depth in future reports on the status of women and girls.

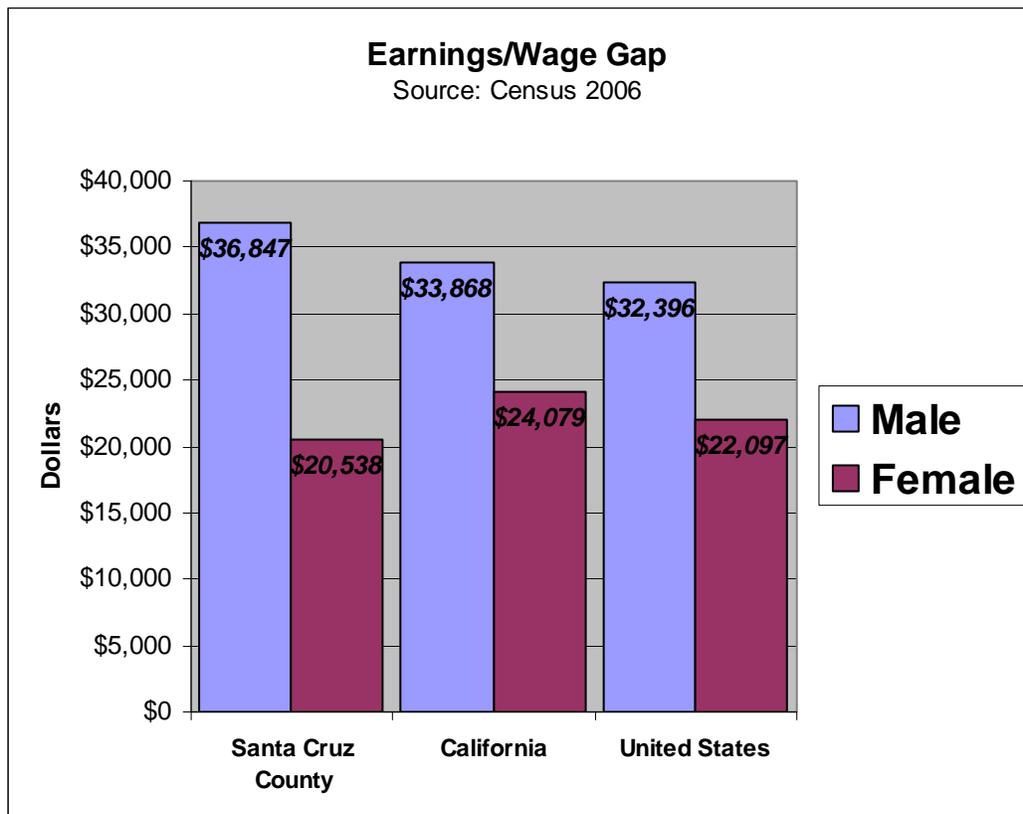
6. ECONOMIC JUSTICE

6.1. Income and Earnings

Using a variety of measurement methods, all indicators show that women in Santa Cruz County are far behind men in economic status. There is a significant gap between men's and women's earnings and incomes, more women are in poverty than men, it is much less likely that women will be economically self-sufficient than men, and women are more likely than men to be unemployed. Women who are heads of households or non-white are even more likely to suffer economic distress in Santa Cruz County.

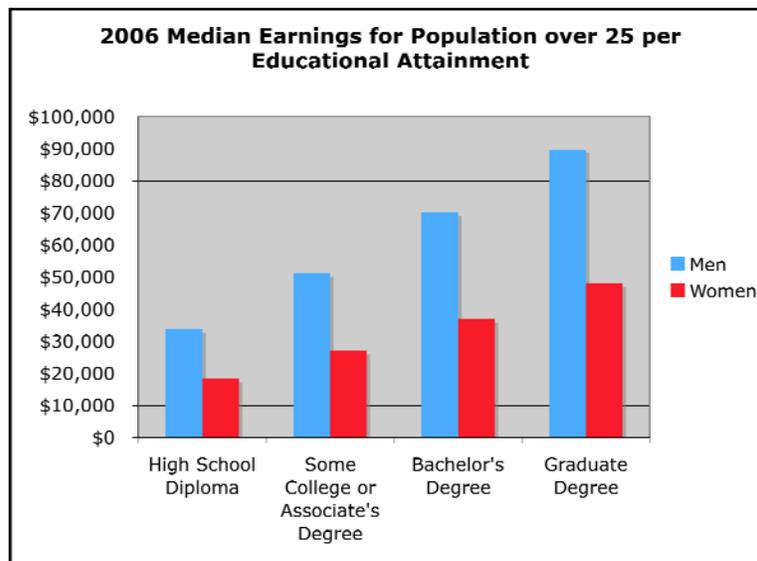
The most common measurements are those related to income and earnings, all of which point to women and woman-headed households as being in much more difficult economic situations than their male counterparts. For example, in the years 2005-2007 family income for a female-headed household was 86% of the income for male-headed households.

Looking at women's earnings, in 2005-2007 women in Santa Cruz County earned only 78%³³ of what men earned, compared to 84% statewide³⁴ and 77% nationally³⁵. In 2008, the local disparities had not changed significantly, with women in Santa Cruz County earning 79% of men's earnings³⁶. Unfortunately, the gap between men's and women's wages had widened between 2005 and 2008 at the state and national level, with women earning 76%³⁷ and 71%³⁸ of men's wages, respectively.



Women and men in Santa Cruz County suffer from differing unemployment rates as well. In 2008, 4.6% men between the ages of 20-64 were unemployed, while the percentage of unemployed women was significantly higher: 7.4%. The differences were minimal at the state (6.8% men, 6.7% women) and national levels (5.8% men, 5.6 % women).

While education is often thought to offset wage differences, this does not seem to be the case in Santa Cruz County. The gap between female and male wages actually widens rather than narrows with higher levels of educational attainment. While the wage gap between men and women with a high school diploma is around \$14,400, men with graduate degrees typically earn \$38,200 more than women with the same level of education.³⁹



American FactFinder(US Census)⁴⁰

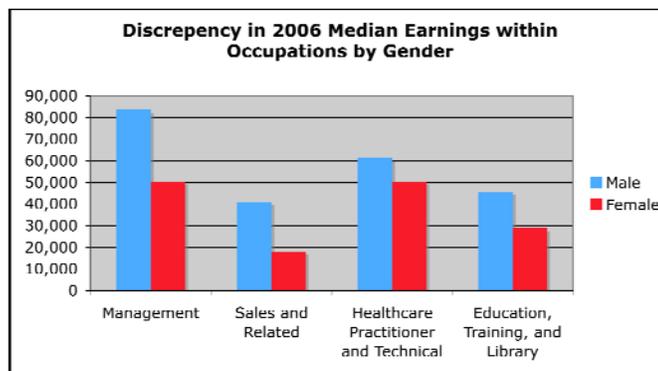
As is common in many locations, Santa Cruz County women tend to be employed in lower paid occupations, and receive lower pay within occupational groupings. The charts below show the ten occupations in which each gender is most likely to be employed in Santa Cruz County. In 2006, a woman was most likely to be employed as an administrative assistant making \$23,673, while her male counterpart was most commonly found in a management position at \$70,013. In 2008, the disparity had not changed much, with a woman making \$30,693 as an administrative assistant, and a man making \$76,451 in a management position⁴¹.

Top Ten Occupations for Men in 2006	Median Earnings
Management	\$70,013
Construction and Extraction	\$41,450
Sales and Related	\$20,558
Computer and Mathematical	\$92,472
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	\$37,210
Office and Administrative Support	\$23,673
Architecture and Engineering	\$80,174
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	\$11,310
Transportation and Material Moving	\$19,293
Production	\$31,750
Average Salary of Top Ten Occupations	\$42,790

American FactFinder (US Census)⁴²

Top Ten Occupations for Women in 2006	Median Earnings
Office and Administrative Support	\$23,673
Sales and Related	\$20,558
Education, Training, and Library	\$34,158
Management	\$70,013
Personal Care and Service	\$10,467
Healthcare Practitioner and Technical	\$51,801
Food Preparation and Serving Related	\$15,075
Business and Financial Operations	\$54,292
Healthcare Support	\$25,471
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	\$24,547
Average Salary of Top Ten Occupations	\$33,006

Even within particular occupations, women are often paid significantly less than men. A woman employed in sales will make 56% less than her male co-worker. If she happens to be promoted to manager, she will have narrowed the gap to a mere 40%. This is not specific to Santa Cruz. In California in 2006, a woman employed in sales made 47% less than her male co-worker (\$38,973 to \$20,611)⁴³.



American FactFinder(US Census)⁴⁴

6.1.1. Poverty Levels

Federal poverty levels are set by size of family and reflect national averages, not the local costs of living. In Santa Cruz County, many people have incomes above poverty level and still earn far less than enough to survive. Even so, poverty figures show a disparity of economic status between men and women. In 2000, 10.7% of Santa Cruz County single adult households headed by men fell below the poverty line while 17.9 % of single adult female-headed households were below the same threshold.⁴⁵

In 2008, 12.2% of all males and 15% of all women lived below the poverty level. Among the unemployed, 27% of men and 29.8% of women lived below the poverty level.⁴⁶

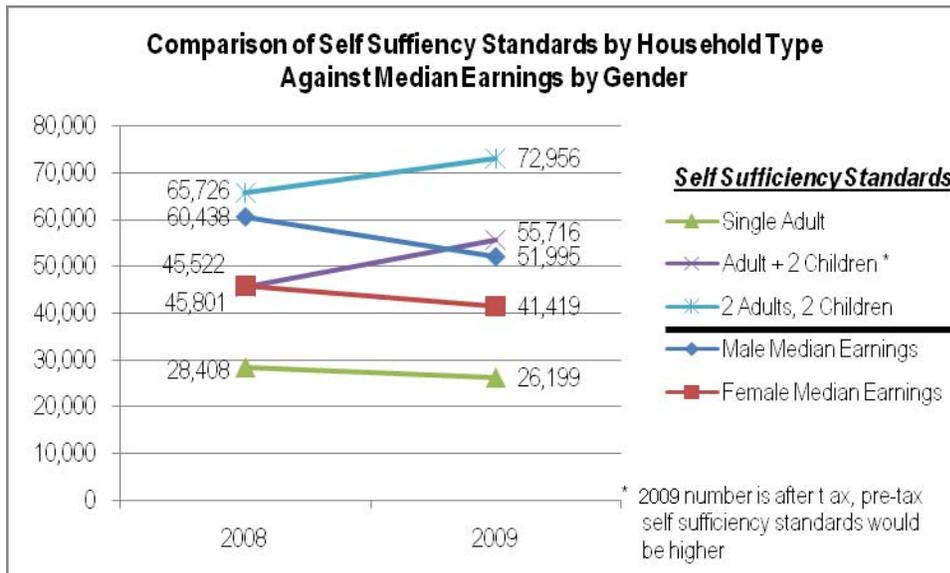
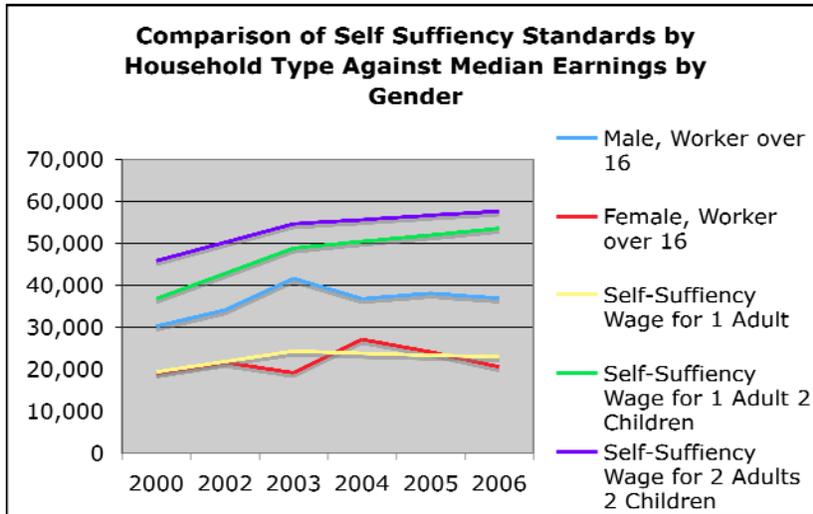
As of the 2000 census, girls, young women and older women were more likely to be living in poverty than others, correlating with limited participation in the workforce. Young women 16 -24 (20% of this age group, excluding university students with no children) and girls under 16 (16% of this group) were most likely to be in poverty.

Thirteen percent of women 65 or older were in poverty, while 9% of women of prime working age, 25-64, were in poverty.⁴⁷ With the economic downturn since 2000, these numbers are likely to be higher.

6.1.2. Self-sufficiency Standards

The hardships caused by income inequality between genders are further magnified by the increasingly high cost of living in Santa Cruz County, for which federal poverty levels represent an incomplete picture. Over the last 15 years, self-sufficiency standards have been increasingly used as more accurate measures of income adequacy. The self-sufficiency standard is set at a level, which allows a family to cover only the most essential purchases without outside support, such as food, housing, transportation, and childcare. The standard is developed for each county or city based on local costs.

The most recent sources available to the Women's Commission reveal an even greater disparity for women of color. While only 36% of white, non-Hispanic women had earnings under the self-sufficiency standard in the 2000 Census, 69% of Latinas were below the same standard. Fifty-six percent of Native American/Alaskan Native women, 44% of African-American women, and 43% of Asian Pacific Islanders were below the self-sufficiency standard.⁴⁸



Sources: Insight Center for Community Economic Development, Pennsylvania State U.

