Radical Visions of Safety
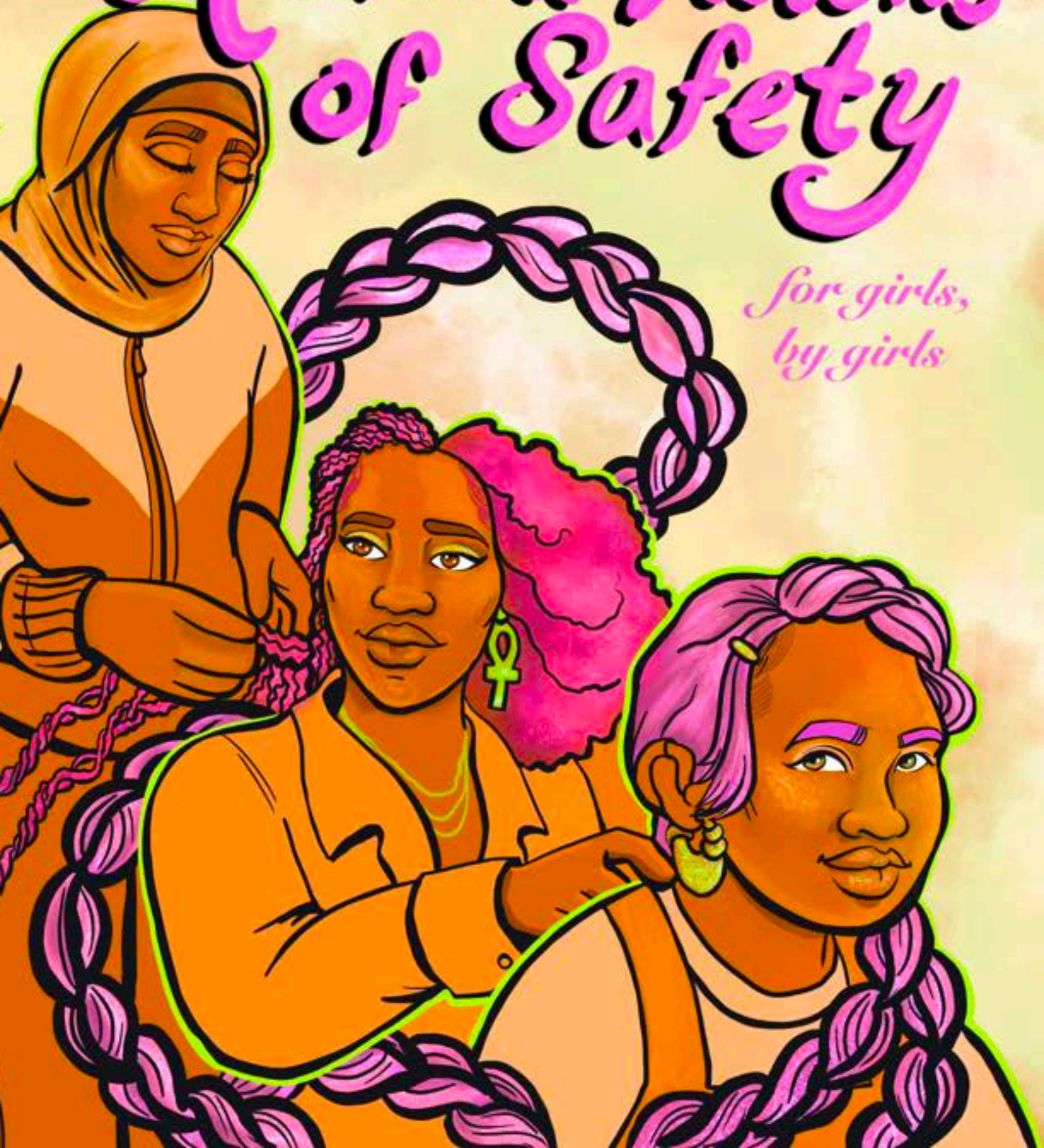
for girls, by girls

Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls

ALLIANCE

FOR GIRLS

evaluation
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Acknowledgements

A Letter From Alliance For Girls

Dear Friends,

Imagine a world where the hundreds of millions of dollars that go toward punishment every year instead went toward creating spaces where girls could build trusting relationships and safely be their full selves. Imagine if safety was created from practices based on belonging and acceptance, rather than policies that perpetuate racist and sexist systems of oppression.

These are not far-away fantasies but the leading edge of violence prevention informed by the practical vision of Black girls and girls of color, gender expansive youth, and the adults who champion them. This is what's possible girls on the margins define safety themselves. Alliance for Girls' Radical Visions for Safety report uncovers what it truly means to create safety for girls and gender expansive youth. The bulk of the research was done before COVID-19 changed the world. Nevertheless, the learnings and findings apply now. While COVID has made the world less safe for girls, the underlying harmful conditions have been building for a long time. COVID further exposed that the old ways of thinking about safety, and the old systems that were supposed to keep us safe, never really did.

In this report, girls and gender expansive youth point us to the places and spaces in which that elusive concept of safety--a safety that allows for the unshackling of their bodies and minds from sexism, racism and the violence of oppression--was made possible. In these spaces, adult caregivers, supportive peers, and the organizations in which they gather physically or virtually are engaging in community-driven practices that respond to their needs and incorporate the wisdom of cultural ancestry. In these spaces, girls and gender expansive youth report that they can finally breathe, dream, and feel a sense of belonging. This report highlights girls' and gender expansive youth's definition of safety. It also highlights the practices of 40 organizations within the San Francisco Bay Area community that are effectively creating the safety girls and gender expansive youth need to thrive.

Alliance for Girls, the largest membership association of organizations that serve girls and gender expansive youth, invites organizations and caring adults to join us and our over 120 member organizations to translate this research into action - ensuring that girls' radical visions of safety can result in systemic change by creating safety at school, home, within service organizations, and in public spaces to ultimately create safe communities for all.

It is time that we invest in these community-driven and women-led proven practices, and let girls set the agenda for their own safety. Join us.

In solidarity,
Emma

A Letter from Blue Shield Foundation

This report invites us to re-imagine how we as a community support and make ourselves accountable to co-creating a world with the young people who are a part of it. Girls, in particular, deserve to be heard and uplifted.   So, we listened; and what we heard is that girls needs are basic needs. They seek support, trust and belonging. They find safety through connection – to family, community, and society. These vital protective factors are not novel, but making them our collective responsibility – is.

With this report, Alliance for Girls elucidates a path forward toward a society where safety and sustainability are the norm and all girls – including Black, Brown, Indigenous, gender non-conforming and differently-abled, etc. - have the resources and support they need to thrive. It highlights the transformative practices already being employed by women and girls in communities across the Bay Area. The report serves as a comprehensive guide for leaders, caregivers, parents, and educators of girls and gender-expansive youth - and it invites all of us to be champions for change.

Blue Shield of California Foundation is proud to partner with Alliance for Girls on this landmark report. We hope it prompts readers to imagine a future with a radical vision for all girls that is rooted in abundance, equity and belonging.

Lucia Corral Peña, Senior Program Officer
Blue Shield of California Foundation

Executive Summary

Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls systematically and rigorously centers girls' lived experiences in a world that rarely does. It highlights an aspirational definition of safety and healthy relationships based on these centered voices and generates solutions that value and build on girls' strengths, assets, and unique characteristics.

This report represents a step by Alliance for Girls to ensure that the voices, beliefs, and experiences of girls and gender-expansive youth inform every aspect of gender-based work. It is intended to be a practical tool for girls' champions interested in designing holistic, research- and girl-informed interventions that address the root causes and not just the symptoms of violence faced by those they support. This is a report for girls by girls. It is a report that provides direction for girl champions—parents, caregivers, service providers, and all caring adults in the lives of girls and gender-expansive youth—on how to support safety and healthy relationships for girls and gender-expansive youth.

• Girls' radical visions of safety are dynamic and evolving. The way girls characterize safety moves away from traditional assumptions and encompasses notions of physical, emotional, and spiritual ideas of comfort, nonjudgment, acceptance, and belonging.

• Boundaries are highlighted by girls as one of the most important conditions for a healthy relationship.

• Multigenerational practices are incredibly impactful in fostering safe spaces and healthy relationships for girls. Supportive connections with adults, parents, and caregivers contribute profoundly to their well-being.

• Practices that most contribute to the shift of strict gender norms include awareness, boundaries and consent, and digital literacy.

• Social media and digital literacy are important pathways for girls to connect. Fostering more understanding and training for both girls and adults can leverage these pathways' potential for positive impact and mitigate their negative effects.

• The most profound barriers hampering girls and their champions from achieving safety and healthy relationships include systemic barriers like racism and stigma, operational barriers such as staff capacity, community barriers such as lack of support from school administrators, and personal barriers such as trauma and lack of parental support.

• Systems of support for girls are disconnected and lack continuity of care that addresses girls as whole people.

• Girls have a clear and powerful sense of what they want, how their experiences define their needs, and the best ways to help them thrive. The pathways to power for them are sovereignty, knowledge, and adults who acknowledge and include them.

Each section of this report, outlined below, is designed to stand on its own or, combined, provide a compendium of references for gender-based work with youth.

[Download the report in its entirety here.](#)

Section 1: Introduction

Introduction

What's so radical?

Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls elevates the voices and expertise of girls, their champions, and their caregivers by creating space for them to collectively and unapologetically redefine what radical safety and promising practices look like from the ground up. This reframing is important because it not only rethinks measures of success but also rethinks who is redefining those measures of success. This is particularly important for communities who are traditionally marginalized and excluded from accessing, informing, and creating systems of power and knowledge; those who cannot access the resources and tools necessary to implement research and evaluation; those who lack the funding and systems of support necessary to fund and scaffold research and evaluation; and those who serve girls and communities that have historically been traumatized by the implementation of research and evaluation that does not thoughtfully address the top-down dynamics of power and consent often built into the research process.

Currently, the girl- and youth-serving sector provide many of the protective factors noted to prevent domestic and intimate partner violence in the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Connecting the Dots (CDC, 2014) report, including shifting strict gender norms, increasing connection to caring adults and peers, coordinating a network of care, and increasing community support and connectedness for girls. However, progress has been insufficient in the prevention of domestic violence and violence against women and girls.

The Path to the Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls Report

In 2019, the Blue Shield of California Foundation (the Foundation) released Breaking the Cycle: A Life Course Framework for Preventing Domestic Violence (Chandler and Martinez, 2019), which looked broadly at the prevalence, drivers, and pathways of domestic violence. It concluded that an effective framework for breaking cycles of violence requires understanding the interplay of our bodies, minds, environment, and histories in predisposing young people toward domestic violence. Further, effectively addressing issues of domestic violence requires addressing root causes, bringing in multigenerational approaches, centering culture and identity, and supporting prevention pathways.

Between 2018 and 2019, Alliance for Girls (AFG), as a key component of their Meeting Girls' Needs Initiative (MGNI), released its Lived Experiences of Girls report series, respectively titled Valuing Girls' Voices, Growing up in Oakland, Girls Leading Change, and Together We Rise. Collectively, these reports center girls' voices to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of girls in the San Francisco Bay Area. In these reports, girls consistently mention issues of safety, dealing with strict gender expectations, harassment, and violence across a multitude of personal, political, and institutional spaces (i.e., social media, home, schools, girl-serving organizations, public spaces, policies, and culture). More specifically, girls expressed a desire to redefine and get rid of strict gender expectations that they deemed stressful and harmful to their well-being. Girls also shared that key protective factors, including access to caring adults and peers within their family, at school, and within community-based organizations, are effectively improving their life outcomes by reducing the trauma of exposure to violence and giving them access to helpful resources. Finally, girls noted that engaging in civic and social movements, like March for Our Lives and #MeToo, makes them feel empowered and protected in an environment where a culture of violence against women is rampant.

Leveraging the research of the Foundation, AFG found converging needs around issues of safety, wellness, and healthy relationships for girls and wanted to align their own definition and framing of issues around strict gender expectations, violence, and harassment. AFG also identified a few gaps to explore. One gap was in hearing what girls, and those who work closely with girls, are actually saying about what safety and healthy relationships look and feel like to them. Another gap was in understanding the landscape of research and best practices that address violence prevention, safety, and healthy relationships for girls. Finally, based on the Foundation's Life Course Framework and AFG's own grounded frameworks, including the Socio-Ecological Model, intersectionality, and transformational resistance (see sidebar), there appeared to be a pressing need to take a meticulous, extended look at the direct influences that encircle girls and the identity spaces to which girls themselves belong. To address these gaps and create more meaningful support, the Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls report was commissioned.

Alliance for Girls' Frameworks

AFG's work and research is framed and guided by three independent but interconnected lenses: the Social-Ecological Model (SEM), intersectionality, and transformational resistance.

SEM serves as a central lens for understanding the relationships and connections among various personal and environmental factors as well as the impact of these on individual outcomes and experiences. SEM recognizes that individual behavior is shaped by the social environment and that in order to intervene and change negative outcomes, it is imperative to develop strategies at each band of influence, including the individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and policy (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; McLeroy et al., 1988).

Intersectionality, meanwhile, is a critical lens for understanding the complex interconnection of identity and structures of power. It recognizes that individuals who live at the margins of society—based on intersecting factors such as race, gender, class, immigration status, and sexuality—experience oppression in unique ways (Crenshaw, 1991). Despite social, educational, and economic constraints, individuals and communities resist inequities.

Transformational resistance is one lens for understanding how communities oppose social structures and build power for social change. Transformational resistance occurs when people critique oppression and seek social justice, understanding that individual and collective change is attainable. This resistance is based in validating the experiences of underrepresented communities, challenging dominant ideologies, centralizing intersectionality, and making a commitment to social justice (Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Alone, these frameworks capture only parts of an individual's experience in systems of power and oppression. Together, they provide a holistic understanding of a person's experience, as well as key levers for change.

Section 2: Safety and Healthy Relationships as Defined by Girls

Safety and Healthy Relationships as Defined by Girls

In addition to developing a radical vision of safety and healthy relationships for girls, AFG also supports a radical approach of girls defining what safety and healthy relationships mean to them. Girls who participated in the focus groups shared that they want to feel physically and emotionally safe and that they desire nurturing, positive relationships. These needs are extrapolated from the numerous and enduring experiences girls relayed of consistently not feeling physically or emotionally safe at home, at school, in their neighborhoods, and through social media. Given a large landscape of programs and supports in place for girls, a broader question arises: *Why do girls continue to feel unsafe and lack the healthy relationships they need and want?*

Systems of support and programming interventions are created around concepts and assumptions presumed to be universal, but they are often built on legacy definitions and principles from those who are historically privileged. As such, at the most basic level, *Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls* steps back and asks girls: *What does safety mean to you? What does a healthy relationship mean to you? What does a radical vision of safety look and feel like? What does a positive, nurturing, and healthy relationship look and feel like?*

Figure 1: Safety As Defined By Girls

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

The Meaning of Safety

In focus groups and interviews, girls were asked to describe which programs or groups make them feel safe and how these make them feel safe. Girls' champions were also asked to describe their visions of safety for girls and how they create practices to foster their visions. The nature of safety was most commonly described as notions of trust, nonjudgment, and comfort, as shown in the word cloud diagram in Figure 1. From this analysis, the most common characterizations of safety given by girls and their champions are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Most Frequently Used Concepts to Describe Safety

Notion of:	Characterized by:	According to:
TRUST	Trust is characterized as something built between peers and adults and containing a sense of confidentiality and protection of vulnerability.	*"[A safe space is one where] we can talk about anything. If we can cry, we can celebrate. In the context of this environment, we create agreements. Agreements on how we are going to respect each other, how we are going to talk."* - Maria Jimenez Mujeres Unidas Y Activas (MUA)
NON-JUDGMENTAL	Nonjudgmental is synonymous with being open-minded. Enabling safe spaces for girls includes giving room for them to talk about their thoughts and feelings, presenting their true selves without being judged, and feeling unconditionally accepted.	*"[A safe space is one where you are] safe to have an opinion. It's safe to be quiet. It's safe to have fun. It's safe enough to bring your whole self."* - Hamida Yusufzai Banteay Srei
COMFORT	Comfort includes feelings of being at ease, stress-free, relaxed, and carefree. In many cases, comfort was described as almost an escape and a place to disconnect from outside stressors.	*"[I keep coming to this program because] I've gotten comfortable here, I feel welcome here and the sisterhood feel is good energy, good vibes, and when I do feel like I can't handle stuff outside like I come here."* -Young Parent Young Women's Freedom Center

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

In addition to the most common terms and characterizations used to describe safety, there were a few unique concepts discussed, as highlighted in the Spotlight shown in Table 2. Although these terms were not the most frequently mentioned in the focus groups, girls spoke of ideas of representation and sovereignty as important.

Table 2: Featured Concepts Used to Describe Safety

Safety Spotlight:

REPRESENTATION	Representation is characterized by having adults who serve as leaders, role models, and teachers who look like the young people they serve; these adults are reflections of their participants' histories, ethnicities, and social identities.
SOVEREIGNTY	Sovereignty is a sense of control around one's body and environment. On an individual level, interview respondents said sovereignty means girls feel empowered to say "no," and do not have to deal with people harassing them on the street. On a macro level, they described sovereignty as a liberation from self-consciousness, stigma, and unwanted gaze; as having determination over their spaces; as being able to come and go; and as having power and control over "what I need in a space to be seen."

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

Types of Safety

As girls and their champions began to describe and characterize what safety meant and felt like, three categories of safety emerged: physical safety, emotional safety, and spiritual safety (Table 3).

Table 3: Most Frequently Used Concepts to Describe Types of Safety

PHYSICAL SAFETY	EMOTIONAL SAFETY	SPIRITUAL SAFETY

Physical safety is the intentionality of the physical space—cleanliness, accessibility, and ambiance. Additionally, physical safety is creating conditions and intentionality around the physical program space through precautions that provide fail-safes from harm. For example, some programs have locked doors, frosted windows, and adults accompanying girls into the parking lots during pick-up. Another way programs provide safe spaces is by meeting girls' basic needs. To do so, many programs provide healthy snacks, access to clean water, and quiet areas, and model an expectation around a minimum quality of life through their programming space.

Emotional safety was the most-referenced type of safety in the interviews. Emotional safety exists when there is inherent trust with others, a sense of belonging, an ability to form connections and friendships, and feelings of acceptance and nonjudgment. Many interviewees also mentioned spaces in which girls are listened to, acknowledged, and permitted to be comfortably authentic. One example comes from Dawn Edwards from Oakland LGBTQ Community Center, whose idea of safety for girls "allow[s] people to come in and to create a community where there is non-judgment, where people are willing to be vulnerable, and people are willing to actually listen and to see you and to acknowledge you."

Spiritual safety is the inclusion and respect of girls' values and individual standpoints. Many participants described a safe space as one where those working with girls actually represent the girls in similar identities and values because it better upholds trust and connection. Additionally, providing girls with knowledge around their histories, identities, and selves fosters safety. Arcenio Lopez from Mixteco described their safe space as one where their young people "can have a safe place where they can start creating this discussion about their communities, our history, and their identity and their language, but also to understand what are some of the factors that prevent them from accessing higher education." For girls, knowledge is power, and power fosters feelings of safety.

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

Safety for Overlooked Groups

It is important to note that different backgrounds, histories, circumstances, and social identities can situate how safety is highlighted differently. Table 4 outlines the different characterizations of safety by various identity groups.

Table 4: Frequency of Concepts Used by Specific Identity Groups to Describe Safety

ALL	LGBTQIA+	YOUNG PARENTS
TRUST	ACCEPTANCE	COMFORT
NON-JUDGMENT	CAREFREE	TRUST
COMFORT	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	BELONGING
ACCEPTANCE	BELONGING	CONNECTION
CAREFREE	NONJUDGMENT	BASIC NEEDS

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

LGBTQIA+

LGBTQIA+ youth described feeling safe when they feel accepted and can be carefree and at ease. Some organizations exclusively serving LGBTQIA+ populations mentioned their young people coming to their programs to let their guard down and not talk about stresses in their lives. Rather, they relax, play games, and laugh in a space where they are accepted and feel a sameness with their peers. Priya Suman at Lyric SF states:

> We have fun activities here so it doesn't become a space where you only show up when you're trying to navigate trauma. It becomes a safe space where we just do artwork and sit. They can update me on how things are going and not just talk about what violence they are facing so I'm not associated only with trauma, but rather with general support.

Young Parents

Young parents most frequently mentioned comfort and trust to describe safety. Many connected safety to being comfortable, feeling good energy, and having a place where they can talk to others and open up. Distinct to young parents was the way in which their feelings of comfort and trust were tied to getting their basic needs met, specifically regarding childcare.

For young parents, childcare is more than just being able to bring their kids to a facility. It is having their kids accepted, and their own identities as young parents accepted, acknowledged, and supported without judgment. One young parent described her positive experience with Young Women's Freedom Center:

> This space doesn't believe in separating the child from the mother. Which I believe in a lot of spaces they want to separate the child from the mother. They're like it's great that you're a mom but they don't recognize that you're a mom 24/7 and that's really key because if I need to come here and get something done I know that there's going to be a space where my kid is welcome, safe, get fed, play, see other kids.
> It's completely kid- and parent-friendly."

For Girls, By Girls:
Positive, Nurturing, and Healthy Relationships

Defining a positive, nurturing, and healthy relationship can be challenging, so participants (both girls and their champions and caregivers) were also asked to describe what a healthy relationship feels like. Many responded with a variation of "it feels warm, happy, and peaceful." One girl described, "You just get that feeling that you just can't stop smiling. You're just overwhelmed with love, that's that feeling to me." Participants' descriptions of healthy relationships applied to not just their relationships with others but also to themselves.

Figure 2 shows the most common words used to describe positive, nurturing, and healthy relationships. Frequently used words and characteristics describing healthy relationships included having boundaries, respecting and valuing each other, and having fun (Table 5).

Figure 2: Healthy Relationships as Defined by Girls

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

Table 5: Concepts Used by Girls to Describe Healthy Relationships

Notion of:	Characterized by:	According to:
BOUNDARIES	Participants described their personal boundaries as knowing what they are willing to give, what they are okay with, and what their needs are. They also recognized that in a healthy relationship, personal boundaries require reciprocity and must be respected by others; this may include physical consent and/or emotional deference.	*"[In defining boundaries we find time to] say 'I need this time to come together, this is something I need to be able to be fully present, and this is something I'm willing to give.'"* - Dawn Edwards Oakland LGBTQ Community Center
RESPECT	Respect was described by many girl champions as meeting girls where they are both physically and emotionally. It was also described as valuing girls' opinions and expressed needs, not making demands on anyone to be different, and not punishing and undercutting how girls feel or what they say.	*"[Healthy relationships are about] respect for each other regardless of opinion or background. That's a huge thing in promoting loving relationships and positive relationships. Society can make you feel like your opinion isn't valued as much, and so by promoting that we all respect each other."* - Kaylee Tyrner Team Enough
FUN	Healthy relationships are marked by laughter, happiness, and humor—in a word, fun. Having fun was described in interviews as playing, joking around, and celebrating.	*"I have a friend, she lives in Martinez and she's always there for me and makes me laugh..."* - Student from SFUSD describing a relationship that felt healthy

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

In addition to the most common terms and characterizations describing a healthy relationship, a unique concept was also highlighted (see Spotlight in Table 6). Although this term was not the most frequently mentioned in the focus groups, girls spoke of self-love as important.

Table 6: Featured Concept Used to Describe Healthy Relationships

Healthy Relationship Spotlight

Participants frequently acknowledged that the most important relationship is with ourselves and that cultivating radical self-love is an important foundation to recognizing and cultivating healthy relationships with others. Participants referenced many social-emotional traits (including self-awareness, self-expression, self-confidence, and self-esteem) as fundamental to a healthy relationship. They also spoke a lot about taking care of oneself physically and mentally by eating well and taking the time to care for their own needs first. This is particularly true for young parents, as one young mother from Young Women's Freedom Center stated:

> I think in order for you to have a good relationship, it depends on who you're focusing on. So for me, if I'm focusing on my child, then I need to focus on myself first, because if I'm not okay like mentally or physically then I can't take care of my child a hundred percent. So before my child comes me, and then comes my child so that I'm able to take care of her a hundred percent.

SELF-LOVE

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

Section 3: Barriers and Successes

BARRIERS AND SUCCESSES

PROGRAM BARRIERS

Programs and organizations face numerous and varying barriers to achieving and fostering safe spaces for girls. Most barriers described by participants fit into three broad categories: external, internal, and individual (Table 7).

External barriers were challenges presented outside of the programming space that prevented girls from accessing the organization or its programs, such as transportation and safe access. Internal barriers were challenges faced within an organization that prevented quality, growth, and consistency for the girls they serve. Individual barriers were the inner struggles of girls on an individual level.

Table 7: Barriers in Trying to Foster Safe Spaces for Girls

External Barriers	
ACCESS	**Transportation.** Several organizations noted transportation as a barrier, which included not having a car, a ride, easy bus routes, access to public transport, or money for public transportation. The reasons for not having transportation varied from parental acceptance, gentrification, and accessibility of public transportation. **Safe Access.** Safety was seen as a physical barrier in the community and neighborhood in preventing access to the safe spaces, such as girls walking to or from programming or staff sent to homes or emergency situations (domestic violence responders). For youth who identify as LGBTQIA+, people of color, unhoused, and low to no income, physical safety is a constant fear because of their greater exposure to violence, especially for girls.
ADULTS	**Adults.** Another external barrier identified by organizations are the adults in young people's lives. These adults included parents, family members, school personnel, and street bystanders. Strict gender expectations, prevailing attitudes, and lack of understanding and acceptance were all cited as why adults can be a barrier in young people's lives. In fact, "adults" was the only barrier that was cited by all identity groups. Organizations report that the real work is in building awareness in adults, especially because organizations see young people as the experts about their own needs and wants. Additionally, because most youth programming is for those under age 18, parental consent is required to participate in any programs or activities. For some, they are unable to get consent, and for LGBTQIA+ youth this can create issues for those who are not out to their parents.