Over the last decade, the disparities between men and women’s self-sufficiency have grown. Between 2000 and 2006, men earned 38% more than the minimum required to financially support themselves, while women earned about 11% less than the amount needed to be financially self-sufficient. While earnings for both men and women dropped between 2008 and 2009, and the self-sufficiency standard for a single adult dropped slightly, the self-sufficiency standard for families rose significantly. Men’s earnings in 2009 were \$3,712 below the amount needed to sustain an adult with two children, but the gap between women’s earnings and the amount needed to sustain one adult and two children rose to \$14, 297, almost four times the gap for men.

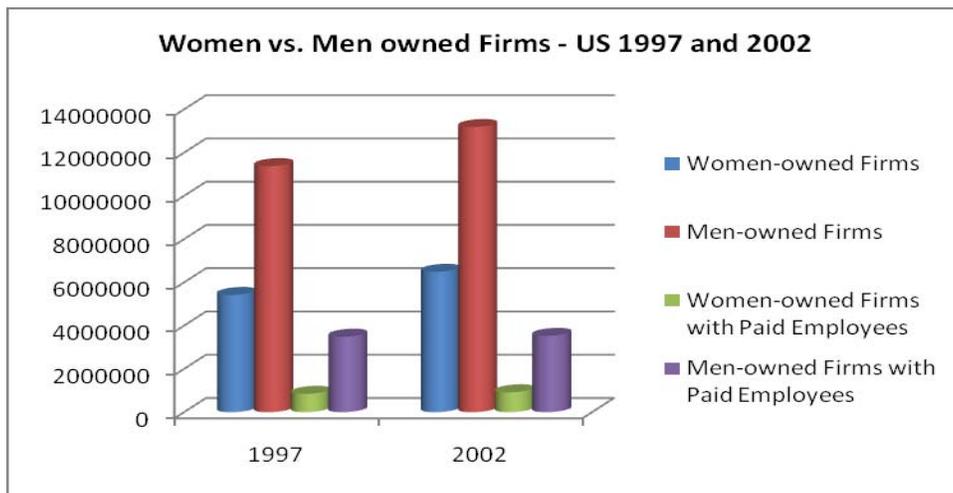
At the median earnings level, a household with children needs two full-time workers to

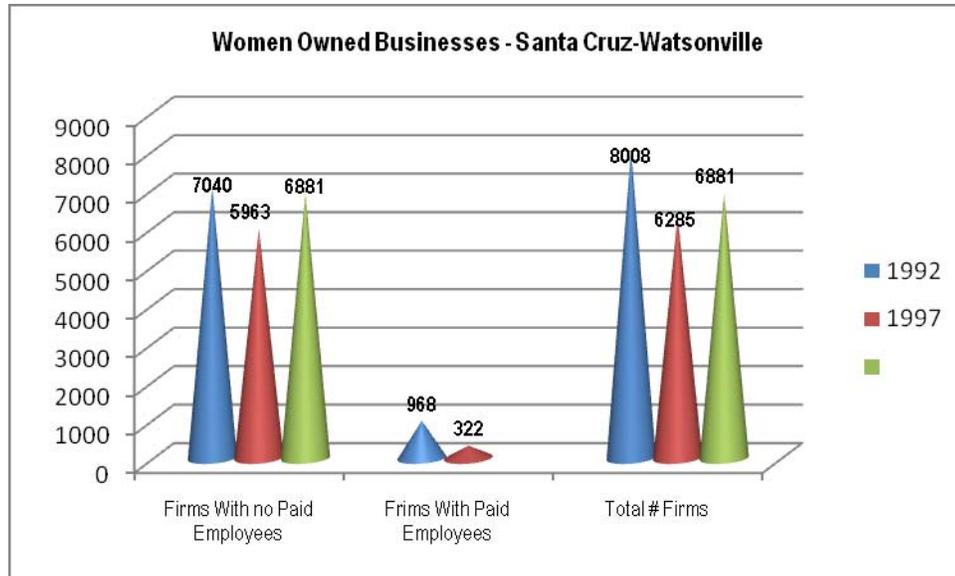
come close to making ends meet. Between 2000-2006 the wage needed for self-sufficiency for families with one adult/two children and two adults/two children rose by 46% and 26% respectively, to \$53,593 and \$57,658 a year.⁴⁹ In 2008, the annual self-sufficiency wage for a family of two adults with two children had risen to \$65,726⁵⁰ and in 2009, 72,956.⁵¹

While the median earnings for men between 2000 and 2006 increased by 22%, women's earnings increased by a mere 7%, demonstrating the deterioration of women's economic status over this period.⁵²

6.2. Women and Business

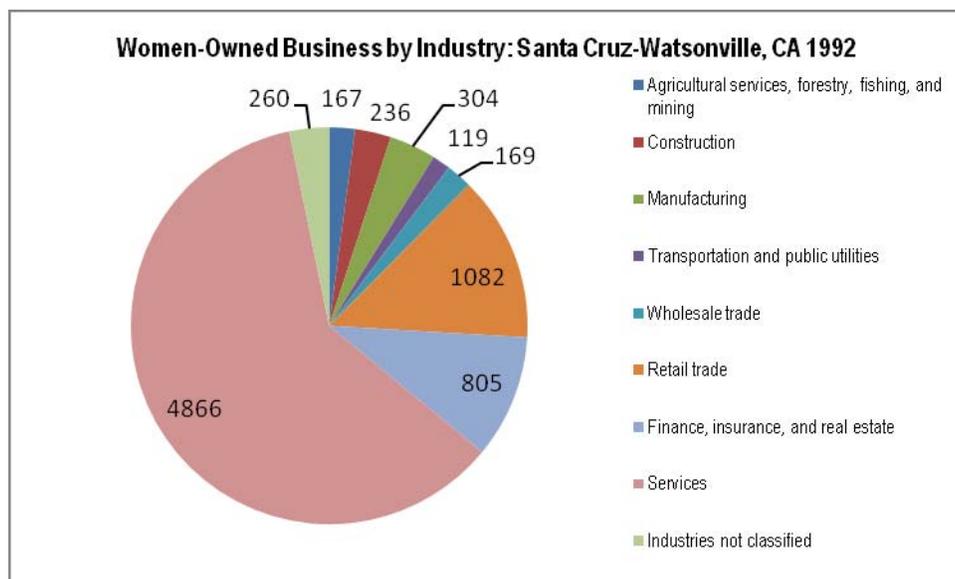
According to the US Economic Census, the number of male-owned firms is typically double that of female-owned firms at both the state and federal levels. This disparity is even greater in firms large enough to have employees, in which the number of male-owned firms is 3 to 4 times the number of female-owned firms. The Women's Commission was unable to find comparable data at the county level.

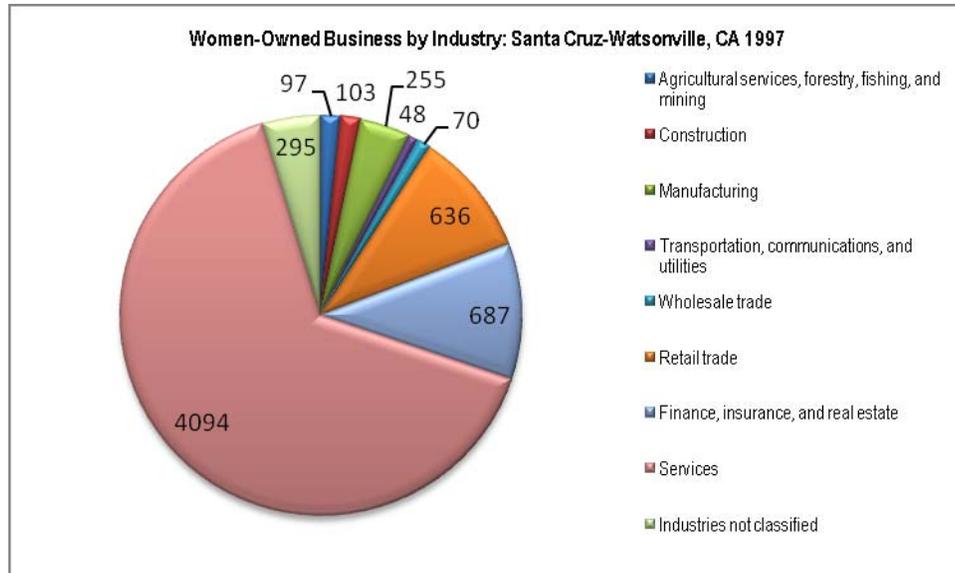




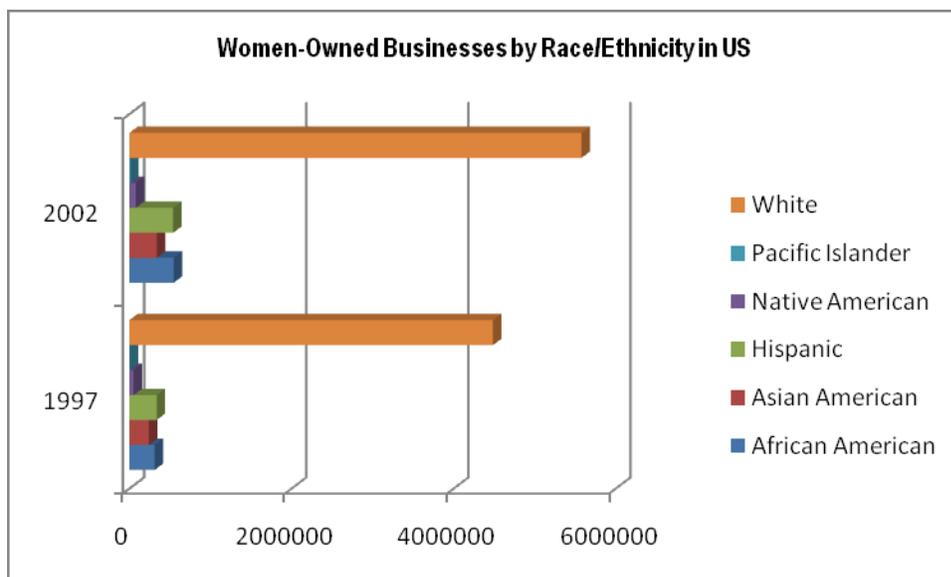
Although not enough data was available to confirm this trend, it seems that the number of Santa Cruz County women-owned businesses runs counter to the nationwide economy, with more women-owned businesses in 1992 and 2002 (during economic downturns) than in 1997, when the economy was booming. More recent data was not available.

Women's business activity in Santa Cruz County follows patterns similar to state and nationwide trends, with the great majority of women's businesses concentrated in services and retail trade. Changes in the US Economic Census methodology in 2002 no longer included the information in the same way as in 1992 and 1997, making it impossible to track many details about women's businesses in smaller communities such as Santa Cruz County.





Nationwide, the number of white women owning their own business is more than ten times the number of African-American female business owners. The number of women from other racial/ethnic groups who own businesses is even less. Comparable numbers were not available for Santa Cruz County.



Access to sufficient credit is a key factor in business success. Another is using the best business practices available for the business and sector involved. The local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has offered much support to female small

business owners. It developed a joint effort with the El Pájaro Community Development Corporation (EPCDC) and the Child Development Resource Center for child care enterprises, nearly all of which are women-owned, with business skills and assistance in applying for credit. The EPCDC has also collaborated with the Community Foundation for Monterey County to develop a successful program that provides business education and loans to women starting or expanding their businesses in the Pájaro Valley and other areas of Monterey County. That program is not yet available in Santa Cruz County.

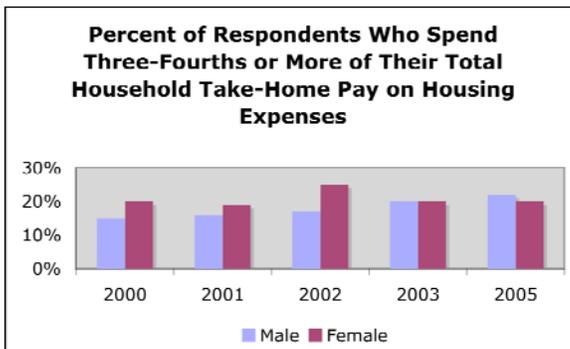
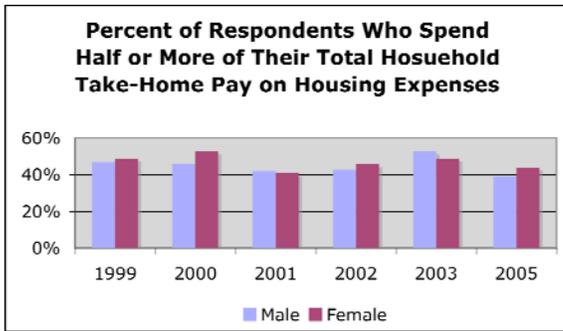
While women have encountered challenges accessing credit nationwide in the past, the Women's Commission was unable to find information on this subject at the local level. Key information such as the percentage of women's loan applications approved, the percentage of all loans made being made to women, the percentage of all funds being lent to women, and the failure rate of male-owned vs. female-owned businesses at the local level was not available because financial institutions do not disaggregate this data by gender. Women are grouped with minorities in the records of many institutions that track business development, such as the Small Business Administration.

6.3. Women and Housing

The National Association of Home Builders has consistently ranked the Santa Cruz-Watsonville metropolitan area as one of the least affordable areas to live in the nation, and it is even less affordable for women. While the high cost of homeownership is common knowledge, it is less well known that the average monthly rent for a two-bedroom unit increased by 28.7% from \$1,249 to \$1,608 between 2002 and 2008.⁵³ Women have felt the burden of the increase in the cost of living more than men. In 2007, 46.5% of women said that housing cost increases were the main reason they did not feel better off than last year, as compared to only 35.7% of men.⁵⁴

The percentage of women paying more than 50% of their income for rent is typically higher than men. In 2007, the percentage of women in this category was 27% compared to 23% for men.⁵⁵ In four of five countywide surveys covering the period of 2000-2005, close to 20% of women surveyed reported that they consistently spent at least 75% of their net income on housing expenses.