INSTITUTIONAL

Systemic. Systemic barriers include patriarchy, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, racism, gentrification, pollution, and elitism. Organizations viewed systemic barriers as pervading the lives of girls in all spaces. These barriers felt most present for those organizations serving Latinx communities, citing the current federal government's administration's rhetoric and policies as detrimental to the safety and well-being of young people and the communities they come from. Maria Jimenez with MUA notes, "I am talking about the barriers to access services in English, not being able to fill out forms, the barrier of not understanding the system, knowledge about their rights while also having a lot of responsibilities."

Schools. For program practitioners, sometimes school administrators block content, refuse to provide space, or are strangled by their own bureaucracy in pushing initiatives through. Efforts by Shalom Bayit to introduce boundaries and consent workshops at schools are sometimes thwarted by administrators who may be uncomfortable with discussing topics of sex, sexuality, and relationships. Kim Woozy of Skate Like a Girl describes that many public schools don't allow skating on their campuses, which prevents them from implementing their programming. Natalie Langsdorf from Girls on the Run Bay Area notes limitations of Title IX, explaining, "Title IX, while super important for raising the knowledge of the need for more programming that is equitable and serves women and girls, schools are still figuring out how to navigate that so when they see a girl-specific program they say they can't do it because they don't have an equivalent offering for boys."

Funding. Funding to expand programs or extend services was a barrier cited by 30% of organizations. Organizations noted that funding gaps included unrestricted funds and funds for LGBTQIA+ youth housing, for girls of color, and for programs that are more emergent and intersectional. Anasa Troutman at Shelectricity identifies the siloed, traditional funding models as barriers and describes a desire to access funds that are supporting Black female entrepreneurs looking at innovations in girl programming rooted in community-ownership models. She states, "You don't even get to apply because the guidelines are so narrow and if the arts organizations think you're a tech organization and the tech organizations think you're an art organization, you don't get past the invitation to be able to apply for a grant."

Internal Barriers

STAFF

Staff. Internal barriers included staff capacity and staff turnover. Teen Success reflects, "We lose about 70% of young people if they haven't at least gotten 2/3 of the way through the program if an advocate leaves."
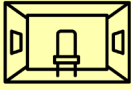
SPACE

Limited physical space. This was not a huge barrier for organizations, but was referenced a handful of times for organizations who want to take on more youth, to create that sense of privacy and safety (Girls on the Run, Art of Yoga), or to build out their programming into a formal youth center.

Individual Barriers

MENTAL HEALTH

Trauma. Practitioners describe an "overload of stressors" that are barriers for engaging with girls. Access to mental health services, if not provided in-house through case management, is a desire for organizations to fully support girls. Both LGBTQIA+- and Latinx-serving organizations mention the number of stressors that their youth face in the community, such as gender-based violence or homophobic violence. Priya Suman of Lyric points out the consequence of this continued stress on young people's lives: "That is definitely something that can affect the safety of the space when you have a youth coming in who's really triggered or has just experienced violence."

Eileen Hall with Planned Parenthood of Mar Monte reflects, "A lot of our clients do need a lot more therapeutic interventions. My case managers are not licensed therapists. A lot of the barriers we see is in trying to link girls up with resources such as medical or different types of counseling services."

SYSTEMIC

Systemic. Racism, misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia provide many individual and personal barriers to girls. Arcenio Lopez with Mixteco states, "For our youth who come from very low-income families, very disadvantaged communities, there is a historical kind of pressure. A 'rejection' from society that keeps telling our youth that being Indigenous is 'not cool.' Our youth are struggling a lot with their own identity, cultural identity. We as Indigenous people, often find ourselves in a position where we have a lot of internalized racism." Shaista Soroya from Malikah describes the difficulty in breaking through gender stereotypes and stigma in the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community:

> In my personal experience, I find it difficult to be heard in those particular spaces, but those are spaces where I take up space. I get resistance from them…from my particular community. It feels like nobody knows how to have these discussions or how to come about it in a healthy productive way.

PROGRAM SUCCESSES

Program practitioners were asked to reflect on their successes and to share how they knew their programming was fostering safe spaces and healthy relationships for girls. Embedded in this question was the desire to identify the anecdotal drivers of success and how organizations truly saw change in their young people over time. Organizations noted two ways of measuring their success: quantitative outcomes ubiquitous to grant- and funder-required measures, and qualitative/anecdotal stories that they thought were more compelling and indicative measures of success.

Quantitative measurements of success included the following:
- attendance: increased number of youth accessing and attending programs;
- retention in returning participants; and
- improved ratings received in post workshop surveys, training evaluations, curriculum assessments, testing, and comparative studies.

Evidence-based measurements of success were cited as an important indicator for about one-third (30%) of the organizations interviewed. Most of these are resource- and education-focused (not direct service) organizations that bring healthy relationship curriculum and training to adults and young people. Both Bay Area Womean Against Rape (BAWAR) and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), which offer healthy-relationships curriculum in schools to prevent domestic violence, believe in evidence-based measures that are tied to direct feedback from students, educators, and administrators. Gretchen Shaw from NCADV clarifies, "We specifically tested and evaluated it through these 16 pilot educators." Thus, this use of evidence-based metrics shows not only support of the traditional quantitative measures that funders use to evaluate the success of a program through numbers and outcomes but also the underlying desire of organizations to respond to and serve the needs of young people. As Erin Scott from the Family Voilence Law Center (FVLC) confirms, "We directly use their feedback in curriculum development and that feels, you know, very tangible and good."

However, more organizations thought qualitative measurements overall were a better indicator of their impact in creating safety and healthy relationships. Figure 3 lists the most commonly shared qualitative indicators of success. While some organizations that provide more technical assistance viewed publishing reports and data or speaking and being represented in larger conferences or gatherings as measures of a success(especially if they served a specific identity such as the Indigenous population), many others identified true success as actually seeing the transformation of individual young people who gained skills positively correlated to girls feeling safe and connected to healthy relationships. These skills include functional shifts, like showing up consistently to weekly check-ins, but are also rooted in improved social-emotional growth— increased self-confidence and self-regulation, responsible decision making, and improved peer and adult relationships, leadership, and goal setting. Eileen Hall of Planned Parenthood Mar Monte described this feeling when she reflected,

> "That's something that we see as a success, you know, to see a youth come from not being able to really identify strengths, not having a lot of social support. You know, not enrolled in school to being enrolled in school. Being able to goal set without us having to really help them."

Figure 3: Most Commonly Shared Qualitative Indicators of Success

Shift in attitudes and a	Social Media engagement	Academic improvements	Local level policy change
Popularity	Community partnerships	Sustained attendance	Continued dialogue
Freedom to be oneself	Ability to teach others	Positive feedback	Parental understanding

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

Arcenio Lopez from Mixteco, an organization serving Indigenous migrant communities of California's Central Coast shares a success story, stating,

> "After the first year of creating some leadership trainings and community organizing trainings, we needed to start a campaign around this word that has been used and feared in the fields and schools that is very derogatory for an indigenous person from Oaxaca. The word is 'Oaxaquita.' So youth decided to start the campaign about 'No me llames Oaxaquita' that was pushing for a resolution for the local schools to prohibit the use of this word in the schools and the classrooms.... I asked them to name their own group with a name that really identifies them. So they named it 'Tequio,' and tequio is an indigenous practice that is about community service, as serving your community to move or to make your community better. 'No me llames Oaxquita' got statewide attention, it motivated other indigenous-led groups in the United States and in Mexico to start having more intentional conversations about discrimination against indigenous people that we always knew existed but sometimes is hard to have conversations about it. So 'No me llames Oaxaquita' really was kind of like that thing that was needed to for us to be more brave and start having these conversations."

Section 4: Reimagining Promising Practices

REIMAGINING PROMISING PRACTICES

Promising or best practices and interventions often reinforce and perpetuate uneven power dynamics and oppressive ways of thinking without getting to the root causes of toxic gender norms and issues of violence for girls. These practices traditionally engage leaders, experts, practitioners, researchers, and institutions while altogether leaving out the voices of girls and those at the margins. A critical remedy to this kind of exclusion is to center girls' voices and provide a platform for them and their champions to identify the supports, approaches, and interventions—or Promising Practices—that they say foster safety and healthy relationships. It is the hope of AFG that these practices will be shared, help highlight collaborative partners, and shed light on ways to incorporate some of these practices into institutional spaces.

Girls and their champions were asked to describe the best ways to support positive, nurturing, and loving relationships for girls. They were also asked to describe how their work fosters and nurtures these radical visions of safety. Participants rarely referenced specific programs by name or distinct practices. Rather, they tended to name practice categories (classes, workshops, groups, etc.) with distinct content foci, but discussed them by naming the practice's intended outcomes. As such, this report analyzes and lays out "Promising Practices" with some interchangeability between content focus and intended outcome—in some ways, they are just as much "Promising Outcomes."

The next three sections highlight practices that foster and provide a pathway for radical visions of safety for girls and that create positive, nurturing, and healthy relationships. First, we focus on emerging Promising Practices that provide protective factors— conditions that not only mitigate the likelihood of young people experiencing violence but also increase their abilities to confidently respond to violence (CDC, 2020). Second, practices are reviewed through two widely respected youth development frameworks— Positive Youth Development and Social and Emotional Learning. Lastly, wecategorize all the practices identified in this report into common practice structures to help other practitioners identify mechanisms for creating programming. Figure 4 shows the most common themes that emerged from this analysis.

Figure 4: Commonly Emerging Promising Practices Themes

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

Promising Practices: Protective Factors for Girls

Both the Foundation's Breaking the Cycle: A Life Course Framework for Preventing Domestic Violence and Alliance for Girls' programming and services emphasize and promote protective factors as having the potential to "guide program and community-based innovations with specific outcomes for the prevention of domestic violence" (Blue Shield Foundation of California, 2019).

AFG strongly supports coordinating services and resources to increase protective factors for girls, as outlined by the CDC (2020). It is important to note that AFG shifted the CDC's terminology to describe risk and protective factors so that it is more strengths-based. This ensures that our research, evaluation, and practice align with our strengths-based frameworks and values. As a result, AFG focused on increasing protective factors and reframing and rewording risk factors. This language includes describing "toxic gender norms" as "strict gender norms," "prosocial peers" as "caring peers," and "culture of violence" as "visions of safety."

Thus, reframed to use AFG's strength-based lens, the protective factors used in this report include:

- shifting strict gender norms
- increasing connection to caring adults and peers
- coordinating a network of care
- increasing community support and connectedness for girls
- parental support and resilience

The findings from the interviews and focus groups showed that awareness and knowledge was by far the most-mentioned Promising Practice to support protective factors for girls, with boundaries and consent as the most frequently mentioned prerequisite for a healthy relationship (Table 8). In addition, practitioners emphasized the importance of digital literacy for girls to increase social awareness and self-management.

Other Promising Practices from the findings included increasing social-emotional support and connection from adults, modeling or creating safe physical spaces, establishing relationships of kinship and representation, and providing opportunities for youth leadership and community involvement (Tables 9 and 10).

Noticeably absent from the findings is coordinating a network of care. Participants did not mention any practices that could be characterized as comprehensively bringing together a system of care that spanned all types of services. This gap is noted in the Literature Review in Section 6 and substantiated through the interviews and focus groups with girls and their champions.

Table 8: Promising Practices Targeting Protective Factors: Shifting Strict Gender Norms

Shifting Strict Gender Norms

AWARENESS & KNOWLEDGE

Awareness and knowledge is by far the most-mentioned Promising Practice. Awareness is about facilitating heightened consciousness and understanding of issues particular to girls. Knowledge is seen as power, and participants recognize the role of knowledge to increase agency for girls.

In our interviews, the concept of awareness and knowledge took many forms: understanding of histories (i.e., Indigenous, Black, structural racism), education around identities, political understanding, recognition of structural violence, digital and media literacy, access to information, and access to resources.

BODIES, BOUNDARIES, & CONSENT

On a national level, the concept of bodies, boundaries, and consent has been a volatile and growing issue. The term "boundaries" is discussed earlier in this report as the most frequently mentioned prerequisite for a positive, nurturing, and healthy relationship. Consent is a specific and particularly important type of boundary. It is an explicit, positive, and clear communication about the agreement and affirmation of sexual and physical activity.