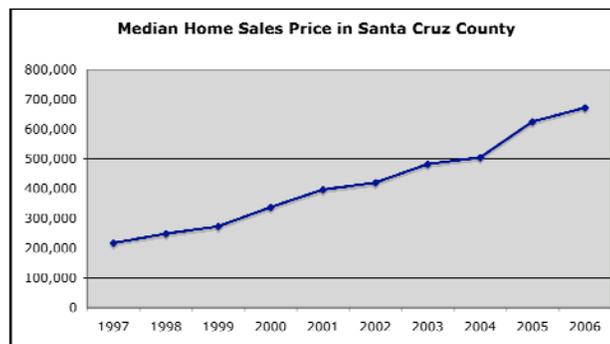
In reviewing these trends, it is important to remember that in 2005, 17% of the 57,460 households in Santa Cruz County, totaling 9,499 households, were headed by women with no husband present. Of these 9,499 households, almost 60% (5,410) contained at least one child under the age of 18, requiring women with few economic means to choose between food and clothing for their children and the cost of housing. From 2005-2007, 22% of single female head of household families were in poverty.⁵⁶



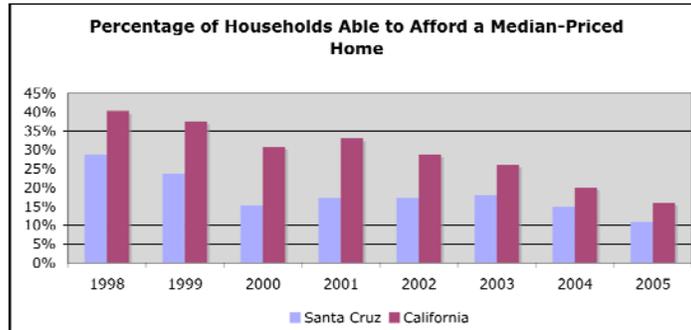
Source: Community Assessment Reports, 2000-2005

6.3.1. Homeownership

Long considered a key to long-term economic stability, homeownership is increasingly inaccessible to women. Over the 9 years from 1997 to 2006, the median home sales price in Santa Cruz County shot up 210%, more than 100% higher than the national average, from \$217,000 to \$672,000. Home sale prices peaked in 2006, but only dropped slightly by 2008, with median home sale prices down to \$508,000. In 2006, a mere 6% of homes countywide were affordable to families earning the median income of \$62,193. However, only 25% of women earned more than \$65,000 a year, compared to 47% of men, making homeownership even less likely for women.⁵⁷

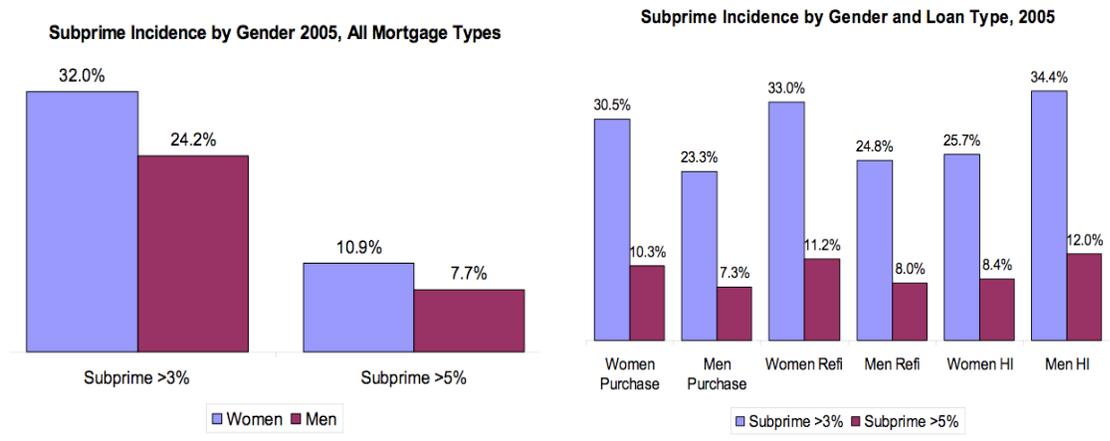


The percentage of affordable homes for median income families has decreased from 32% in 1999 to 22.2% in 2008.⁵⁸ From 2005-2007, only 8.4% of households had the \$150,000+ income to afford a median priced house.⁵⁹ This makes homeownership impossible for all but a very small percentage of women, as only 9% of women earned \$100,000 or more in 2006, compared to 25% of men.⁶⁰

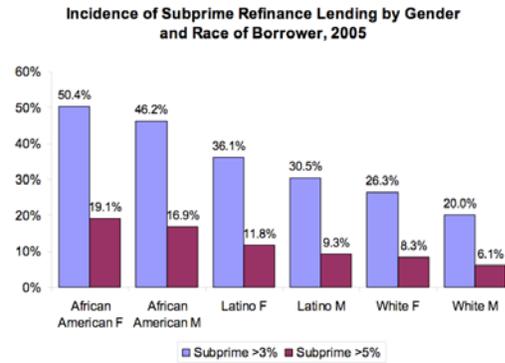
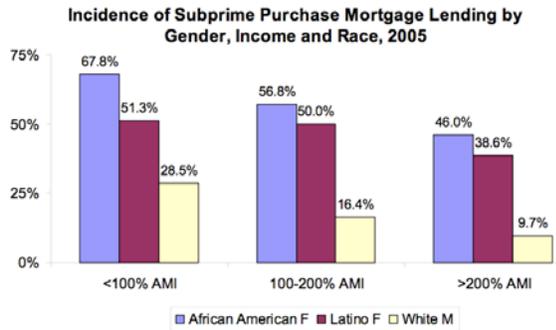


Subprime Lending:

A disproportionate number of subprime loans have been made to women and people of color, making them more vulnerable to steeply rising interest rates, unaffordable payments and risk of foreclosure. Research done by the Consumer Federation of America (CFA)⁶¹ found that women are many times more likely to receive high cost subprime mortgages than men. In 2005, while women comprised 30% of borrowers for mortgages of all types, they comprised 39% of all subprime borrowers. When financing their mortgages, 32% of women used subprime loans, opposed to 24% of men.



While women have slightly higher average credit scores than men, 682 to 675 respectively, and usage rates, 24%, women are still significantly over represented in the pool of subprime mortgages. The gender discrepancy is further magnified when borrowers are separated by income level. Women earning double the median income, women earning between double the median and the median income, and women earning below the median income are 46%, 28%, and 3%, respectively, more likely than men earning similar levels of income to receive subprime mortgages.



CFA believes that four barriers facing potential female homeowners may play a significant role in explaining why women are forced to take out high cost loans. First, and most obviously, women continue to earn considerably less than men; especially female headed households. Second, it has been shown that women have historically faced higher levels of rejection at the lender’s window. Third, women have and continue to be the target of predatory lenders. Finally, according to the same study, women may lack confidence in their abilities as financial consumers. When asked to rate their knowledge of financial products and services, a study by Prudential Financial found that 62% of women give themselves a grade of C or lower. Understanding these possible reasons for the high proportion of women with subprime loans can point to steps that can be taken to improve this situation.

6.3.2. Women and Homelessness in Santa Cruz County

The percentage and number of homeless women in Santa Cruz County seems to have dropped steadily since 2000. At that time, 43.3% of homeless people in the County were women. In 2005, 38.7% of homeless people were female, representing slightly over 1300 women. In 2007, that percentage had dropped to 30.2%, representing approximately 840 women⁶². In 2009, the percentage dropped once again, this time to 26% of the homeless population.⁶³ Homeless families are three times as likely to be headed by women as men.⁶⁴ Women and children are also typically less visible, so their actual numbers and percentage of the homeless population may be higher.

Women presently in housing are at greater risk than men of losing this housing. A good way to measure this is through the statistics of the Community Action Board’s Residential Assistance program, which provides emergency funding to help individuals and family stay in their housing. Between 2006 and 2009, the program served between 573 and 808 people annually, of which between 56% and 60% were women. Of the 79 to 132 single-parent families served each year, between 92% and 97% were headed by women.⁶⁵

6.3.2.1. Causes of Women’s Homelessness

According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, poverty and the lack of affordable housing are the principal causes of family homelessness nationally. Declining real wages

and changes in welfare programs in the past decade account for increasing poverty among families in the United States and have put housing out of reach for many women.⁶⁶ These trends are mirrored in the Santa Cruz homeless population. Economic hardship and substance abuse have been consistently cited by Santa Cruz County homeless people as key reasons for their homelessness.

Nationwide, approximately half of all women and children experiencing homelessness are fleeing domestic violence (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2001). Between 2006 and 2009, domestic violence was reported as the primary cause for family homelessness in 30% to 57% of cities nationwide.⁶⁷ Approximately 63% of homeless women have experienced domestic violence in their adult lives.⁶⁸ Many women and their children are forced to choose between abuse at home and life on the streets.

Domestic/family violence and divorce/separation both rose as causes for homelessness in Santa Cruz between 2005 and 2007, then dropped somewhat in 2009. Of all 2007 Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey respondents reporting domestic violence, family/domestic violence was cited as a cause of homelessness more often than job loss or unemployment (26%, as compared to 24%), underscoring its importance as a cause of homelessness for many women.⁶⁹

Domestic/family violence continues to be experienced by homeless women. In 2005, nearly 21% of homeless female survey respondents stated they were presently experiencing domestic violence. This rose to 29% in 2007, then dropped to 12% in the 2009 survey.⁷⁰

6.3.2.2. Employment and Homelessness

In 2001, approximately one-third of Santa Cruz County's homeless population reported having some form of employment,⁷¹ while only 12% of homeless people reported having any employment in 2005, 13% in 2007, and 15% in 2009. In 2001, the last year in which gender-disaggregated data is available, unemployment was higher for homeless women (57%) than homeless men (48%).⁷²

Homeless people who are seeking employment need housing, food, clothing, and transportation in addition to the job skills training most unemployed people require. Since the great majority of homeless children live with their mothers, childcare and transportation for the children are an additional challenge for homeless women seeking employment.

6.3.2.3. Existing Resources for Homeless People in Santa Cruz County

A broad coalition of government and nonprofit organizations, the Homeless Action Partnership (HAP), works to provide services and housing for homeless people in Santa Cruz County. Nevertheless, the needs are much greater than the services.

6.3.2.3.1. Housing Resources

Because the census of unsheltered homeless did not identify the gender of 67% of that population, it is impossible to determine what percentage of homeless women are sheltered. As of 2008, the county had approximately 376 emergency shelter beds available year-round and 494 emergency shelter beds available during the winter.⁷³ In 2005, there were approximately 400 units of transitional housing available, some of which served families with children. The percentage of unsheltered homeless rose from 54% in 1990, to 80% in 2005, and 83% in 2007, and then dropped to 68% in 2009. Changes in methodology may account for some of these differences, as does the 27% increase in people housed in emergency shelters between 2007 and 2009.⁷⁴

6.3.2.3.2. Employment Resources

Within Santa Cruz County, several organizations provide employment services, including the Santa Cruz County Human Resources Agency (HRA), Santa Cruz Citizens Committee for the Homeless, and the Community Action Board. These programs offer services such as educational training, workshops, job search assistance, and post-placement follow-up. The only programs specifically for women are Women's Organic Flower Enterprise (WOFE) of the Homeless Garden Project and the Women Ventures project. WOFE teaches women to prepare and sell dried flower wreaths and other products as well as learn the business operations of a small retail store. Women Ventures provides women with training and placement in living wage, nontraditional occupations.

6.3.2.3.3. Health Resources

The Homeless Persons Health Project provides health information and referrals, assistance in accessing medical care and funds to pay for it. It also provides health education and prevention services, assistance with alcohol and substance abuse concerns, case management and assistance in overcoming barriers to accessing social and health services.

6.3.2.4. Conclusions

Women, especially women of color and those heading households, face greater challenges than men in finding affordable housing in Santa Cruz County. They are more likely to spend a high proportion of their income on housing, and if they seek homeownership, are more likely than men to have a sub-prime mortgage loan. Homeless women in Santa Cruz County, especially those with children, face significant challenges as they try to move out of homelessness.

6.4. Parenting and Women's Economic Situation

Women are much more likely than men to be the primary caregivers for children in the family. In 2001, the average cost of raising a child was \$170,460.⁷⁵ By 2009, that cost had risen to \$222,360.⁷⁶ This cost does not include unpaid time for childrearing or loss of income during the time spent raising children. Primary caregiver responsibilities make it

more difficult for mothers to take advantage of educational and career advancement opportunities. For women working outside the home, increased costs of child care and transportation, family unfriendly work environments and lack of financial support from absent parents (typically fathers) combine to make it difficult to make ends meet. As a result, it is important to examine support for childrearing, including child support and child care, to deepen one's understanding of women's economic situations.

6.4.1. Child Support

One indicator of support for childrearing is an examination of child support collections for children in single parent households. From 1994/95 to 2002/03, the total average funds paid out for child support in Santa Cruz County increased from \$7,378,756 to \$15,335,417, an increase of 107.8 percent. During the same period, the Court Orders for collection per case increased from \$1,440 to \$1,963, an increase of 35.6 percent. In 2002/2003, Santa Cruz County exceeded the average recovery per case statewide by about 22 % (state \$1,601).