Shalom Bayit provides healthy relationship workshops that increase awareness about dating violence and knowledge of what a loving, respectful relationship looks like for women and girls. These also take an intergenerational approach by educating parents. Zephira Derblich-Milea from Shalom Bayit describes a specific practice of their work around boundaries and consent:

> We ask, what is a healthy relationship? What are healthy boundaries as tools for recognizing when a relationship is moving along a relationship continuum from healthy to unhealthy to abusive? Giving youth an understanding of the warning signs and how to support a friend. One in four teens report experiencing physical abuse in their romantic relationships, which actually tells me that it's happening even more than that because abuse never starts out physical and a lot of people don't acknowledge abuse when it's emotional because of the minimization that happens.

DIGITAL LITERACY

Many program practitioners emphasized the importance of expanding digital literacy for girls in order to teach them how to manage their reputations and recognize abusive behaviors. By deconstructing the messages that girls are receiving through social media, organizations find they are able to strengthen girls' self-awareness, social awareness, and self-management.

Jennifer Berger from AboutFace describes the effects of their programming:

> "We help teenage girls understand their media environment including social media, TV, movies, any other type of media that they're using. Help them break down and decode a lot of the messages they're getting. Whether it be from advertising or whether it be from other types of content that's not advertising. How do they handle themselves and practice wellness with regard to their use of media? And what are some of the messages that they're seeing all the time? Our theory of change is 'education into action.' What happens after we talk with [girls] about representation, social constructs, and all the things that are wrapped up in the messages that they're getting through media is that they often get pretty mad. So we teach them how to take action and give them action tools for making change in ways that make sense to them."

Esther Pearl from Camp Reel Stories describes a specific practice of their work around social media and girls positive body image:

> "We have no mandatory media literacy in our schools and our youth are subjected to so much imagery and we're not giving them any critical thinking skills on how to manage it all. Our organization works with a lot of other media organizations that focus on media literacy. We really give them an opportunity to craft media that is more reflective of their points of view. This shows them how if they're looking at things on social media and it's not making them feel good about themselves there are ways that they can have agency and advocacy to change that.

> "We bring in social media influencers and they really pull back the freaking curtain of this is what I look like. The influencer world – they are working 24 hours a day. It is trying to give them knowledge. If they want to be an influencer and if that is something you are drawn to and are connected to, that's cool, but here's what it really entails and maybe that's super attractive to you or maybe they're like, 'oh'."

Table 9: Promising Practices Targeting Protective Factors: Increasing Connection to Caring Adults and Peers

Increasing Connection to Caring Adults and Peers

ADULT SUPPORT

Adult support encompasses the distinct and various ways practices and approaches can position adults to help girls. Adult support scaffolds important connections and relationships for girls to achieve radical spaces of safety and healthy relationships. Social and emotional guidance by adults includes encouragement, listening, and holding informal spaces to say "good job," or as Anasa Troutman from Shelectricity suggests saying to girls, "We will support you in manifesting that thing, whatever it is for yourself."

Shaista Soroya from Malikah describes their active listening approach this way: "Malikah is holding space for us to listen to others. Really listen rather than coming up with like an answer or some sort of feedback before they finish."

Priya Suman with Lyric SF described how they intentionally carve out space: "I block an hour after group so that in case someone needs to check in with me."

MODELING

Modeling was described as replicating both safe and healthy physical spaces, as well as safe and healthy behaviors and relationships. In the first, space is intentionally designed so that girls can understand what a safe space and healthy environment feels like, and having seen it, can come to expect and ask for that in their lives. This is an important nuance and distinction from other risk-factor models where physical safety is about the intervention and spaces created to protect girls after they've been harmed. The physical space of safety described here, distinct to underserved girls who are pushed to the margins, is creating a practice where physical safety can be modeled as an expectation for their lives where it may not have been present before.

Jennifer Lyle from Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth (MISSSEY) describes the physical space they create: "Our space is clean and it's free of strife and stress and they have good healthy foods that they have access to. Because we're setting a standard that we have for their health and well-being without necessarily telling them what that looks like."

Modeling also occurs in the ways the adults in the room demonstrate the kind of behavior girls should expect for themselves and from others. Dawn Edwards from Oakland LGBTQ Community Center describes their peer engagement approach:

> We have a few female volunteers in their early 20s. They've been critical in coming in, getting to know the youth, adding their youthful experience, and showing their understanding of how they see the world and how they walk in it. The youth have been really gaining a lot of knowledge of having intergenerational models.

Table 10: Promising Practices Targeting Protective Factors: Increasing Community Support and Connectedness for Girls

Increasing Community Support and Connectedness for Girls

BELONGING

The practice of belonging makes girls feel a mutuality of kinship and likeness, where they feel included because of, or regardless of, their "differences." Belonging was described as practices of acceptance, representation, and cultural humility.

Representation was described as having teachers, staff, and peers who are people of color, queer, or speak the native language of the girls being served. Hamida Yusufzai from Banteay Srei describes how their programming and leadership is representative of the people they serve: "We have board members, all Southeast Asian women of various ages, various ethnicities, various careers."

Cultural humility was described as a grounded understanding and empathy of the strengths and histories of other cultures, values, beliefs, and identities. It is a competence and standard that puts the onus of learning and critique on the adults working with young people. Eileen Hall from Planned Parenthood Mar Monte describes, "We are meeting them with a case manager that is appropriate for them. Our case managers go through different types of training to be culturally appropriate. We take into consideration really meeting the youth where it's at. Not really putting any labels on them."

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Youth leadership is characterized as a driver of change that also influences health and safety. Youth-led practices encourage resistance, political awareness, policy reform, and public speaking around issues affecting girls' radical visions of safety and healthy relationships. Some examples include youth engagement and youth organizing in town halls, summits, advocacy, campaigns, and movements.

Break the Cycle use a combination of grassroots, social media, and youth-led engagement to amplify movements against domestic violence. They bridge gaps in programming by focusing on youth leadership and education, capacity building, and policy and legislative change. Their Let's Be Real (LBR) movement brings together over 550 youth who use their voices to build conversation and educate their peers on healthy dating relationships and teen dating violence, as well as to share their personal stories and experiences.

The RYSE center is a community-based organization creating safe spaces for the youth of Richmond, California to participate in programs, workshops, and events that allow them to build and initiate solutions in community health and education. RYSE's community health program Let's Talk About Sex is designed to educate youth about sexual health practices and healthy behaviors as a response to what the youth themselves identified as a priority for themselves and their community.

The Role of Multigenerational Practices

An important finding from the Foundation's Breaking the Cycle emphasizes the ways in which multigenerational interventions prevent and mitigate the risk for girls around domestic violence and harassment. Because girls are at a greater risk for experiencing generational imprint of unsafe and unhealthy relationships, this report highlights multigenerational practices that foster safe spaces and healthy relationships between young parents, between girls and their parents/caregivers, and between girls and other adult support. Table 11 provides an overview of multigenerational practices that foster safe spaces and healthy relationships for young parents, girls, and their caregivers.

Table 11: Multigenerational Practices Fostering Safe Spaces and Healthy Relationships for Young Parents, Girls, and Their Parents/CaregiversGirls, and Their Parents/Caregivers

Parental Support and Resilience	
PARENT ENGAGEMENT	Parent(s)/caregiver(s) engagement is characterized as first creating dialogue between parents and girls, and second as extending the practices, awareness, knowledge, and resources provided to girls to their parents. Parents are often described in interviews as lacking understanding and actual knowledge about boundaries, consent, dating, domestic violence, and what it means to be gender expansive. Further, parents are often disconnected and lack the skills and tools to actively listen, engage, and express themselves to their kids. Participants describe practices bridging these gaps in parent-child dialogue. Miriam Wong from The Latina Center describes, "What we try to do is invite younger generations and older generations [into our workshops] and ask them to talk about how they are feeling. What do they need from the parents?" Zephira Derblich-Milea from Shalom Bayit details how her organization engages parents in talking about healthy relationships: There's our core workshop, which is for parents of middle school and up. It's about understanding dating and domestic violence specifically around teens. What are warning signs? Understanding how we talk about and teach consent, healthy relationships, and healthy boundaries. Giving parents a space to think about what kind of values they have, both general values and Jewish values that they want to make around relationships and sexuality.

YOUNG PARENT SUPPORT

Young parents exist at the intersections of need and support—they need youth development support, but as a parent they also need the connection to services aligned to parental resilience and engagement. This creates unique conceptions for them of what a safe space and healthy relationship should look and feel like.

Eileen Hall from Planned Parenthood Mar Monte talked about the concrete support they provide to meet young parents where they are, and described unorthodox ways they sometimes provide assistance:

> Meeting them where they're at, where they can bring their baby with them, you know, sometimes we even just meet in cars. Just to create that safe space with them and really just getting to know them first. Because so many of our youth have been through so many different types of systems...we try to create like a safe place for them to text us back, to let us know what's going on and knowing that it's not anything punitive that's going to come from us or any kind of negative image that we're going to have of them. We understand, you know, that we're meeting them wherever they're comfortable at and sometimes it takes a little longer to foster those relationships.

WHOLE SUPPORT

Whole support is comprehensive assistance for parents, threading basic needs, childcare, development of life and professional skills, support circles, and welfare services.

Several participants in a young parents' focus group from Young Women's Freedom Center (YWFC) discussed the biggest value they receive from YWFC is childcare, use of basic office equipment, getting basic needs met, and having a space to get away and feel comfortable. One young parent states, "It's being welcomed, where you can have children around, where they just play with each other and you're doing your own thing and you have everything available for you, like food, connections, resources, and in one place. It makes such a huge difference."

Maria Jimenez from MUA describes their parenting support program:

> One of the very good components of the program is that we always take care of their children. The ladies arrive, leave their children in the childcare area, and go to the meeting knowing that they have two hours to cry, to express themselves, to have coffee. Time that is dedicated for them to feel good without thinking that their child is crying. We have a model program in which the caregivers are members the women actually know. They are prepared and trained to take care of children so it also makes them feel comfortable and makes them feel relaxed as a family.

Promising Practices:
Youth Development Frameworks for Girls

Two youth development frameworks were used to further ground the Promising Practices identified in this report: Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). These two frameworks were selected because they are widely respected strengths-based models of youth development and serve as a valuable reference point for potential areas of exploration and growth for programs. Conversely, they also serve as reference points for the youth development landscape to compare how existing frameworks may further exclude the needs of girls, thereby providing a pivot point for looking at how design frameworks include or exclude girls and those most marginalized.

PYD is centered on notions of competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring, while SEL focuses on responsible decision making, relationship skills, self-management, social awareness, and self-awareness. Research has shown a positive correlation between bolstering SEL skills/behaviors and improved physical and mental health and lower rates of violence (Jones et. al., 2015). It has also shown a positive correlation between PYD skills, behaviors, and attitudes and improved well-being. This is particularly true for underserved and overlooked youth populations (Bonnie & Backes, 2019 a).

Within interview and focus-group transcripts, there were 272 mentions of various Promising Practices. Seventy-one were aligned to one or more indicators of PYD, and 38 were aligned to one or more indicators of SEL (Figure 5). Because one practice could be tagged infinitely to multiple themes and multiples frameworks, a practice can be aligned to one or more frameworks and more than one indicator within a framework. As such, these numbers are simply an aggregated count of practices by framework and provide a cursory and relative glance at Promising Practices through the lenses of PYD and SEL.

Figure 5: Count of Promising Practices by Youth Development Framework Indicators

Confidence	7	Self-Awareness	7
Character	9	Social Awareness	8
Caring	20	Responsible Decision Making	10
Connection	22	Relationship Skills	10
Competence	31	Self-Management	11
Total PYD	71	Total SEL	38

Source: 41 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

Competence, or the ability and motivation for civic and social engagement, cultural engagement, physical health, emotional health, intellectual achievement and employability, was the most commonly reported PYD skill in interviews and focus groups. Sara Guillermo from IGNITE describes their civic engagement work with girls:

> Young women feel equipped, they have the skill sets they need in order to be able to vote, to be able to register voters, to be able to speak their truth and to be able to also just have the tools that they need to ultimately run for office, from public speaking, to understanding how fundraising campaigns happen, to understanding how many voters you need to win within a district and what it's like to canvass.

There were fewer Promising Practices aligned to SEL than PYD. Karin Kelley from Teen Success describes how their practices align to SEL skills: "We are building their skill set to solve their own problems and helping them see that they have within them the answers, and we're there to help them discover those answers and of course connect to whatever supports that they need in terms of additional services."

Natalie Langsdorf from Girls on the Run Bay Area describes the ways their programming helps and guides relationship skill development this way:

> We train the coaches to really use those in between times to build relationships. And I think for kids they don't necessarily have a lot of other opportunities outside of parents or teachers to develop relationships. And they don't have any opportunities necessarily to think about how to be really strategic and healthy about forming relationships with their peers and building friendships.

Overall, girls and their champions characterized a more comprehensive and interdependent approach around the integration of practices that foster self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-management, which this report categorizes as self-actualization. This interconnectedness of self and its manifestation was seen as a Promising Practice, as described in Table 12.

Table 12: Promising Practice: Self-Actualization

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Self-actualization encompasses self-awareness and self-regulation, or the ability to understand and control reactions and emotions. When girls can be self-aware of who they are, and have the capacity to emotionally self-regulate, they're able to make better decisions and choices, or as Kim Woozy from Skate Like a Girl describes, "transform fear to confidence."

Eileen Hall from Planned Parenthood Mar Monte describes a self-awareness activity called My Strengths:

> [Girls are asked to identify] What are strengths you have? What are strengths you haven't identified yet? A case manager notes what they see in them and ask if that's something that they see in themselves. Our youth are surprised to see how many strengths they have because that's not something they're typically focused on. It's something they use later. They remind themselves of the strengths they have when trying out a new job; going to a different program; looking for housing.

Mary Lynn from Art of Yoga describes how the organization's trauma-informed yoga and mindfulness practices affect girls' decision making, emotion processing, and choices:

> They can be better attuned to others, they can recognize cues, and monitor their own safety and comfort in relationships. When maybe they're about to send a text, they might be more connected to their intuition, and they can hold back and take a deep breath and say, you know, this isn't in my best interest. Instead of being reactive, they're embodied, they're more connected to their feelings because as you know when we get nervous about something our heart rate goes up and we can tap in and say this doesn't feel right. We're really trying to get girls to know themselves well, and we call our curriculum Wise Inside.

Promising Practices: Common Structures of Practice

Most practices fell into one of four delivery methods: classes and workshops, circles and groups, activity- and skills-based programming, and advocacy and civic engagement (Table 13).

Table 13: Common Structures of Practice

CLASS AND WORKSHOPS	Classes and workshops were the most common and widely accessed format for interventions. Variations in this category include trainings, prevention education, courses, and any learning involving curriculum or lessons. Some of these classes and workshops are youth-led and/or youth co-created.
CIRCLES AND GROUPS	Circles and groups were practiced by more than half of the programs interviewed. Twenty-one of the 38 program practitioners interviewed mentioned sharing circles, sister bonding circles, affinity spaces, parenting groups, restorative circles, and/or youth groups as a part of their practices. These circles and groups are often further broken down into dedicated groups that hold space for specific identities, such as parents, women of color, LGBTQIA+, girls, or race/ethnicity.
ACTIVITY AND SKILL-BASED PROGRAMMING	Activity- and skill-based programming uses a specific and distinct activity or skill to promote the intended long-term outcome of radical spaces of safety and healthy relationships for girls. Some standout activities include skateboarding, filmmaking, yoga, running, volleyball, meditation and mindfulness, and martial arts. Standout skills include public speaking, leadership, organizing and advocacy, citizenship classes, English language classes, resume writing, and parenting.
ADVOCACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT	Advocacy and civic engagement practices encourage resistance, political awareness, policy reform, and public speaking around issues affecting girls' radical visions of safety and healthy relationships. Some examples include youth engagement and organizing in town halls, summits, advocacy, campaigns, and movements.

One format lesser used, but with distinct advantages, is online and social media platforms. This unique and emerging practice is featured in the spotlight show in Table 14.

Table 14: Featured Structure of Practice

	Structure Spotlight
SOCIAL MEDIA	Social media has an inevitable presence in the lives of girls. Practitioners interviewed describe the potential merits and drawbacks of social media as a platform to grow their audience of girls, raise awareness about their causes, and connect girls to resources. It is a powerful means for communication and connection with girls who use their smartphones to text, direct message, tweet, tag, forward, like, and share. However, it also has the same precarious power to perpetuate unhealthy relationships, poor body image, and can be used for digital abuse and sexual harassment. While online platforms and social media are not widely used for program delivery and are often resisted as a valuable platform for youth engagement, it does have distinct merits. As Jasmine Uribe from Break the Cycle states, "We found that young people really like to organize online so a lot of how we create that authentic space and nurturing space is in valuing the ways that they want to communicate." Team Enough, which is a youth-led anti-gun violence organization, notes that social media is the primary way they connect with like-minded young people, survivors of school-based violence, and a way to organize. Kaylee Tyner states: A lot of times we determine whether what we've been doing is successful or not based off the likes and responses on social media by other youth. I think for youth specifically, a lot of our lives are on social media and we are trying to use that to our advantage because that is a huge way to network and to organize. Digital platforms can provide accessibility to radical spaces of safety for girls while still tapping into feelings of belonging. For gender-expansive youth not out to their parents or families, this kind of accessibility is imperative. Gender Spectrum hosts many online groups for gender-expansive youth and their parents. Yarrow Halpern from Gender Spectrum shares: We are literally holding safe spaces for youth. Because it's online programming we are able to serve folks internationally and domestically from all sorts of communities so if you don't have an LGBTQ Center, if you don't have access, we're basically creating access by hosting these online groups. This might be the only time that a youth has been in a space, even virtually, where there's other folks experiencing gender in ways that they are and where they're able to have that space to not worry or stress about their gender and just be in that moment in that one hour of this online program.

Section 5: Forward Strategy and Conclusion

FORWARD STRATEGY AND CONCLUSION

This section recognizes areas to amplify and support, and identifies ways to preserve and magnify continuity, connection, and progressive recommendations.

Areas to Amplify

There are two areas to amplify to ensure change and further support radical visions of safety and healthy relationships for girls: 1) creating a continuum of services and 2) bolstering population and identity groups.

Creating a Continuum of Services

Integrating systems of support. Services and their funding structures exist in silos. These systems include mental health services, legal services, educational services, housing, and reproductive health, to name a few. While girls define their needs about safety and healthy relationships in interrelated and dynamic ways, access to systems of services does not reflect the needs of girls as whole people. Girls and their champions mention the need for more intentional and in-depth trauma-informed training, legal pathways and resources, and mental health services for girls, as well as extending these same supports into schools and communities. This similarly affects funding for programs that may have comprehensive services but have limited access to philanthropic support.

Adapting and reflecting content and practice for multiple outcomes. Most systems and practices support girls in one direction—college and career success. If that is not the trajectory for a young person, their options for continued engagement and support is lost. Since most practices and interventions supporting safety and healthy relationships serve this direction, there is a lack of Promising Practices for girls aged 18 to 24 who are unstably housed or disconnected from programming hosted in educational spaces such as schools.

Promoting and funding multigenerational practices. Because services are siloed and disconnected, the populations they serve are not well-integrated. Services support young people or parents or preteens or adults. Anasa Troutman with Shelectricity states, "We have to move thousands and hundreds of thousands and millions of girls, and so we need something to be the connective tissue between all these girls, their families, their caretakers, their teachers, and the people who support them programmatically." Maria Jimenez with MUA also describes the need to connect intergenerational groups:

> "[It is important] not to isolate or separate young girls from older women nor create something that is exclusively for specific ages. We believe that we all learn and we all teach. We have tried to break many of the stigmas that tell us that only adults are those who have wisdom or that only young people are the ones who can do things. We integrate most of our activities and design it in a way that everyone can participate."

Increasing parent engagement into programming. A significant number of programs mention not knowing how their programming has affected their young people's relationships with their parents, families, and the other adults in their lives. The capacity to engage parents is something most programs do not have access to. Scaling and expanding existing promising approaches that provide pathways, tools, and resources for programs working with girls would increase parent engagement and promote multigenerational dialogue.

Increasing digital literacy for adults. In order for young people to understand the impact of their digital presence, their parents, caregivers, and champions need to as well. Because teens and preadolescent youth spend approximately 5 to 8 hours a day on screens, not including homework Common Sense Media, 2019), social media training should extend to adults so they are also equipped to understand prosocial online behaviors. Some organizations interviewed for this report provide these trainings (About-Face, NCADV, Tech Safety/NNEDV) and can support other organizations in building literacy for adults and youth.

Bolstering Support of Specific Identity Groups

Increasing community engagement for young parents. Young parents and their champions mention the isolation and disconnect they experience from their communities when they become parents due to their own shifting identities, stigma, and reduced social connections. Increasing community education, awareness, and advocacy around young parents can help reduce stigma.

Expanding and scaling access to gender-expansive knowledge, tools, and resources for LGBTQIA+ parents. Gender-expansive youth most desire acceptance and acknowledgment from their "families of origin" in order to feel safe. Gender Spectrum points to the lack of accessible resources and knowledge for parents and families. As such, it is important to make resources on gender-expansive issues more accessible, available, and approachable for parents and caregivers. However, parent/caregiver consent should not be a barrier to young people connecting to services,

knowledge, and support networks, so it is also important to establish modalities that can bypass parental consent, if needed.

Increasing awareness around the dichotomy of inclusion and exclusion for LGBTQIA+ groups. Because young people's identities and sense of belonging is varied, evolving, and complex, all programs and practitioners need to understand that same variability in their inclusive practices. Most organizations identify their practices as inclusive by default and they do not actively exclude anyone. As programs begin to explore more intentional inclusive practices, however, it is important to carefully consider their approaches and methods of inclusion. Some LGBTQIA+ young people note they come to programming spaces to unify around their interests and not their respective identities. One LGBTQIA+ champion states it shouldn't always be about including LGBTQIA+ perspectives into curriculum or programming, but rather removing ideas around a binary. Including "other perspectives" presumes a central existence to be included into. One staff noted that an attempt to expand their curriculum to include LGBTQIA+ perspectives received this response from young people: "'We don't want anything to be in the binary. I just want to talk about relationships, all relationships and that the binary should just be taken out.' Like heteronormative stuff should just be taken out of the curriculum...so they really push that envelope for us."

Some programs serving LGBTQIA+ young people identified creating affinity spaces and circles to provide inclusion and allow for feelings of "sameness in their experiences." However, there was a juxtaposition to the role of inclusion and the effects of inclusion. One practitioner noted that the more LGBTQIA+ youth felt a sense of belonging and inclusion through sharing circles and safe spaces, the more their sense of exclusion was heightened after leaving that space. As Erik Martinez from SFUSD states, "[They're more attuned to] multiple forms of harm. They're coming into the rest of their lives with a different awareness." This is important to note for other practitioners when thinking about readjusting practices and lenses commensurate to the evolving experiences and awareness that results from inclusive practices.

Expanding Promising Practices to overlooked age groups. Practices related to radical visions of safety and healthy relationships for girls are primarily, if not exclusively, targeted at middle school and high school-aged girls. As such, there is a lack of programming and services fostering safety and healthy relationship support for those between 18 and 24, elementary school-aged, and in early childhood. Particularly for girls ages 18 to 24, if they exist outside the school system, there is not only a gap in available interventions but also a disconnect in the understanding of where and how to access resources that foster safe spaces and healthy relationships.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Based on the findings of this report, there are two next steps recommended to sustain and provide immediate pathways that build the capacity needed to support girls and their champions in forging safety and healthy relationships: 1) creating a girl-centered evaluation framework, and 2) establishing a multigenerational community of practice for girls.

Creating a Girl-Centered Evaluation Framework

Developing an evolving, girl-centered evaluation framework for visions of safety and healthy relationships. There are many youth development and social welfare frameworks, outcomes, and measures used by foundations, grants, and funders to determine the quality of programming and practice. Few, if any, of these interventions are centered on the voices of girls, and determined by the experiences of their intended benefactors. Evaluation Studio recommends the creation of a quality framework created and developed by girls, gender-expansive youth, and programs exclusively serving these groups. Program practitioners interviewed for this report point to their programming's intangible measures of success, which are often not captured due to stringent grant guidelines. Additionally, based on the concepts of safety and healthy relationships identified in this report, there is an entire subsidiary of outcomes valued by girl-serving organizations but not captured, esteemed, or acknowledged. Giving recognition and providing rigor to a girl-centered evaluation framework will open space for pushing foundations, funders, and communities to recognize other outcomes and create institutional power for girls and their champions.

Establishing a Multigenerational Community of Practice for Girls

Developing a radical vision of safety for a multigenerational community of practice (CoP). Given the importance of promising multigenerational practices as supported by girls, their champions, and research, as well as the lack of a continuum of services bridging parent engagement, parental resilience, and adult support, Evaluation Studio recommends establishing and convening a multigenerational community of practice to support girls. This CoP would bring together girls of all ages, parents, caregivers, girl champions, teachers, administrators, researchers, leaders, and all supporting adults to address multigenerational practices and sustainably foster a continuum of care addressing girls' radical visions of safety.

CONCLUSION

Girls are the experts of their own wants and needs. They are insightful and optimistic, and they are best qualified to determine the kind of radical visions of safety they desire. This report has assembled the voices and personal wisdom of girls and their champions to create an opportunity to think in new ways about what safety and healthy relationships mean to them and the types of innovative solutions, practices, and approaches needed to achieve that vision.