In 1999, the State of California created the Department of Child Support Services to take responsibility from local District Attorneys for collecting child support and tracking down parents who did not pay. After the first two years of operation, statewide collections increased from \$1.6 billion to more than \$2 billion, a 25% increase. In addition, rates of establishing paternity and obtaining support orders also improved.⁷⁷

While the good news is that collection efforts are yielding more money for child support, the number of child support cases prosecuted actually declined by 20%, from 12,952 in 1994/95 to 10,358 in 2002/03. As a result, over the last decade fewer families receive support from absent parents through governmental efforts. Without this financial support, more female-headed families are likely to need other types of government benefits, such as TANF, WorkFare, Food Stamps and Medi-Cal.⁷⁸

6.4.2. Childcare

In Santa Cruz County, the number of children needing care far outstrips the availability of licensed childcare available. In 2006, the most recent year for which the Women's Commission had comprehensive data, there were 53,648 children ages 0-14 in Santa Cruz County. Fifty-four percent (54%) of families had all parents in the labor force. As a result, the number of children needing childcare could be estimated to be 28,809. Only 8,599 spaces were available in licensed childcare centers and family child care providers. Because childcare providers typically prefer to serve a lower number (34% less than capacity) to provide better care, the actual number of licensed childcare spaces available would be closer to 5,684 countywide. Over 23,000 children in Santa Cruz County are then receiving child care by family, friends, unlicensed childcare businesses and after-school programs, or are left to fend for themselves as latch-key children. Given the difficulties of matching childcare providers with the location, age, financial ability and other needs of parents and children, finding childcare in Santa Cruz County is a major challenge.

The quality of child care has a long term effect on the children, their parents and the larger community, and many studies have shown the importance of high quality child care at an early age in terms of academic and social development. It is estimated that each public dollar spent on quality childcare saves up to 7 dollars in public expenditures over the life of the child. Licensing and education of childcare providers can contribute significantly to the quality of childcare available. Santa Cruz County is fortunate to have a nationally–acclaimed early childhood education program at Cabrillo College, and an unusually high use of this resource by local childcare providers.

For the group most likely to need full-day care (ages 0-5), the number of children requiring childcare was 10,688. However, the licensed capacity of childcare providers for infants and preschoolers was 6,727. Taking into account providers' preferred capacity (34% under maximum), the likely capacity is closer to 4440. Thus approximately 6,400 children aged 0-6 (nearly 60%) were cared for in situations other than licensed providers.

For ages 6-14, 3,786 children were enrolled in publicly funded after-school programs; in addition to 1643 children in licensed childcare programs. Of the 17,925 children in this age group who needed child care, nearly 70% were unable to receive it through licensed childcare or and publicly funded programs.

While more affluent families may be able to hire at-home care, this is not the case for the 34% of the children whose family incomes are 200% or less than the Federal Poverty level. As of November 2007, there were 605 families and 976 children waiting for space in subsidized programs. Families sometimes wait a year before a space becomes available.⁷⁹

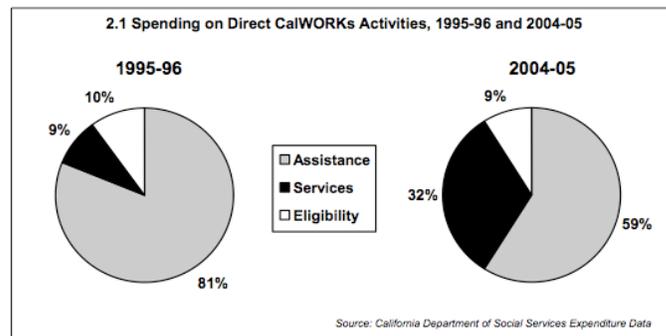
6.5. CalWORKS

In Santa Cruz County, as in most other locations, the main recipients of CalWORKS are women and children. Year after year, over 80% of local participants are women, 55% of households receiving CalWORKS are headed by a single parent, and close to 90% of those single-parent households are headed by women.⁸⁰ Yet, people leaving CalWORKS are often placed in jobs paying less than enough to support a single person, much less a family. Information about how these women and their children fare after they leave the program in Santa Cruz County was unavailable, but in other locations, people leaving welfare often remain in poverty.

6.5.1. Background on CalWORKS

In 1996 Congress attempted to “end welfare as we know it” in the form of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. The act established the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant, which, unlike its predecessors, emphasizes a work-first approach while giving states the freedom to decide how federal dollars will be spent.

Implemented in 1998, CalWORKs, California's TANF program, attempts to address underlying employment barriers that prevent families from moving towards self-sufficiency by incorporating a set of social service programs into CalWORKs⁸¹. Along with the standard cash grants, CALWORKS provides employment services (career centers, vocational trainings, job fairs), educational services (GED preparation, ESL classes), family support services (assistance with child care, transportation, and housing), and behavioral health programs (substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, and domestic violence services) to help families gain the knowledge and skills they need to support themselves. The graph below demonstrates the statewide shift in spending on CALWORKS activities over the past decade, with a decrease in direct assistance and an increase in the provision of services such as those mentioned above.



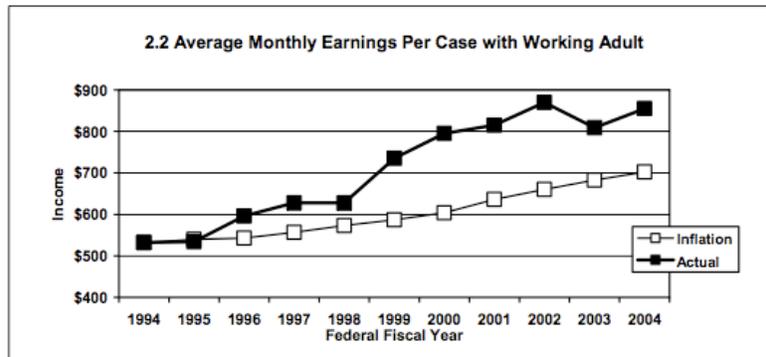
Eligibility for CALWORKS is determined by family size, income, citizenship, age, resources, and assets. Federal regulations require that 50% of one-parent families receiving CALWORKS must be participating in a work-related activity for a minimum of 30 hours a week (20 hours for a parent with a child under 6 years of age), while 90% of two-parent families are required to work 35 hours a week. All aid is subject to a lifetime limit of 60 total months, which can be spread over any number of years.

Until the present recession began, the CalWORKS program had reduced the number of welfare caseloads significantly. In 1995, under the previous Assistance to Families with Dependent Children welfare program, California was supporting 1 million families through direct cash subsidies.⁸² By 2005, after 7 years of CalWORKS, the caseload had dropped to 482,289 statewide. Locally, there was a 60% reduction in caseloads between 1990 and 2006.

Other changes also seemed to be related to the drop in welfare cases. A 2006 study completed by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation found that CalWORKS led to decreases in domestic abuse, increases in marriage rates, and increases in income among one and two parent families⁸³.

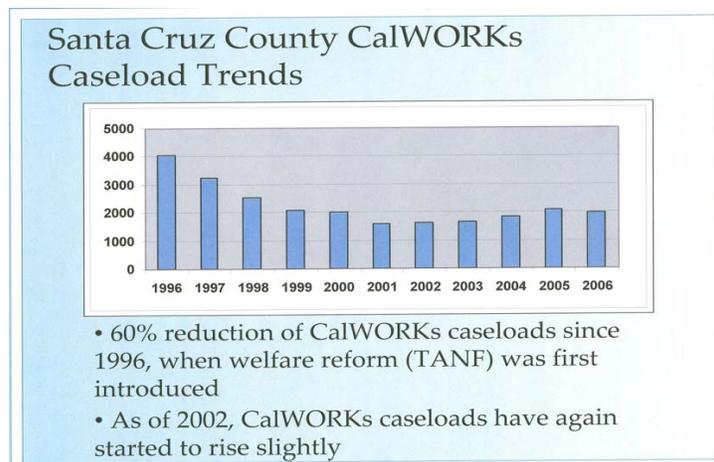
Even when the number of cases was declining, challenges remained. In 2005, a report by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities showed that among families who stop receiving TANF assistance, only 60% were able to find employment and most of those

who did remained in poverty.⁸⁴ While participants are also making significantly more than they were a decade ago, even adjusted for inflation, the typical California 2004 CalWORKS graduate had an average income of under \$900 per month, far below the California state self-sufficiency standards.

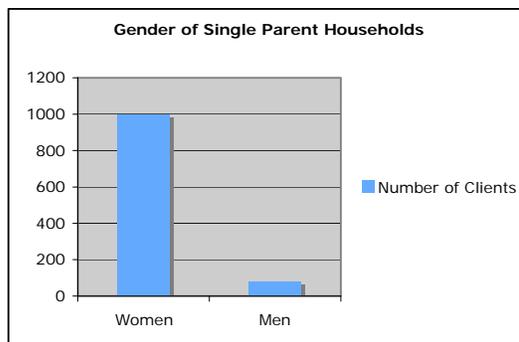


6.5.2. Present Situation

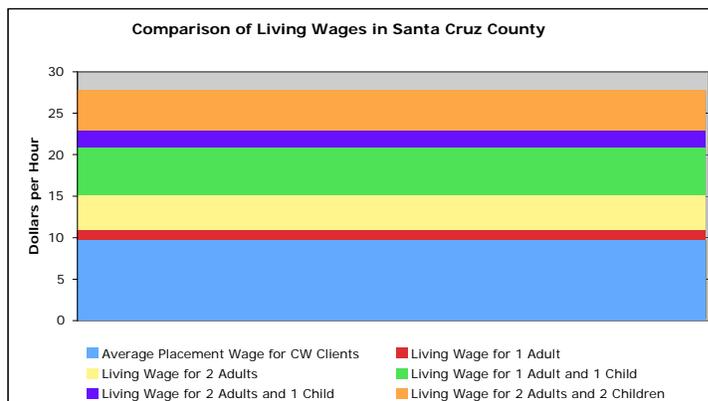
Current trends reflect increasing caseloads, likely driven by the downward turn in the economy. While the graph below does not include the most recent numbers, the local caseload rose to 2,295 in 2008 and 2,416 in 2009, close to 1998 levels, according to the Santa Cruz County Human Services Department (SCHSD).



As of February 2009, CALWORKS participants totaled 5,435 individuals comprised of 1,171 adults and 4,264 children. A significant number of children in CALWORKS are in families headed by adults who are not in CalWORKs. Between 87% and 88% of all CALWORKS families were headed by women.⁸⁵



In Santa Cruz County the average placement wage for CALWORKS participants in 2008 was \$11.43 an hour, more than the \$11.00 per hour self-sufficiency wage for a single adult, but far less than the \$20.91 an hour needed to support a household of one adult and one child⁸⁶. According to the SCHSD, “in [fiscal year] 2007-2008 approximately 202 families left aid due to increases in income.” In the same period, an average of 56 adults entered employment each month.⁸⁷



Nationwide, many families leave TANF programs because they are unable to meet work participation requirements due to employment barriers such as mental or physical handicaps, substance abuse issues, domestic violence, or low skill levels. These barriers have also caused difficulties for CALWORKS participants seeking employment. Between October 2006 and September 2007, 22% of Santa Cruz CalWORKs recipients and 22.3% of California recipients were meeting work requirements, far below the 45.6% required under the reauthorized TANF Act.⁸⁸

To assist clients in overcoming these challenges, Santa Cruz County contracts with a number of community partners to provide additional services, including learning disability testing, domestic violence and legal services, career assessment and job skills training, and work experience. Santa Cruz County’s Human Services Department and Health Services Agency collaborate to provide mental health and substance abuse services. The goal is that all clients, including those requiring intensive services, participate in approved work activities and move off of cash aid within the time frames imposed by welfare reform.

Even with the support systems in place within the county, specific challenges make it difficult for women to successfully overcome all such barriers. For example, a shortage of low-cost sober living environments for clients trying to overcome addiction has contributed to an increased burden on the criminal justice system as substance abuse is one of the leading causes of arrest among women. Women graduating from substance abuse programs may still have a particularly difficult time finding employment, especially if they have a criminal background.

Obtaining education represents another challenge. While the relationship between higher educational attainment and increased wages is apparent, it can be difficult for women to obtain a two or four-year degree while enrolled in the program due to high work participation requirements. The Fast Track to Work program assists CALWORKS participants at Cabrillo College.

The challenges of parenting while trying to meet work requirements, improve their education and job skills, and negotiate the network of services and agencies with which CalWORKS women interact can be overwhelming. Even those women who leave the program because of increases in income are likely to remain in poverty, if trends elsewhere are repeated in Santa Cruz County. With recent budget cuts, many of the support services critical to women and children making a secure transition to self-sufficiency have been cut or severely restricted, adding another layer of challenges for these individuals and families.

6.6. Recommendations

6.6.1. General

- Promote financial literacy for all women.
- Promote family friendly policies as part of cultural competence requirements for all County Contractors
- Collect all statistics by gender. Many statistics do not identify male or female, especially in business. As a result, analysis of the status of women in those areas becomes impossible to quantify and must be based on interviews and opinions.

6.6.2. Income/Earnings

Within many of the following approaches, there is great potential for women to be mentors and peer supporters for other women learning new skills and assuming new responsibilities and this should be pursued whenever possible.

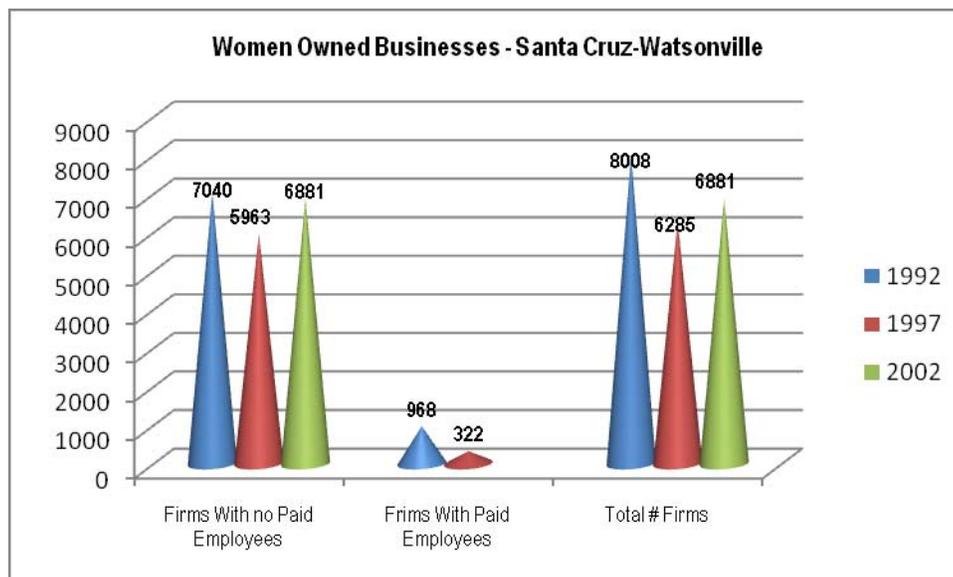
- **Assure that real pay equity exists when women are performing the same work as men:**
 - Support legislation aimed at creating a more equitable workplace for women.

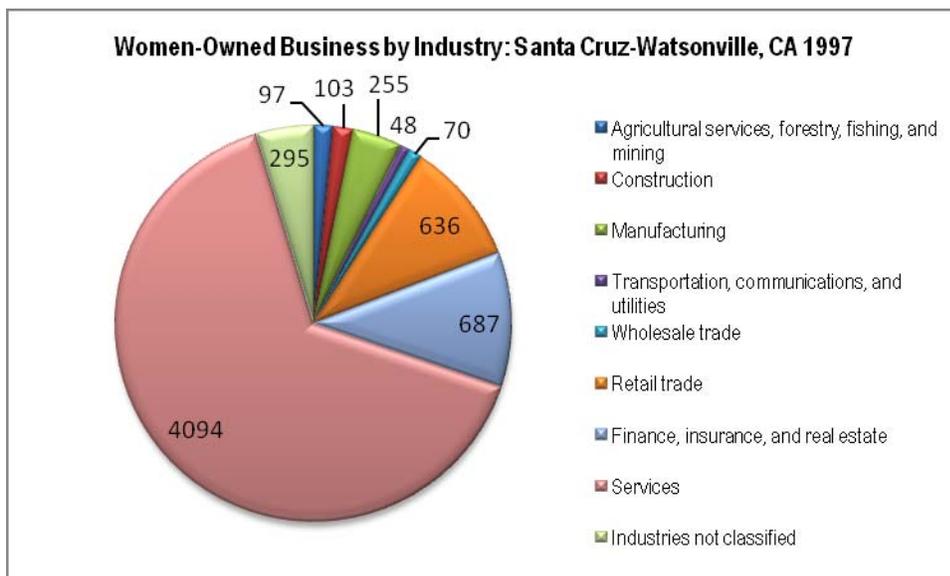
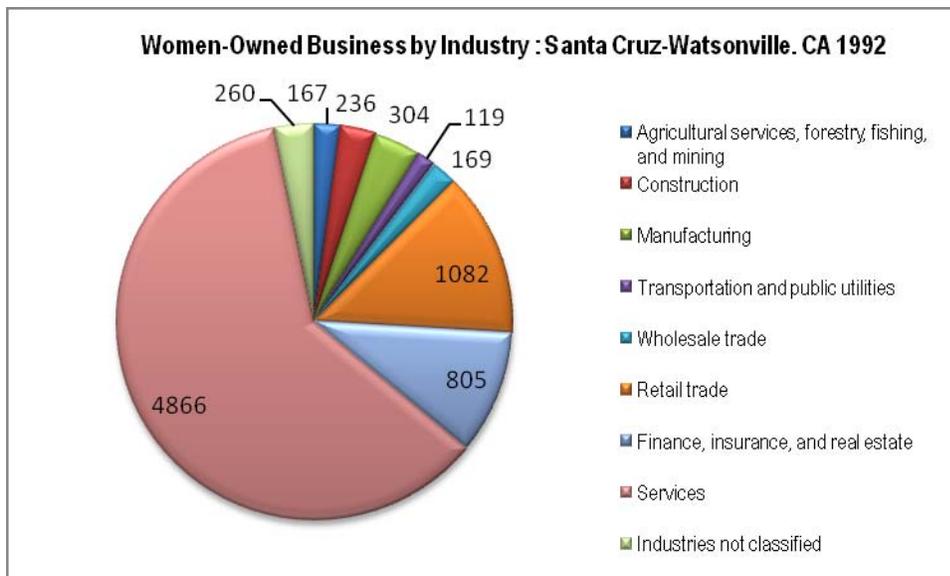
- Encourage employers to analyze their wage-setting policies by completing a pay equity self-audit like one developed by the National Committee on Pay Equity. (<http://www.pay-equity.org/cando.html>)
- **Assist women in obtaining employment in better-paid types of work:**
 - Support educational programs that prepare women for positions in “non-traditional” industries such as construction, which provide numerous benefits and pay two to three times higher than jobs “traditionally”, held by women. The Santa Cruz County Workforce Investment Board, Cabrillo College, and Women Ventures represent local efforts to provide this education.
- **Raise wages in occupations with high percentages of women employees:**
 - Improve the income in what is now low wage work so that low skilled workers can meet their basic needs. This is typically achieved through policies establishing higher minimum wage levels as well as living wage laws and unionization efforts.
- **Assist women in obtaining higher-paid positions within their field of work:**
 - Encourage companies, nonprofit corporations and government agencies where women are underrepresented in higher management to develop “career ladders”, making the path to advancement for women more possible.
 - Provide the training necessary and encourage women to prepare themselves and compete for the large number of management positions that are likely to become available in the next ten years as Baby Boomers retire.
- **Support wealth-building and income supports that make it possible for low-income women to live with dignity in Santa Cruz County:**
 - Increase the use of Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). These accounts enable low-income families to invest in their futures by matching their contributions from public, private, or non-profit sources. As part of their enrollment, participants attend financial literacy/management classes. In California only privately backed IDAs are available, as the state has not yet passed legislation allowing the use of state funds for IDA accounts. In Santa Cruz County, the Santa Cruz Community Credit Union has a successful IDA program, but the funds available are limited. About two-thirds of the participants are women.
 - Make sure that sufficient support is available for women trying to leave the welfare system, such as education, childcare and transportation support. Continue that support until they are able to earn a self-sufficiency wage and have the skills and knowledge to advance further. (Also see section on CalWORKS.)

- Make sure that women take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). This federal tax credit can significantly reduce the tax burden of low and moderate income taxpayers and refund all or part of the income taxes withheld from their wages. A coalition of local groups, in coordination with the Santa Cruz Community Credit Union, assists eligible families in preparing their taxes to take advantage of the EITC, but many others miss this opportunity each year.
- Eliminate barriers to assistance such as asset limits, finger imaging and quarterly reporting of income to increase the use of Food Stamps and promote employment by participants.

6.6.3. Women and Business

- Continue and expand programs that provide women business owners with access to credit and business training and consulting.
- Disaggregate data on access and use of credit by gender so that useful information about women’s access to credit can be obtained and policy impacts measured.
- Find alternative ways of tracking the kinds of businesses in which women are involved, as changes in the US Economic Census methodology in 2002 eliminated the detailed information necessary to successfully track smaller communities such as Santa Cruz County.





6.6.4. Housing and Homelessness

- Increase access to safe and affordable housing for women of all ages, including those with children and disabilities.
- Promote sustainable home ownership through Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), combined w/financial fitness training.
- Provide financial information to women about their borrowing/credit options to make them less susceptible to predatory lending.
- Promote legislation to eliminate predatory lending and enforce the consumer protection laws that already exist.

- The Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness identifies many strategies to reduce homelessness in Santa Cruz County. Strategies that specifically affect women include:
- Address domestic violence as a catalyst for homelessness:
 - The inconsistency between national and local data concerning domestic violence, as a cause should be explored, including ways that local survey administration might result in the relatively low number of women citing domestic violence.
 - Examine how childcare and transportation problems interfere with women becoming housed.
 - Adequate, quality, affordable child care is a specific issue for homeless mothers seeking to leave homelessness, as they are not able to secure a job paying a self-sufficiency wage without it.
 - Transportation options for homeless mothers must take into account their need to transport their children.
 - Increase access to transitional and affordable housing.
 - Because most homeless children live with their mothers, family homelessness must be addressed effectively, beyond providing the services required by all homeless people. The recent addition of shelter for families is one significant step towards meeting those goals, and more is needed.
 - Homeless mothers will almost always need additional job skills to secure a self-sufficiency job to assure that they can get employment with a self-sufficiency wage covering their children's needs.

6.6.5. Women and Parenting

- Continue and expand efforts to provide quality, affordable child care and after-school programs that meet the diverse needs of the area's families, especially single-parent households (primarily women) with limited economic means. This could include strategies such as salary supports to retain trained, experienced child care providers, innovative methods to develop new child care centers and licensed family child care providers, and increased subsidies to make quality child care affordable.
- Continue and expand efforts to provide support and training to informal childcare providers, who are often family members, friends and neighbors of the families they assist.
- Support programs which encourage the retention and professional development of the early care and education workforce, such as Child Care Planning Council's recommendations, legislation such as the AB 212 Retention and Professional Development Program and First 5's Preschool Literacy and Language Foundation Program.

- Support the development and improvement of child care facilities and enterprises through such efforts as reviving the Santa Cruz County Developer Fee Loan Program, so childcare programs can access the funds already in that pool, and supporting the efforts of Child Care Ventures, the Small Business Development Center and El Pájaro Community Development Corporation.
- Continue to work closely with the Child Care Planning Council and utilize their expertise in the areas of early care and education. Refer to the recommendations from the 2009 All Succeed with Access to Preschool Plan and the 2008-2013 Master Plan for Early Care and Education and School Age Extended Learning.
- Analyze the reasons behind the decline in the number of cases prosecuted to make sure that mothers receive this needed support.
- Child support orders and enforcement are a critical piece to the well-being of mothers and their children and should be pursued whenever possible.

6.6.6. Women and CalWORKS

- Maintain data on reasons for termination of aid, including sanctions, types of non-compliance and timing out. Follow-up with those who left the program to determine their level of self-sufficiency/poverty.
- Continue childcare, transportation and all other benefits until self-sufficiency is attained.
- Revise state regulations to include study time towards CalWORKS work requirements and support efforts to increase enrollment in education leading to self-sufficiency wage jobs.
- Extend CalWORKS eligibility to adults in recovery from substance abuse and with custody of children upon release from incarceration.

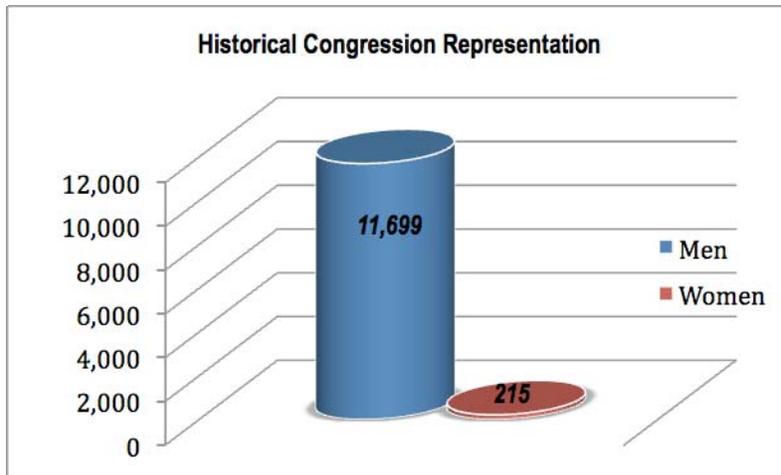
7. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

“The quantity of women involved in elective politics has increased greatly, but there should be more women in higher offices.” Mardi Wormhoudt

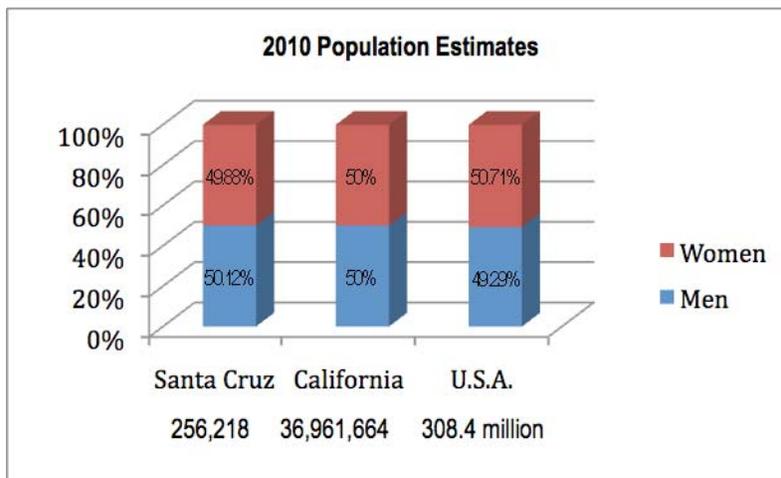
7.1. Women as Elected Officials

7.1.1. Federal Government

For women’s perspectives to be considered at national, state and local levels, there must be enough women ‘at the table’ for their voices to be heard. Yet historically, only 2% of U.S. Congress members have been women.⁸⁹