In this report, girls and their champions describe and define with clarity and resilience what they mean by safety and healthy relationships. Their characterizations move away from conventional and institutionalized understandings that conflate safety with protection and being free from harm or danger. Their experiences—as girls of color, as young parents, as isolated by their communities, as trans, queer, and gender expansive, and as whole people—have informed them that safety and healthy relationships are defined by trust, belonging, comfort, fun, respect, and sovereignty. Self-love and self-actualization can be achieved through fostering these needs and uplifting Promising Practices of engagementleadership, and knowledge along with support from their parents, families, other adults, and communities.

Truly listening to what girls and their champions have to say not only focuses on the root causes of safety and well-being affecting girls but also weaves together the complex policies and practices needed to address those issues. Moving forward, the stories, voices, and tools defined and magnified in this report will hopefully contribute to a better continuum of care, a shift in research practices involving girls, and the dissemination of impactful change strategies in addressing domestic violence and strict gender expectations.

Section 6: How This Report was Created

HOW THIS REPORT WAS CREATED

The *Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls* report was developed from 1) a review of the extant literature on strengths-based outcomes for girls addressing toxic gender norms and cultures of violence; 2) analysis of the services benefitting girls that organizations currently provide and the approaches they use; and 3) analysis of local and national gender- and culturally responsive principles of practice and case studies showing how members address strict gender norms and violence.

AFG, in partnership with Evaluation Studio, conducted 4 focus groups and 41 interviews with a total of 89 girls, parents/caregivers, stakeholders, and program practitioners. Alliance for Girls will continue to apply the practices and recommendations gleaned from these interviews and magnify supports and programs benefitting girls.

Literature Review

The Blue Shield of California Foundation's Breaking the Cycle report and Alliance for Girls' Lived Experiences of Girls report series both lay out the prevalence of need and the conditions necessary to shape interventions around safety and healthy relationships for girls. However, neither report reviewed the existing landscape of research about practice and interventions. This literature review provides that framework, with a comprehensive look at research currently shaping the discussions and practices about violence prevention, safety, and healthy relationships—with a specific eye toward girls.

Preventing Violence for Girls

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a violence prevention framework in its Connecting the Dots report. In the report, the CDC delineates risk and protective factors that influence the likeliness that someone will experience violence. Protective factors are individual or environmental characteristics, conditions, and behaviors that reduce the effects of stressful life events or increase resilience (CDC, 2014). Based on the CDC's report, as well as the information girls shared with AFG, this report focuses on the risk and protective factors identified as important for preventing violence. Risk factors include toxic gender norms and a culture of violence, while protective factors include connection to caring adults and prosocial peers, a coordinated a network of care, and increased community support and connectedness. However, AFG reframes the CDC's factors to align with its own strengths-based research practice. As a result, this report reframes "toxic gender norms" as "strict gender norms," "prosocial peers" as "caring peers," and "culture of violence" as "visions of safety." Therefore, the report focuses on empirical research and practices that aim to:
- shift strict gender norms;
- increase connection to caring adults and peers;
- coordinate a network of care; and
- increase community support and connectedness for girls.

The Role of Protective Factors and the Effects of Toxic Stress

Much research has been done on the effects of toxic stress and the role of protective factors and developmental relationships in ameliorating those effects on young people (Eckenrode, et al., 2017; Cabrera and Leyendecker, 2017). While there are many kinds of stress that young people face, toxic stress is a major contributing factor affecting their well-being, healthy relationships, and ability to feel safe in all their related spheres. Toxic stress is commonly defined as a persistent and heightened form of stress that endures due to a lack of healthy coping skills and lack of support. It is often considered the most detrimental form of stress because it "hampers the hippocampus's ability to promote contextual learning, which makes it difficult for a person to discriminate between dangerous situations and safe ones" (Bonnie and Backes, 2019). Girls often experience toxic stress through everyday harassment, strict gender expectations, rejection, bullying, and feelings of being unsafe.

Because mitigating toxic stress by controlling a young person's environment at all times is unrealistic, the empirical research focuses instead on protective factors. Specifically, creating healthy coping mechanisms and girding positive developmental relationships for young people represent the best ways to give them the building blocks and skills for sustainable support against toxic stress (Thompson and Goodvin, 2016). Developmental relationships are young people's relationships with self, peers, caring adults, and intergenerational influences such as parents, caregivers, and extended family. These relationships are intentional and seen as opportunities for learning and

development (Osher et al., 2018). Positive relationships protect young people and create opportunities for safety and well-being: "Early and ongoing developmental relationships at home and at school promote balance between self-regulatory systems and contribute to the child's capacity to regulate emotions, behavior, and cognition; to develop a sense of agency; to feel connected to other people; and to establish an autobiographical narrative" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Murray et al., 2015).

Two Frameworks for Supporting Protective Factors for Youth

There are two primary frameworks for supporting positive youth outcomes through programming and services: Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). These two pedagogical frameworks are commonly cited in research as cultivating the necessary skills, behaviors, and attitudes to help young people reduce the effects of toxic stress, foster safe spaces, develop healthy relationships, and sustainably promote their well-being. These frameworks provide the context in which youth protective factors can thrive. This is particularly true for underserved and overlooked youth populations (Bonnie and Backes, 2019).

Positive Youth Development

Positive Youth Development has been a widely adopted concept within community-based organizations and expanded learning programs for over a decade. It is a strengths-based perspective for adolescent development, often conceptualized as the Five C's, which include competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring. Competence is the ability and motivation for civic and social engagement, cultural engagement, physical health, emotional health, intellectual achievement, and employability. Confidence is having a sense of mastery and self-efficacy for the future. Connection is feeling membership and belonging, having a sense of safety and structure. Character is having a sense of responsibility and autonomy, a sense of spirituality, and awareness of one's own personality or individuality. Finally, caring is defined as having a sense of being cared for and loved, as well as the ability to form strong friendships, and the desire to care for others (family, peers, community, and global).

Research indicates that PYD has a positive impact on communities of color and girls of color by improving social and mental processing, promoting protective factors, and fostering positive pathways of well-being through improved interactions and relationships with their peers, families, schools, and communities (Cabrera & Leyendecker, 2017; McGee, 2019). For girls of color, PYD has the potential to create the "tools and strategies to push back against, question, and ultimately reframe discrimination and the stigmatization they experience" (Roy et al., 2016). Because of PYD, girls of color can create safe spaces by fostering critical thinking and open dialogue to express themselves against toxic expectations and share their concerns.

Social and Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a specialized "instruction in processing, integrating, and selectively applying social and emotional skills in appropriate ways" (Durlak et al., 2011). One of the most respected SEL frameworks is CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), which has a demonstrated impact in fostering identity development, self-awareness, critical thinking, resilience, confidence, and connection. These can be seen in the ways they benefit young people through improved relationships and well-being, reduced bullying, and feeling safer and more connected to their communities (DePaoli & Atwell, 2018; Jones & Greenberg, 2015; Taylor et al., 2017;). Additionally, there is a proven correlation between a lack of SEL skills and behaviors on the one hand, and poor physical and mental health and higher rates of violence on the other (Jones et al., 2015). Social and Emotional Learning is often characterized by the following five domains:

> • Responsible decision making is the ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

> • Relationship skills is the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

> • Self-management is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

> • Social awareness is the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

> • Self-awareness is the ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

The Roles of Schools and Community-Based Organizations In Supporting PYD and SEL

The developmental assets cultivated through PYD and SEL have the greatest implications for youth development programs (Benson, 2003; Lerner et al., 2005). Schools and community-based organizations (CBOs) are the most accessible conduits for addressing violence, sexuality, and healthy relationships. They are best equipped to promote strategies, interventions, and prevention because of their access to young people and convenience in intervening and providing support. They are also the best connectors between parents/caregivers, families, and their young people. Schools and CBOs are already spaces for learning; they are also some of the few institutions that provide a continuum of services. This is particularly true for middle schoolers who need to enhance skills and attitudes about healthy relationships and benefit from teaching or supports to learn about healthy relationships and boundaries, promote positive behaviors, reduce strict gender norms, and promote intergenerational community skills (Simon et al., 2008). Additionally, according to Osher et al. (2018):

> Structural and social features of schools and early childhood educational settings that provide a developmentally rich context can enhance developmental range, buffer the effects of stress and trauma, promote resilience, and accelerate the development and integration of affective, cognitive, social, and emotional processes.

A number of case studies on programs such as Start Strong, Shifting Boundaries, and Expect Respect have demonstrated the impact and benefits that schools and CBOs have in promoting safe spaces, nurturing healthy relationships, and improving well-being in young people. The case studies also demonstrate the ways in which schools and CBOs manifest and transfer SEL and PYD skills and behaviors (Miller et al., 2015; Rosenbluth, 2002; Stein, 2010).

There is also research that points to ways in which social justice programming—such as civic engagement, advocacy, and student activism—has immense benefits in transferring PYD and SEL skills to girls. This type of programming can promote social and self-awareness, build confidence, and improve connection to community (Crenshaw, 2015; Muno, 2014; Revilla, 2004). Through student activism and civic engagement programs, girls are able to develop the language, energy, peer support, sense of belonging, and bolstered sense of identity that supports safe spaces for them.

A Gap in Integrated Systems and a Services Continuum

Beyond PYD and SEL, the Social-Ecological Model (SEM), which has been the framework guiding AFG research, implies the importance of an ecosystem of institutional support. However, the literature shows that support systems for young people are siloed, highly specialized, disjointed, and complex. Often these specialized systems exist across four domains—education, health, child welfare, and justice—which young people must learn to navigate if they want to receive comprehensive care. Programs and support for young people's cognitive needs are similarly disjointed, with a lack of continuity connecting programming resources across youth's changing and maturing cognitive needs as they develop (Osher et al., 2018). This happens for a number of reasons, including the ways funding and organizational structures also exist in silos. In addition, institutions tend to not address young people as a whole, but as segmented and with disconnected problems.

A continuum of support should extend from young people to their parents, caregivers, and other influential relationships pertinent to their development. While the research points to the importance of parental and caregiver connections and the influence of adults and families, the literature about youth development programming posits a lack of research and practices that incorporate intergenerational engagement, such as offering SEL and PYD programming, like confidence-building activities, to involve parents and caregivers or even directly target them.

This segmented approach most negatively impacts underserved young people, particularly girls of color. It disproportionately affects underserved communities because "while socioeconomically advantaged families have the resources to 'knit together' this patchwork of institutional demands, choices, and costs, disadvantaged youth may have less success in integrating them without guidance" (Jackson, 2019). For girls to flourish, they need all people, systems, and institutions of support to contribute to their social and emotional development if they want to protect their safety and well-being (Bonnie & Backes, 2019a).

Key Highlights of the Literature Review Landscape

This literature review highlights SEL and PYD as the primary frameworks guiding discussions and practices around violence prevention, safety, and healthy relationships with a specific eye toward girls. Additional notable findings include:

- There is little continuity and integration of systems and practices. The literature identifies the need to create a continuum of support among systems and institutions in order to address issues of safety and healthy relationships.

- Protective factors gird positive developmental relationships by fostering skills and behaviors that promote coping mechanisms to deal with toxic stress.

• Through Positive Youth Development (PYD) girls can create safe spaces for opening discussion and dialogue, which allow for freedom of expression against discriminating gender expectations.

• Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) helps young people foster identity development, self-awareness, critical thinking, resilience, confidence, and connection, which help to improve relationships and well-being.

• Social justice programming (such as civic engagement, advocacy, and student activism) has immense benefits in transferring PYD and SEL skills to girls to promote social and self-awareness, build confidence, and improve connection to community.

• There is a lack of literature connecting many of these practices more specifically to girls.

The *Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls* report aims to build on the extant literature to highlight the promising practices that prevent violence for girls. These practices work to prevent violence by building up protective factors for girls' safety, as defined by the lived experience and expertise of girls and their champions.

Research Methodology

There are a few main takeaways from the Foundation's Breaking the Cycle: A Life Course Framework for Preventing Domestic Violence report and AFG's Lived Experience of Girls report. First, strengths-based interventions are important pathways to violence prevention for girls. Second, girls should be the centers of knowledge when communicating and defining what they want for safe spaces and healthy relationships. The research methodology of the Radical Visions of Safety for Girls by Girls report is built on these main conclusions, as well as AFG's guiding frameworks, including SEM, intersectionality, and transformational resistance. These, in turn, informed the research questions, the sampling frame, and the analysis. Participants interviewed in this report exist in a diverse range of spaces. Voices of young people from varying backgrounds serve as the main sources of knowledge, and the analysis and findings are grounded in language, nuance, resistance, decolonized values, and lived experiences.

Four guiding research questions shape the methodologies, sampling framework, data sources, and activities:

• Based on the lived experiences of girls, what protective factors and positive youth development interventions, supports, and practices do girls identify that foster safety and healthy relationships for themselves?

• What does the landscape of protective factors and positive youth

development interventions and practices look like? What do programs/practices have in common, and how are they different?

• What are the gaps in research and best practices around positive youth development and protective factors that foster safety and healthy relationships for girls? What and who is missing from the literature, approaches, and interventions?

• What roles do the intersections of gender, culture, sexual identity, and socioeconomic background play in how practices about positive youth development and protective factors that foster safety and healthy relationships for girls are understood?

Sampling Framework

This report used a convenience-based sampling approach in selecting participants for interviews and focus groups. Because this report uses strengths-based pathways to understand what girls shared about safety and healthy relationships, a youth-focused sampling framework was used to screen in programs, participants, and stakeholders for interviews (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Promising Practices for Youth-Focused Sampling Framework
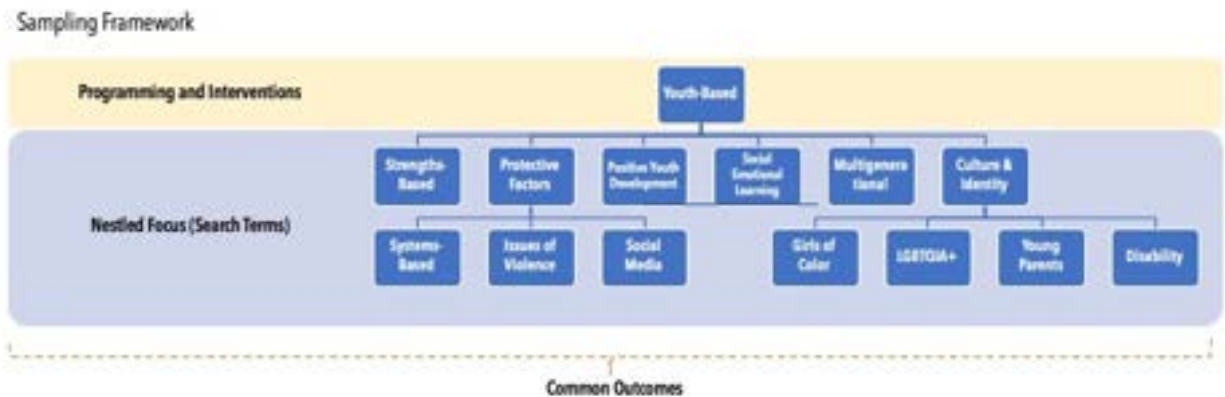
In line with AFG's guiding frameworks, qualifying participants were identified based on their ability to meet more than one of the thirteen nested search terms regarding their interventions: Protective Factors, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Positive Youth Development (PYD), Systems-Based, Strengths-Based, Social Media, Culture and Identity, Girls of Color, Multigenerational, LGBTQIA+, Immigrant and Refugee, and Issues of Violence. Using AFG's membership list, an exhaustive local and national web search, and recommendations from stakeholders, a list of programs was created and tagged within these thirteen search terms. Eighty-six programs and stakeholders initially qualified using these criteria; from there, participants were interviewed based

on availability, capacity, and ability to meet interview scheduling timelines.

Of the four focus groups, two were conducted with middle and high school girls at Alliance for Girls' annual conference (Figure 7). Another focus group was conducted with a parent/caregiver English Language Learner (ELL) group at the Spanish Speaking Citizens' Foundation in Oakland, California. The last focus group was conducted with young parents, or parents aged 19 years or younger, coordinated by the Young Women's Freedom Center in San Francisco, California.

Figure 7: Participants Across Four Focus Groups

Source: Attendance count from 4 focus groups conducted October 1, 2019 (2 groups), December 4, 2019, and December 9, 2019.

All participants were offered a $10 Target gift card for their participation. Programs were offered an opportunity to highlight their Promising Practices and to speak to their approaches and challenges. Girls were offered an opportunity to voice their lived experiences and affect policy recommendations and systemic change.

Snapshot of Participants

This report focused on the voices of girls who are traditionally underrepresented, whether due to their race, sexual orientation, gender expression, situational circumstances, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds. Those voices were then amplified either directly or through champions of services and programs dedicated to girls' well-being. Further intersectionality was achieved in looking at how these elements affected and informed each other, and how these elements related to their environments, histories, and connected institutions.

In total, 89 individuals were interviewed across 41 interviews and 4 focus groups that took place between October 1, 2019 and December 9, 2019. Attributes of the research sample included:

- 38 programs were interviewed
- 27 of these 38 programs had a distinct gender focus.
- 4 focus groups engaged a total of 47 individuals.

The participants serving as girl champions worked in programs and organizations local to the San Francisco Bay Area. More than half of those organizations interviewed were members of Alliance for Girls, and nearly all programs interviewed provided direct services to young people (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Programs Interviewed
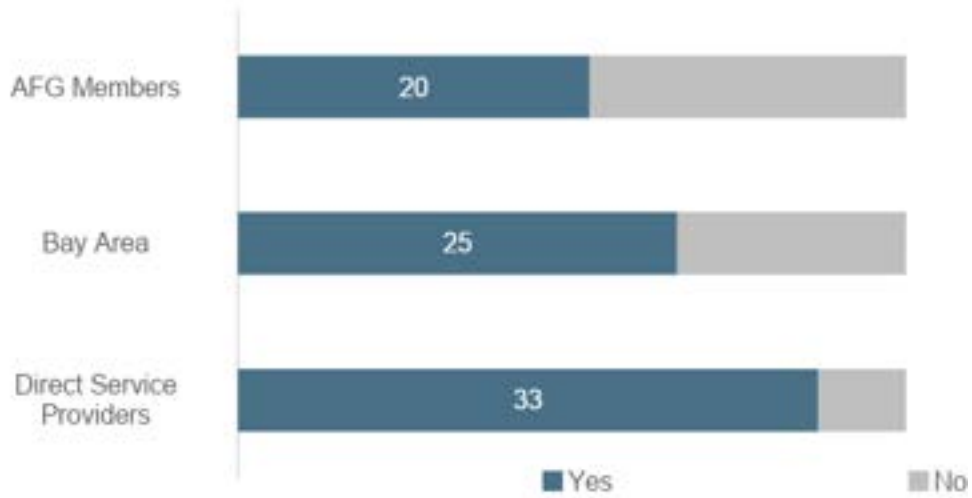
Sources: AFG membership list and nonprofit program websites, 2019.

Who These Promising Practices Currently Serve

The program participants interviewed represented 38 organizations across the Bay Area. As such, this report used these 38 organizations as a loose representational proxy of the constituents currently being served by the Promising Practices collected. Twenty-five of the 38 organizations interviewed filled out an accompanying survey. Of those that responded to the survey, most tended to serve girls between fifth and 12th grade. Twenty-three of the 25 programs served high school-aged young people (Figure 9). Twenty of the 25 programs served middle school-aged young people. The least-represented age group served and reflected in this report included younger children and youth from early childhood to fourth grade.

Figure 9: Age Groups Served by Promising Practices Organizations
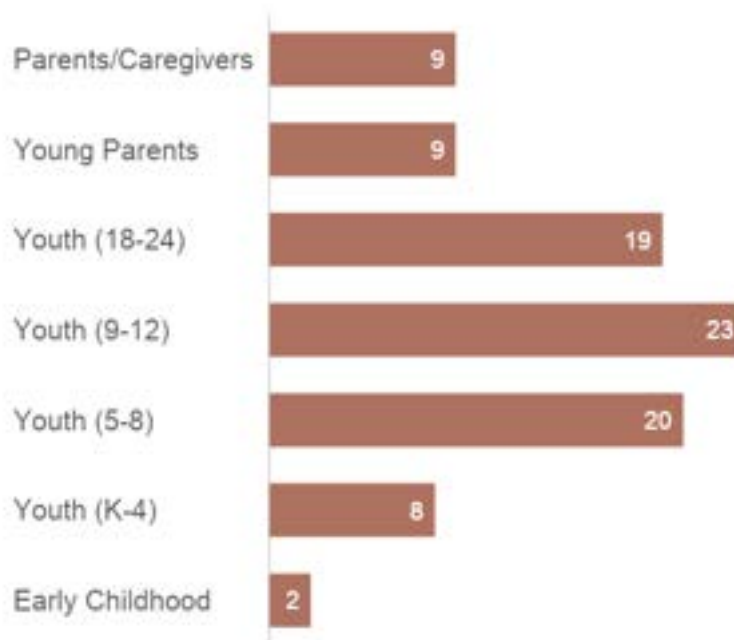
Source: Promising Practices Participant Survey, December 15, 2019, N=25.

Of the programs that responded to the survey, nearly all reported serving all racial and ethnic populations, with a slightly larger service design and focus for Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American young people (Figure 10). As such, this report sees its takeaways and findings as being more reflective of the experiences of middle-to-high school girls of color. However, more in-depth and rigorous research is needed before concluding that the findings in this report represent the ideas and experiences of all girls of color. This is important to highlight, as this report also calls out other identities such as Asian Pacific Islander (API), LGBTQIA+, Indigenous, and Young Parent groups.

Figure 10: Race/Ethnicity Groups Served by Promising Practices Organizations

Source: Promising Practices Participant Survey, December 15, 2019, N=25. Note: Participants could select multiple groups served so totals do not sum to 100%.
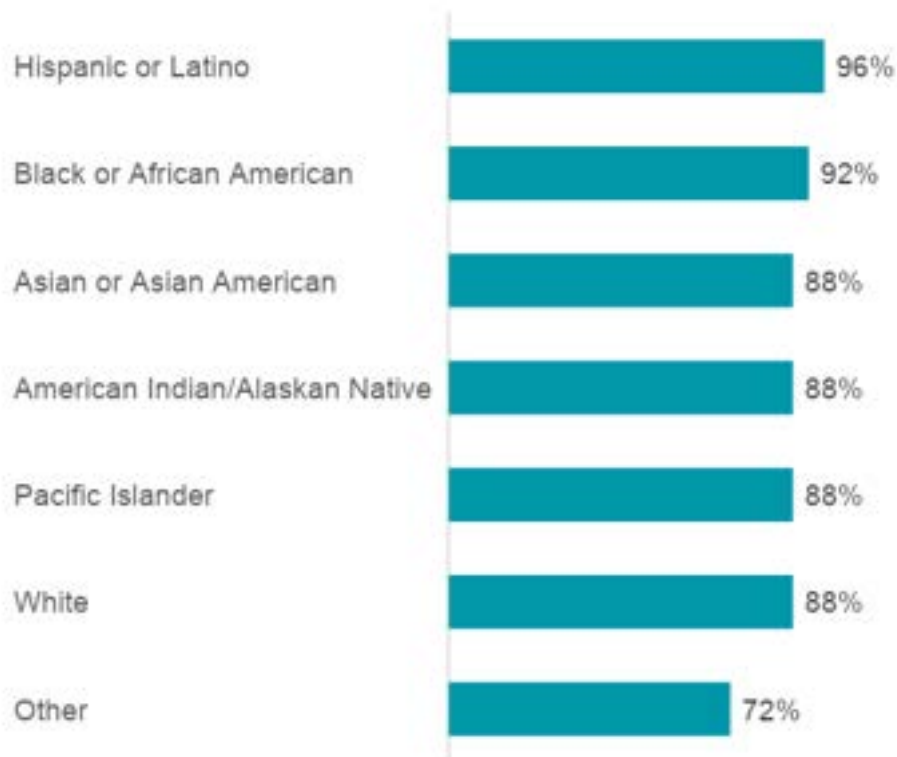
Thirteen of the 38 programs interviewed reference a multigenerational practice (Figure 11). Sixteen percent of interviews have LGBTQIA+ voices represented.

Figure 11: Count of programs with intentional programming for specific identity groups

	Yes	No
Indigenous Youth	3	
Young Parents	3	
API Youth	4	
LGBTQIA+	6	
Multigenerational	13	
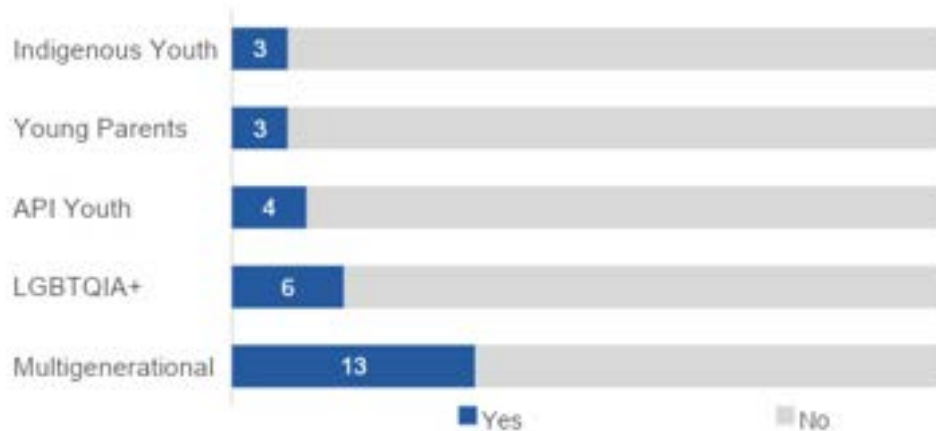
Source: Count of organizations with self-identified or self-referenced services for identity groups. Interviews conducted October 1, 2019 – December 9, 2019.