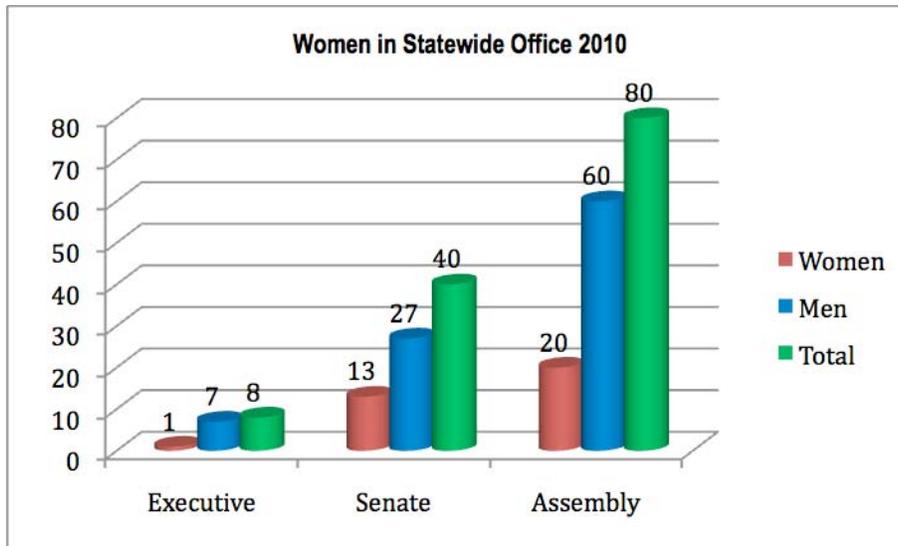
Although the current political landscape has increased to 22.7%, this does not reflect the 51% of women in the workforce.⁹⁰



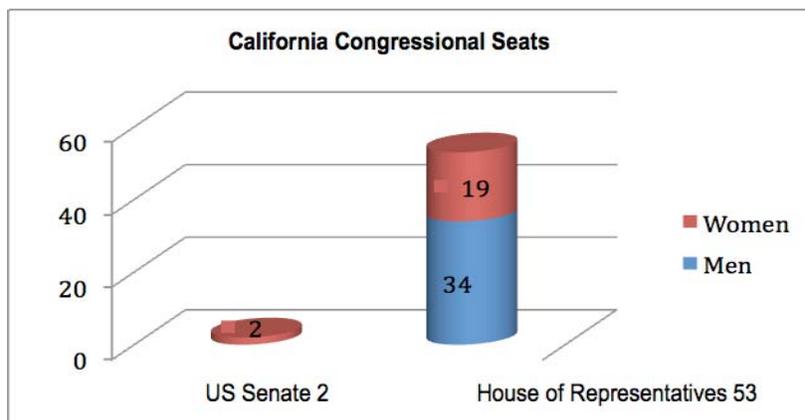
Between 2008 and 2010, the US ranking in worldwide female leadership dropped from 69th to 73rd of 186 countries.⁹¹ In 1992, “The Year of the Women”, 2 of the 5 women elected to the U.S. Senate and 5 of the 24 women elected to the House of Representatives were from California.⁹²

7.1.2. State Government

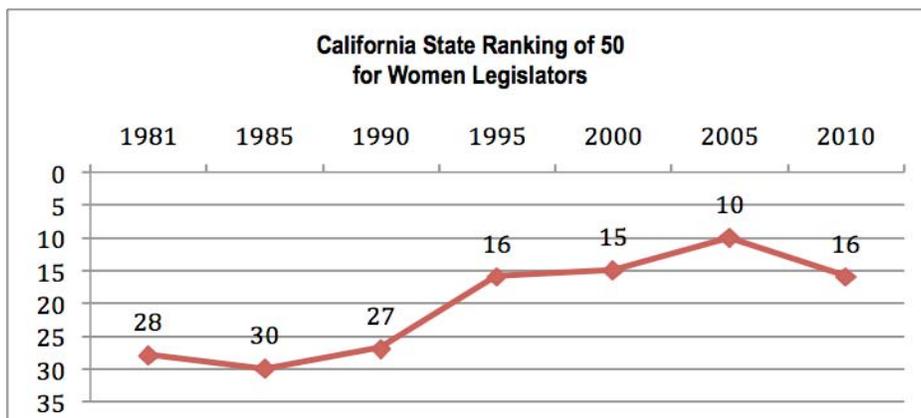
California has 8 statewide elected executives; in 2010 only the Secretary of State’s office was held by a woman. In 2011 women will hold both the Secretary of State and Attorney General’s offices. In the 100 years since California women got the right to vote, no woman has ever been elected California Governor or Lieutenant Governor.⁹³



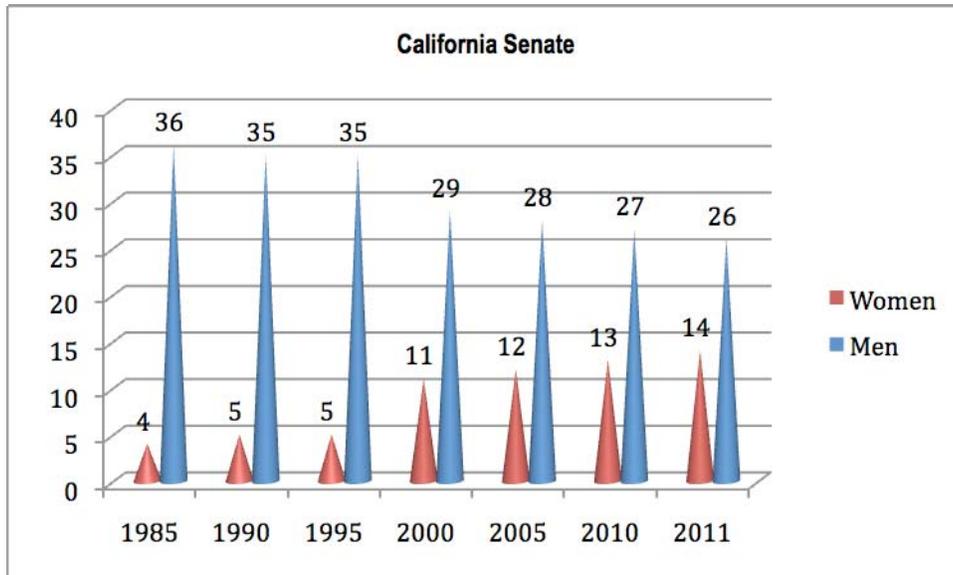
34 California women have served in the House of Representatives. In 2010, both Senators and 19 of the 53 House members were women, making California 16th of the 50 states in the number of women elected to Congress.⁹⁴ The numbers remained the same with the November 2010 election.



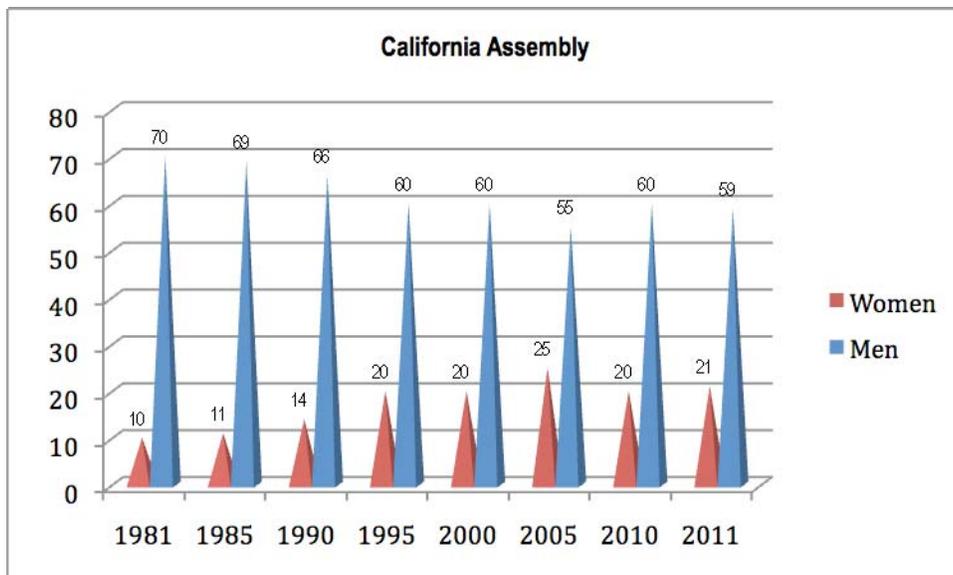
While a record number of women chaired committees in the 110th and 111th Congresses, only six women were chairs of the approximately 40 committees.⁹⁵



Of the 90 women in the current Congress, 21, or 23.3%, are women of color, as are the two Delegates from Washington, DC and the Virgin Islands. 10, or 52.6%, of California's 19 women House members are women of color: 4 are African American, 2 are Asian Pacific Islander, and 4 are Latina. There are no women of color in the U.S. Senate.⁹⁶ There is a total of 120 seats in the California State Legislature: 40 Senate and 80 Assembly. In 2010, 13 State Senators and 20 Assembly members were women. The 2011 Legislature has 14 women Senators and 21 women Assembly members.⁹⁷



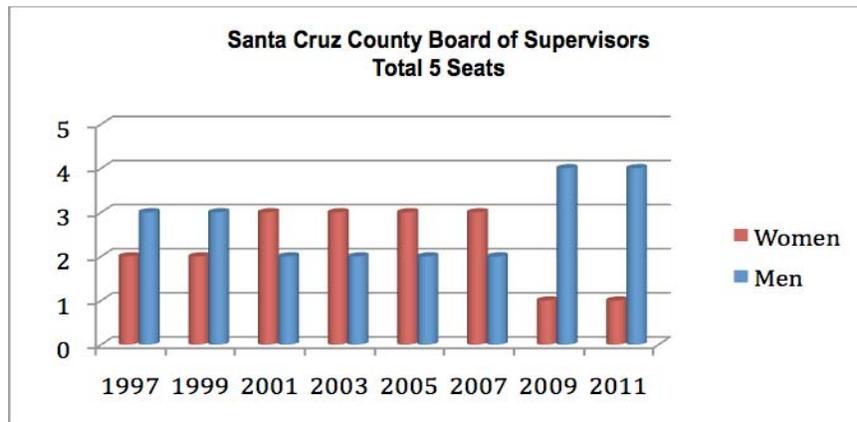
The number of women in both houses of the California Legislature has increased steadily since 1981, but does not yet approach parity.



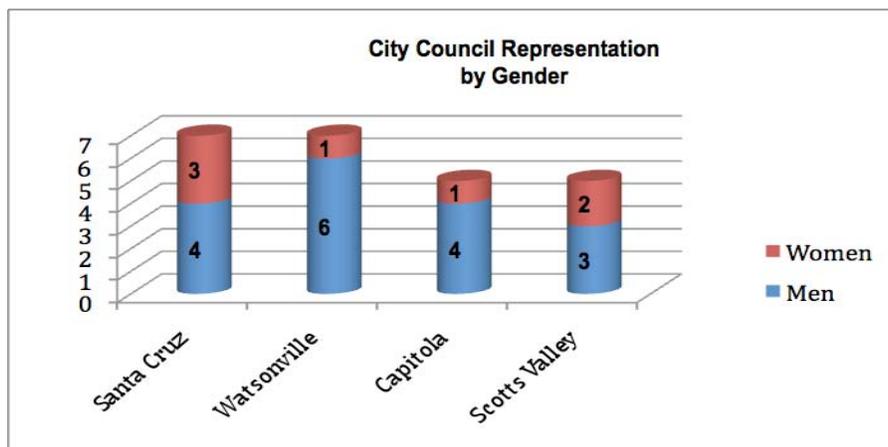
7.1.3. Local Government

Lack of representation at the highest levels of government not only affects decision-making but limits women’s compensation as well. The June 2, 2010 *Santa Cruz Sentinel* reported the 25 highest salaries for city employees in 2009. The top 10 earners were men; only 3 of the 25 were women, 15 were fire department officials and 4 police officials, fields in which women have been historically under-represented. Moreover, there was a \$35,000 gap between the highest man’s salary of \$214,921 and the highest woman’s at \$179,884.⁹⁸ While some of the incomes included overtime pay, women are greatly under-represented in fields that offer overtime.

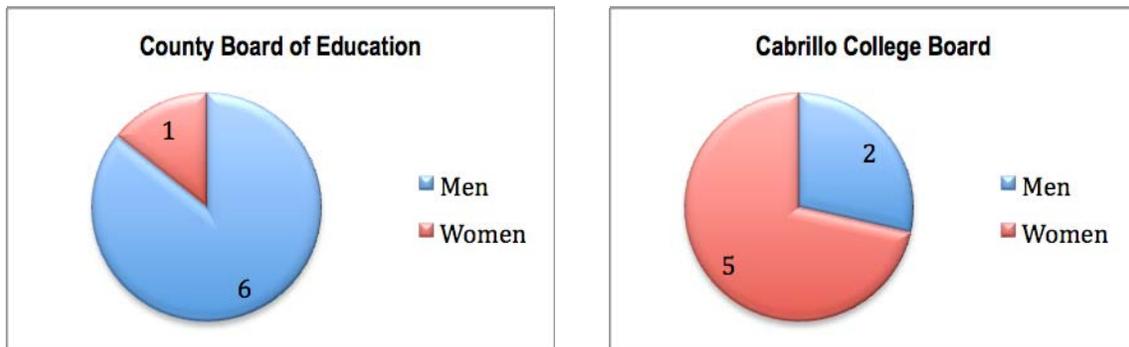
In order for women to be heard in proportion to their numbers, there is much work to be done, even in Santa Cruz County. There are 5 seats on the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. One woman served on the Board from 1957-1962, and one from 1962-1976. Since 1977 there has been at least one woman Supervisor.⁹⁹ There is currently only one female Supervisor, comprising just 20% of the Board.



The four cities in Santa Cruz County have elected city councils. In 2010, women were 42.8% of the Santa Cruz City Council, 28.5% of Watsonville, 40% of Scotts Valley and 0% of Capitola.¹⁰⁰ From 1970 to 2010, the Santa Cruz City Council's 47 members have included 16 women.¹⁰¹ In 2011, Capitola and Watsonville each have one councilwoman.



The County Board of Education has 7 elected members, 1 woman and 6 men. The Cabrillo College Board of Trustees has 7 elected members: 5 women and 2 men.

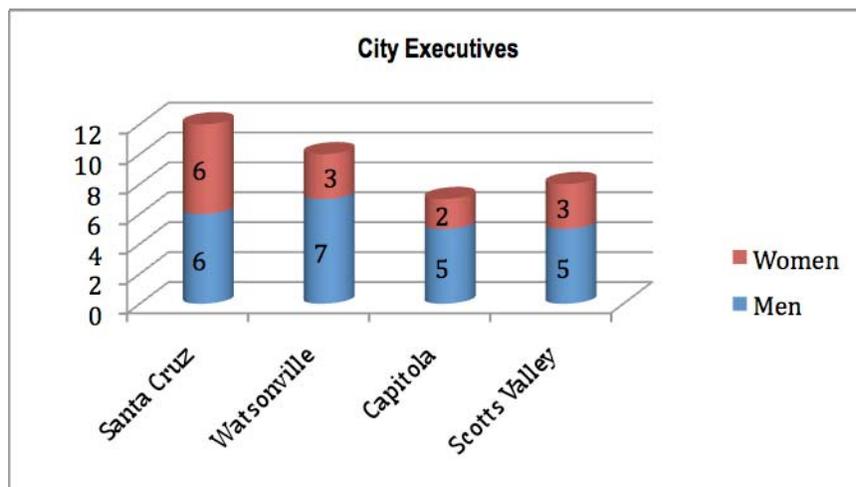


7.1.4. Executive

President Obama's appointments have been more diverse by gender and ethnicity than those of his predecessors of either party. 7 of the 20 initial Cabinet appointments were women; 2 of these are Californians. Women also held 3 of the notable non-Cabinet posts as chairs of the FDIC, Securities and Exchange Commission, and Council of Economic Advisors.¹⁰²

Women hold 71, or 22.5%, of the 315 elected statewide executive offices nationally, down from 79, or 25.1%, in 2006. 7 are women of color: 9% of the women and 2.2% of the total, up from 5, or 6.3% in 2006.¹⁰³

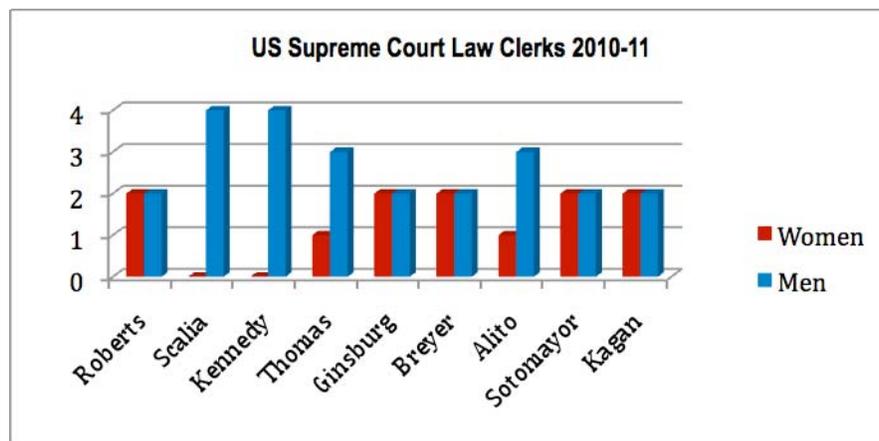
Santa Cruz County has 6 elected department heads. The County Clerk and Auditor are women; the District Attorney, Sheriff, Treasurer and Assessor are men.



7.2. Judiciary

Women enter law school, graduate, and receive J.D. and L.L.B. degrees in numbers almost equal to men, 48.1%. However, they are only 20.8% of law school deans and 27.1% of full-time tenured law faculty. Women hold 17.9% of partnerships in private practice, and are 16.6% of Fortune 500 and 15.7% of Fortune 1000 General Counsels. In 2002 women lawyers' median weekly salary was 69.4% of men's; by 2006 it had increased only 1.1% to 70.5%.¹⁰⁴

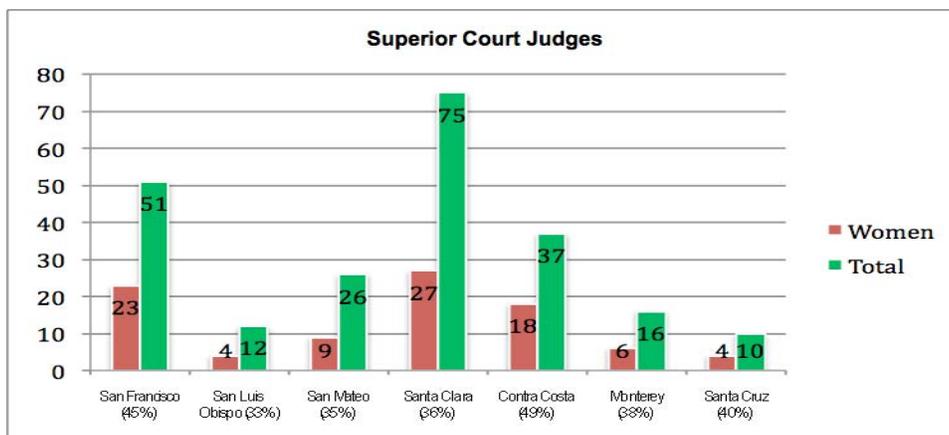
Three of the 9 United States Supreme Court Justices are women. Until 1981, there were no women on the Supreme Court; no woman has ever been appointed Chief Justice. Women have averaged 31% of the Court's law clerks hired since 2000, ranging from 54% hired by Justice Breyer to 7% by Justice Scalia. One-third of the four law clerks hired by each Justice for 2010-2011 are women. Since joining the Court, Justices Sotomayor and Kagan have hired equal numbers of women and men as law clerks.¹⁰⁵



California judges may be elected, or appointed to vacant seats by the Governor, after which they are elected. The State Supreme Court has 7 Justices with 12-year terms; 4, or 57%, including the newly appointed Chief Justice, are women. In 2006 there were only 2 women, or 35%, on the State Supreme Court. The 6 State District Courts of Appeal have 105 Justices with 12-year terms; 30, or 28.57%, are women.¹⁰⁶

Each of the state's 58 counties has at least one Superior Court Judge. As of April 2010, there were 1,536 Superior Court judges; 453, or 29.49%, were women.¹⁰⁷

Santa Cruz has 10 Superior Court judges; 4 are women. 11 of the counties with at least 10 judges have 30% or more women. 16 California counties currently have no women judges.¹⁰⁸ The numbers of Bay Area and Central Coast women judges are shown below.¹⁰⁹



7.3. Commissions

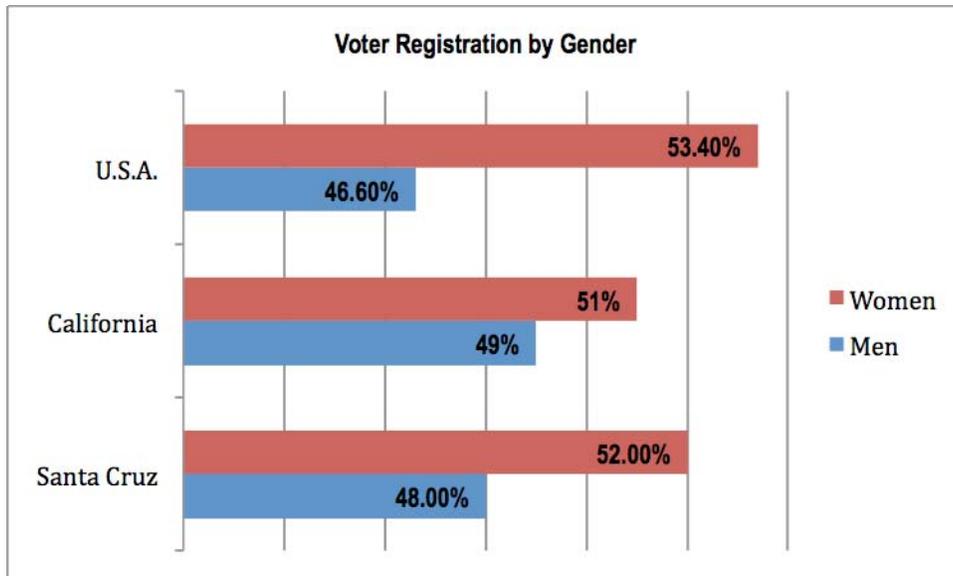
The County has a vehicle to assure public participation in the political process, as the Supervisors must make appointments to the County’s numerous advisory commissions and committees. Each commission has a mandate to focus on a certain area, to examine related issues and make recommendations for action, policy and change. Working on a commission gives a person a greater stake in her government, and sometimes serves as a stepping-stone to higher office.

Women are most represented on 11 of the 41 County commissions; those that deal with social issues, where budgets are generally small and precarious. These include the Arts, Child Care Planning, Domestic Violence, EEO, Human Services, Mental Health, and Women’s Commissions. Women are greatly under-represented on commissions that deal with infrastructure, such as Fire Department Advisory, Fish and Game, Water Resources, Planning, and Parks and Recreation.¹¹⁰

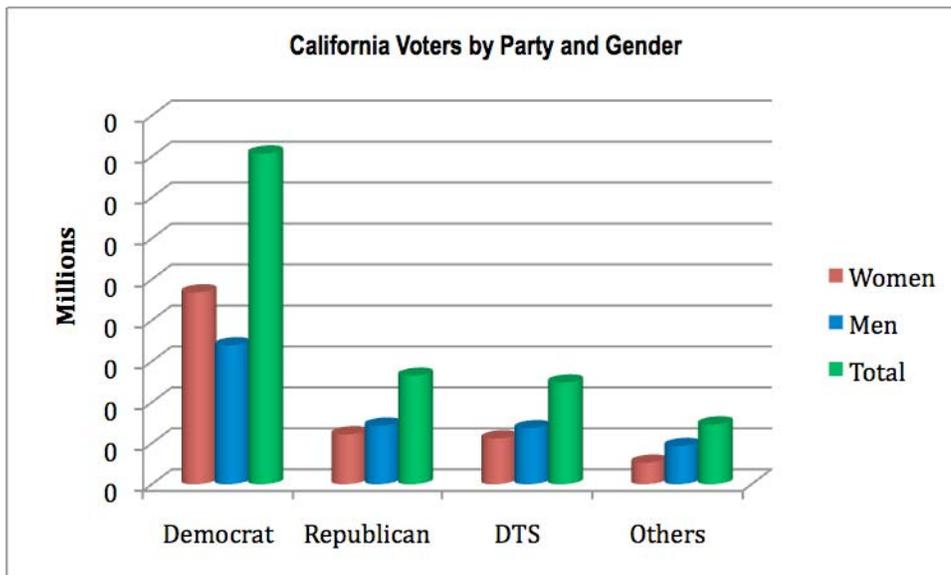
The 17-member State Commission on the Status of Women examines legislative proposals; it supports and opposes those in numerous areas that affect women and girls. A stated priority of the Commission’s *Public Policy Agenda and Proposals for 2009-2010* is to “Require [that] State data collection on Women provide statistics on all ethnic groups in order to develop public policy that better addresses their unique needs with respect to health care, education, and other services.”¹¹¹ The Santa Cruz County Women’s Commission has recommended that all data collected by government be broken down according to gender to provide gender sensitive analysis.

7.4. Voter Registration and Turnout

Women outnumber men among registered voters, and in every Presidential election since 1980, the proportion of eligible women who have voted has exceeded that of men. In 2008, there were 78.1 million women and 68.2 million men registered to vote in the U.S.¹¹²



23,428,023 Californians were eligible to vote in 2010; of these, 16,897,383 or 72.12% were registered. 44.5% are Democrat, 30.79% Republican, 20.14% DTS, and 4.5% other parties.¹¹³



Of Santa Cruz County's 181,679 eligible voters, 146,517, or 80.65%, are registered. 55.08% are Democrat, 18.05% Republican, 16.93% DTS and 9.94% other parties.¹¹⁴

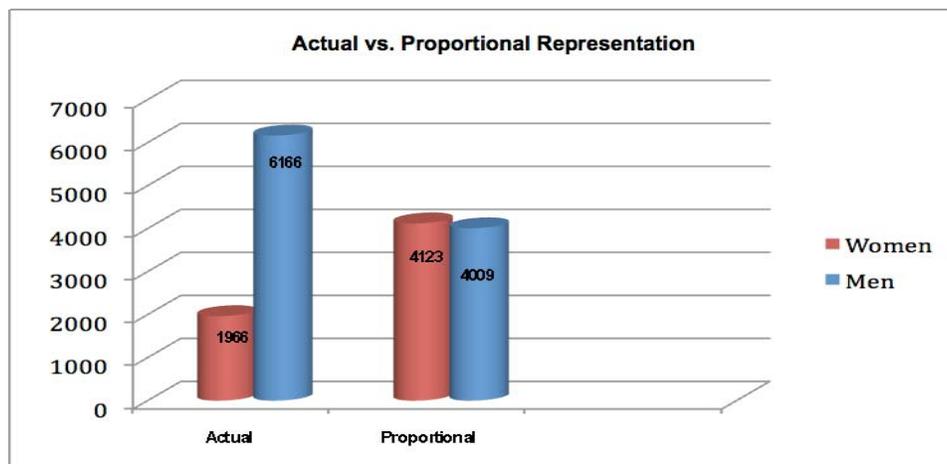
Although gender data is no longer required on Santa Cruz County voter registration forms, current statistics show the same gender distribution as the state, with women 52% and men 48% of the county's registered voters.¹¹⁵

Within the county, the largest number and percent of registered voters is in the 3rd District, the smallest in the 4th District. Voter education and outreach are needed to bring more people into the voting process. County Elections partners with Social Services, Southwest Voters Project and the schools among others in their emphasis on outreach to potential voters. Besides having voter registration materials in Spanish and English, Santa Cruz is one of the only counties in the state to make all notices to voters bilingual Spanish/English.¹¹⁶

Santa Cruz County's average voter turnout since 2000 is 62.24% over 13 elections. In the November 2008 election, countywide turnout was 86.55%.¹¹⁷ Between 1998 and 2003, Latinos who say they vote in every election increased 15.2%, from 22.8% to 38% of those surveyed, while Caucasians increased 4.2% from 74.1% to 78.3%.¹¹⁸

7.5. Comparisons and Observations

In 2008 there were 8132 people elected to Congress, Statewide executive positions and State Legislatures: 1966 women, up from 1845 in 2006, and 6166 men.¹¹⁹ If the number of positions held by women were instead in actual proportion to the population, 4123 women and 4009 men would be helping to make the decisions about their own health care, environment, children, and futures.



7.6. Women as Candidates

“ When women see a problem, they volunteer to fix it; when men see a problem, they run for office.” Bonny Hawley

Local elected officials and staff members were interviewed for this report. They were asked about their paths into and through politics; views on the benefits and barriers for women; and recommendations for increasing the number of women in political life. Their responses are supported by the statistical findings in the Brown Policy Report, “Why Are Women Still Not Running for Office?” The report is based on extensive surveys and interviews in 2001 and 2008 of thousands of women and men in professions that

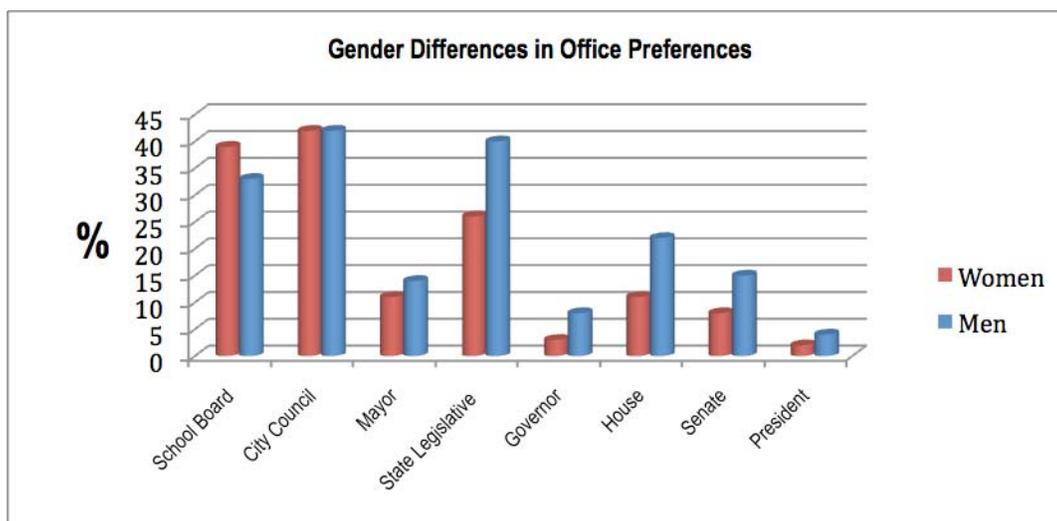
most typically precede political candidacy: lawyers, business leaders and executives, educators, and political activists.¹²⁰

***“Like law and medicine, politics is still a field consisting largely of male networks.”
Jan Beutz***

42% of the women and 56% of the men surveyed overall had considered running for office, a 35% “ambition advantage” for men. Men were also more likely to have discussed and researched running for office.¹²¹

“Unlike men, women do not tend to see politics as a career or a career move; men are also likely to start working towards the goal of election much earlier than women, often in high school.” Mardi Wormhoudt

The gender gap grows with the type of office: an equal or greater percentage of women consider most local offices, while almost twice as many men consider state and federal offices.¹²²



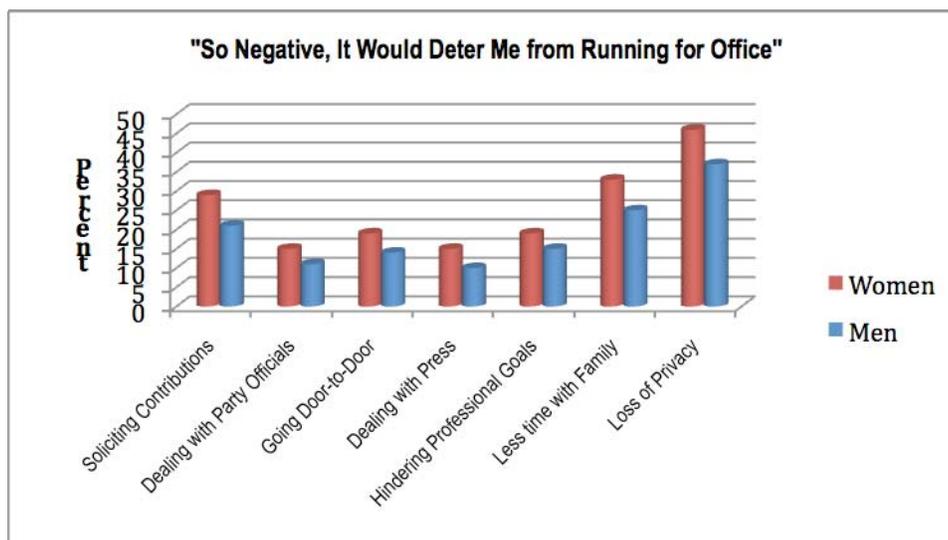
“A man who’s aggressive and gets things done is looked on positively and a woman who does the same is not.” Barbara Sprenger

Women are clearly very under-represented in political institutions, yet research shows that when women run for office, they are just as likely to win their races as men. The fundamental reason for women’s under-representation is that they do not run for office.¹²³

“Because girls are not socialized to be leaders or to be involved in politics, as women they may be more hesitant to run for office.” Jan Beutz

Women often do not feel qualified to serve, do not understand the process of running, and need to be asked to run repeatedly before they seriously consider launching a campaign. The women and men surveyed were equally qualified to serve in elective

office, but women found the mechanics and personal activities of campaigning so negative, it would deter them from running for office at higher rates than men.¹²⁴



“Work/life issues are a greater factor for women than men: for example, women still bear the primary responsibility for children.” Neal Coonerty

The persistence of traditional family dynamics also affects women’s running for office. 60% of the women surveyed in professions most likely to produce candidates handle the majority of the childcare vs. only 4% of the men, and 44% of the women handle the majority of household tasks vs. 7% of the men.¹²⁵

“Women may now think about running for office, but they probably think about it while they are making the bed.” Lawless and Fox, pg. 12

Women may be 51% of the workforce, but they still average 50% more time than men on household tasks: 12.3 vs. 8.4 hours per week. For many women, running for office would simply be a third job, an unappealing prospect since they already have two.¹²⁶

“There is a need for more organizations to aid and train women interested in participatory politics.” Cynthia Mathews

Women say they are more likely to consider running for office if they have access to such practical resources as articles and manuals on campaigns and elections; training programs; webcasts on organizing, fundraising, and media skills; and interviews with political operatives and elected officials.¹²⁷

Girls and women both report being inspired by seeing women in office. A detailed 27-nation study of adolescents found a positive correlation between the number of women serving in lower legislative houses and girls’ expressed intention to be politically active as adults. Girls see themselves not simply as observers but as participants in the political system.¹²⁸

7.7. Conclusions

“ Women in office benefit society because it creates a richer pool of participants to shape society.” Fred Keeley

Based on the principle of outcomes, we can see that there is a clear imbalance in the area of political participation. Even in Santa Cruz County the number of women in appointed and elected office does not reflect the number of women in the population. The higher the office, the more people it represents, the fewer women hold the position. Also, the larger and more secure the budget, the fewer women have a say in its development and allocation.

Women are still a minority of the county’s supervisors, council members, county and city executives, judges, and commissioners.

Political systems reward seniority with leadership positions, in which men outnumber women by significant margins. It is therefore especially important to encourage young women to run for office so they can establish the tenure necessary to rise to political leadership positions.

A central criterion in evaluating the health of democracy is the degree to which all citizens, women and men, are encouraged and willing to engage the political system and run for public office. Democratic legitimacy in the United States demands that we continue to move toward gender parity in electoral office.¹²⁹

***“Now is a time when we have to be really diligent; doors are opening for us, but only because we’re kicking them down. We have to keep kicking them down!”
Maureen McCarty***

7.8. Recommendations

“Identifying the glass ceiling shouldn’t put it in place as a permanent barrier: we can see through it, we need to make it disappear.” Mark Stone

- All public salary data including pay, benefits and compensation should be made easily accessible and in a form that allows comparisons. Although salaries are required by law to be posted online, finding the actual data is difficult, time-consuming, and discouraging.
- Continue to support the County’s voter education and outreach focus, and use emerging social networking media as well as traditional methods of reaching current and potential voters.
- Continue active efforts to reach out and include underrepresented groups on county committees and commissions. Work with schools, nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations to identify volunteers, interns and potential appointees.
- Promote the California Women’s Appointment Project to recruit women to apply for appointment by the Governor to State boards, commissions, or agencies.

- Encourage education and training of women of all ages for political involvement and leadership. Encourage appointed commissioners to act as role models and mentors to attract and support young women to public service and leadership. Have elected and appointed women speak to classrooms and organizations about involvement in community action. Publicize volunteer opportunities such as VIP/CityServ.

“There is a need for qualified women candidates in the pipeline.” Cynthia Matthews

ENDNOTES

¹ *Health Issues Santa Cruz County Community Assessment Project Reports, Year 12, 2006*, United Way (CAP reports), and the California Department of Health Services Office of Women's Health report.

² California Department of Health Services Office of Women's Health report.

³ *A Glimpse of Reality: Health Disparities in the Pajaro Valley, 2009*, Pajaro Community Health Trust Report.

⁴ *Medi-Cruz-An Evaluation of Santa Cruz County's Program for Medically Indigent Adults*, by the Pacific Health Consulting Group.

⁵ *Medi-Cruz-An Evaluation of Santa Cruz County's Program for Medically Indigent Adults*.

⁶ Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, Santa Cruz and Watsonville offices.

⁷ Santa Cruz Women's Health Center; and Simone Reynaud, SC Women's Health Center: interview.

⁸ *Healthy Kids Health Plan*, Healthy Kids of Santa Cruz County.

⁹ *Data on homeless from: Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency; Santa Cruz Homeless Report*, National Coalition for the Homeless; and interviews conducted at the River Street Shelter, which also houses the Homeless Persons Health Project.

¹⁰ Santa Cruz County Children's Mental Health Interagency System of Care Report: *Nineteen Year Anniversary Summary July 1, 1989-June 30, 2008*.

¹¹ *The Farmworkers Journey*, by Ann Aurelia Lopez, Ph.D..

¹² Dr. Janna Doherty, MD, Ob-Gyn, Planned Parenthood Mar Monte: interviews with Margaret Leonard, Esq. and Clare Sheils; and LyLyA Watsonville: focus group.

¹³ Focus groups: Highlands Park Senior Center; Valley Women's Club Board of Directors; Capitola-by-the-Sea Soroptimists.

¹⁴ Lisa Berkowitz, County Food Services: interview.

¹⁵ *Women and Health Care*, San Francisco *Chronicle*, June 24, 2007

¹⁶ *Births, Santa Cruz County, 2008*, County of Santa Cruz Public Health Department, Santa Cruz County, California, 2009, and updates.

¹⁷ Data on teen pregnancy from *Births, Santa Cruz County, 2008*, County of Santa Cruz Public Health Department, Santa Cruz County, California, 2009, and updates, Also interviews with: Linda Clevenger, Director, San Lorenzo Valley Teen Program; Jeanette Cooper, Walnut Avenue Women's Center; GirlZpace; Toni Spencer, Assistant Probation Division Director, Juvenile Hall, Girls' Task Force; Angela Irvine, Girls' Task Force Evaluation; Rita Martinico, Walnut Avenue Women's Center; Huve Rivas, Watsonville High School Video Academy;

Gary Rodriguez, Education Director, Planned Parenthood Mar Monte.

¹⁸ *The Falling Age of Puberty in US Girls: What We Know, What We Need to Know*, by Sandra Steingraber.

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INTERVIEWS

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Bonny Hawley, Chief of Staff to Assembly Member John Laird: interview September 25, 2006

Jan Beautz, Supervisor, 1st District, retired: interview August, 2006 (JB)

Neal Coonerty, Supervisor, 3rd District, former City Council member, former Mayor: interview September 11, 2006

Barbara Sprenger, Assembly candidate, former School Board member: interview, February 8, 2007

Cynthia Mathews, former Santa Cruz Mayor, City Council member, interview August 11, 2006

Fred Keeley, County Treasurer, former Supervisor 5th District, Assembly member, Speaker Pro Tem: interview August 26, 2006

Maureen McCarty, Aide, Senator Joe Simitian: interview September, 2006

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Other Interviews

Stephany Aguilar, Scotts Valley City Council member, Mayor
Tony Campos, 4th District Supervisor, former Watsonville City Council member
Rebecca Connolly, Superior Court Judge
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Rosemary Da Silva Elliott, Political Affairs Director, California NOW: www.canow.org
Stephanie Harlan, former Capitola City Council member, Mayor
John Laird, Assembly member, former Santa Cruz City Council member, Mayor
Irma Marquez, Analyst, 4th District
Ana Ventura Phares, Watsonville City Council member, Mayor, Assembly candidate
Ellen Pirie, Supervisor, 2nd District
Emily Reilly, Santa Cruz City Council member, Mayor
Lorraine Washington, City Clerk, Watsonville
Lorette Wood, former Santa Cruz City Council member, Mayor
Pat Bakalian
Donna Blitzer
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Roberta Valdez
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Jess Spencer, Government Collections Coordinator, UCSC Mc Henry Library