Programs interviewed were asked, "Does your organization currently serve the following backgrounds…." All programs reported they do not actively exclude young people of divergent backgrounds. However, the "unsure"responses also tend to reflect that programs may not be formally tracking certain backgrounds, such as foster care, young people with disabilities, unstable housing, and juvenile justice (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Varying Backgrounds Served by Promising Practices Organizations

	%
Strict Gender Norms (Yes)	96%
Strict Gender Norms (Unsure)	4%
Low-Income (Yes)	92%
Low-Income (Unsure)	8%
Disabilities (Yes)	80%
Disabilities (Unsure)	20%
Foreign Born (Yes)	80%
Foreign Born (Unsure)	16%
Foreign Born (No)	4%
Foster Care (Yes)	68%
Foster Care (Unsure)	28%
Foster Care (No)	4%
Homeless/Unstably Housed (Yes)	68%
Homeless/Unstably Housed (Unsure)	16%
Homeless/Unstably Housed (No)	16%
Juvenile Justice (Yes)	56%
Juvenile Justice (Unsure)	36%
Juvenile Justice (No)	8%
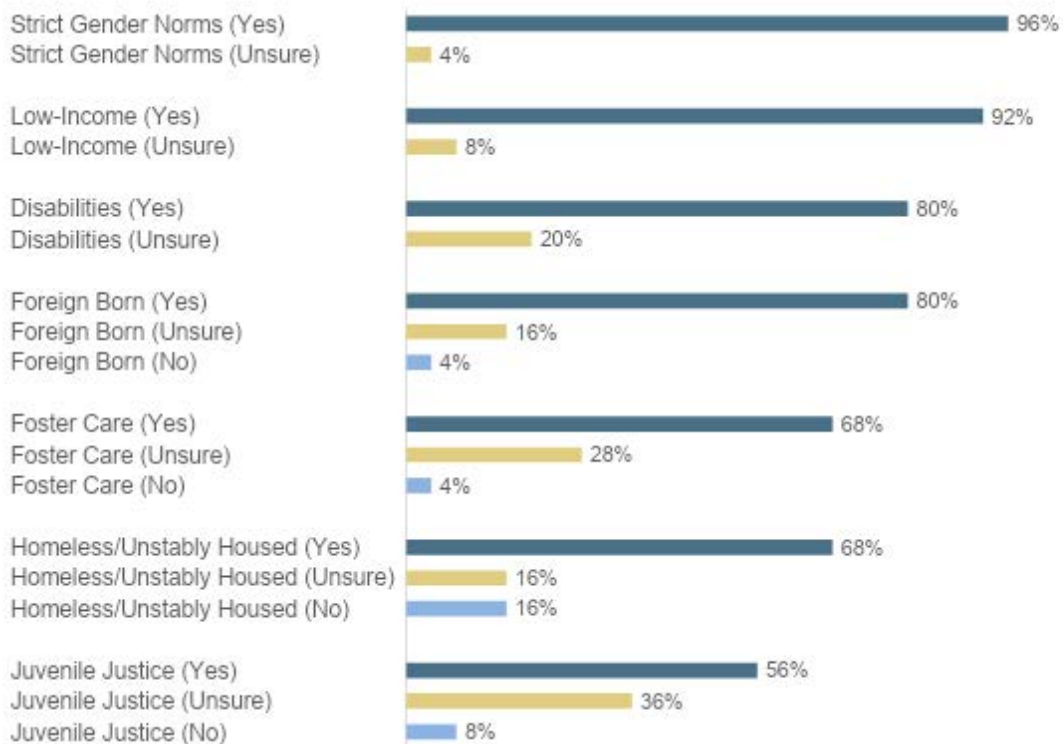
Source: Promising Practices Participant Survey, December 15, 2019, N=25.

The demographic survey was circulated to all 38 organizations interviewed, with 25 (or 66%) responding. A descriptive analysis was conducted. A grounded theory approach was taken in analyzing the 41 interviews and 4 focus groups. Full transcripts of the interviews and focus groups were created using an online transcription software (transcribe.wreally.com). Another round of transcription reviews and revisions was then overseen by Evaluation Studio (ES) researchers, who also conducted the interviews.

After transcription, a thorough first read-through of all interviews and focus groups was carried out. Then, a second read-through of interviews was conducted, noting emerging themes, key concepts, and answering the following questions:

- What are some initial thoughts and takeaways?
- Were there any themes repeated across all interviews/focus groups?
- Were there any words repeated across all interviews/focus groups?
- How would you describe the overarching landscape of practices and interventions?
- Is there a singular understanding of safety and safe spaces for girls and gender-expansive youth? Why or why not?
- Is there a singular understanding of healthy and positive relationships for girls and gender-expansive youth? Why or why not?
- How do definitions of safety and healthy relationships differ based on the interviews?

From there, a third read-through was carried out, noting emerging themes with an eye toward multigenerational and demographic identity groups. Throughout the read-throughs, a coding index was created based on descriptor data and key and emerging themes. Terms and excerpts could be tagged multiple times with multiple indicators.

Representation of other voices

There were a number of limitations due to the common project constraints of capacity, time, and resources. This was a convenience sample—organizations were picked based on criteria including recommendations, affiliation to AFG, and availability. As such, the representation of voices was not exhaustive, resulting in:

- fewer girls' voices being directly incorporated into the findings compared to the voices of girl champions;
- a dearth of voices of girls or program practitioners working with more girls of varying backgrounds such as girls with disabilities, those who are unstably housed, and those who are in the foster care or juvenile justice systems;
- exclusive representation of girls who actually have access to programming supports.

Researcher Bias

As with any research project, this report is limited by researcher bias. Evaluation Studio researchers and Alliance for Girls staff who helped design, curate, and reflect on the development, analysis, and oversight of this report have their own set of histories, understandings, and backgrounds, which inherently affects observations, analysis, and the interpretive findings and themes that emerge.

Language and Translation

Interviews and focus groups conducted in Spanish required translators and the use of translation tools, which filtered and reduced the full meaning and takeaways available to the researchers, limiting this report's ability to accurately reflect and embody Spanish-speaking voices.

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

About-Face	Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)
American Indian Child Resource Center (AICRC)	Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth (MISSSEY)
Art of Yoga	Move to End Violence
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence (APIGBV)	Mujeres Unidas Y Activas (MUA)
Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP)	National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)
Banteay Srei	National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)
Bay Area Women Against Rape (BAWAR)	Oakland LGBTQ Community Center
Berkeley High School Stop Harassing (BHSSH)	Oasis for Girls
Break the Cycle	Planned Parenthood Mar Monte
Camp Reel Stories	RYSE Center
Family Violence Law Center (RAP)	San Francisco Unified School District
Gender Health Center	Shalom Bayit
Gender Spectrum	Shelectricity
Girls Inc. West Contra Costa County	Skate Like a Girl
Girls on the Run Bay Area	Spanish Speaking Citizens' Foundation (SSCF)
IGNITE	Team Enough
IMAGEN Network	Teen Success
LYRIC SF	The Latina Center
Malikah	Young Women's Freedom Center

APPENDIX 2: SURVEY TEMPLATES

Program Survey Template:

Promising Practices Survey

PLEASE FILL OUT BY NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 16, 2019.

This survey will take 2 minutes to complete. Evaluation Studio, on behalf of the Promising Practices Report, is administering a survey to those that we interviewed. This survey will allow us to better describe your work and the populations you serve in the forthcoming report.

* Required

1. **Email address** *

_____

2. **Please describe the population your programming currently serves. (Check all that apply)** *
   Check all that apply.

   ☐ Early Childhood
   ☐ Youth (K-4, Elementary-Aged)
   ☐ Youth (5th-8th grade), Middle School Aged)
   ☐ Youth (9th-12th grade), High School Aged)
   ☐ Youth (18-24)
   ☐ Young Parents (24 years of age or younger)
   ☐ Parent/Caregivers

3. **Please describe the spaces in which your programming intends to impact? (Check all that apply)** *
   Check all that apply.

   ☐ Home
   ☐ School
   ☐ Public Spaces (Neighborhoods and Communities)
   ☐ Social Media
   ☐ Other Community-based/social-service organizations
   ☐ Other: _____

4. **Please describe the racial and ethnic backgrounds your programming currently serves. (Check all that apply).** *

Check all that apply.

- [ ] American Indian or Alaskan Native
- [ ] Asian or Asian American
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
- [ ] Pacific Islander, including Filipino, Samoan, Tongan, Native Hawaiian, and others
- [ ] White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; NOT Hispanic
- [ ] Other
- [ ] Don't Know

5. **Does your programming exclusively serve girls and/or gender-expansive youth?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Unsure

6. **Does your programming currently serve members of the LGBTQQI community?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Unsure

7. **Does your programming currently serve young mothers?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Unsure

8. **Does your programming currently serve young people with disabilities?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Unsure

9. **Does your programming currently serve foreign-born and immigrant populations?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Unsure

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10. **Does your programming currently serve youth and families who are low-income or living in poverty?** *

Mark only one oval.

⭕ Yes

⭕ No

⭕ Unsure

11. **Does your programming currently serve populations that are homeless or unstably housed?** *

Mark only one oval.

⭕ Yes

⭕ No

⭕ Unsure

12. **Does your programming currently serve populations that are in or have had contact with foster care?** *

Mark only one oval.

⭕ Yes

⭕ No

⭕ Unsure

13. **Does your programming currently serve populations that are in or have had contact with the juvenile justice system?** *

Mark only one oval.

⭕ Yes

⭕ No

⭕ Unsure

14. **Does your programming currently address harmful attitudes and expectations around strict gender norms?** *

Mark only one oval.

⭕ Yes

⭕ No

⭕ Unsure

☐ Send me a copy of my responses.

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Parent Survey Template:

Promising Practices
Listening Session Survey

What is the gender identity of your child/children?

☐	Female	☐	Prefer to self-describe (write in): _____ _____
☐	Male	☐	They Don't Know
☐	Non-Binary	☐	Refuse

What is your race?
You may select more than one option.

☐ American Indian/Native American
☐ Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others
☐ Black or African American
☐ Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
☐ Pacific Islander, including Filipino, Samoan, Tongan, Native Hawaiian, and others
☐ White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; NOT Hispanic
☐ Prefer to self-describe (write in): _____
☐ Don't Know
☐ Refuse

What is one of your lifelong dreams? _____
_____
_____

Parent Survey Template (Spanish Translation):

Prácticas Prometedoras
Encuesta de sesión de escucha

¿Cuál es la identidad de género de su hijo/a / hijo/as?

☐ Femenina

☐ Masculino

☐ Género no binario

☐ Prefiere autodescribirse (escribir):
_____

☐ Mi hijo/hijos no sabe

☐ Negarse a responder

¿Cuál es su raza/etnicidad?
Puede seleccionar más de una opción.

☐ Indio americano / Nativo Americano
☐ Asiático o Asiático Americano, Incluidos Chinos, Japoneses y otros
☐ Negro o Afroamericano
☐ Hispano o Latino, incluidos Mexicoamericanos, Centroamericanos y otros
☐ Isleño del Pacífico, incluidos Filipinos, Samoanos, Tonganos, Nativos de Hawái y otros
☐ Blanco, caucásico, anglo, europeo-americano; NO hispano
☐ Prefiero autodescribirse (escribir): _____
☐ No lo sé
☐ Negarse a responder

¿Cuál es uno de sus sueños de toda la vida?
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Program Staff and Practitioners

Part I: Instructions

Hello. Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed today. This interview is being conducted on behalf of Alliance for Girls and will serve to help develop a Promising Practices Report. The unique focus of this report is to fill a gap in research and reported practices that look at programs, interventions, and supports focusing on protective factors, positive youth development, and strengths-based programming that foster safety, confidence, and healthy relationships for girls of color and gender-expansive youth.

> We define "girls" as gender-expansive youth (cis-girls, trans-girls, non-binary youth, gender non-conforming youth, gender queer youth and any girl-identified youth).

> We define "protective factors" as skills, strengths, and supports that foster resilience and healthy social and emotional development in young people.

> We define "positive youth development" as specific competencies that encourage healthy youth development including competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring.

> We define "youth" as up to age 24.

To facilitate note-taking, may I record this interview? Interviews with program staff and practitioners are not anonymous as we intend to highlight the work that organizations are doing. However, if we talk about something sensitive that you wish to not be shared or not attributed to you or your organization directly, we will gladly remove any identifying markers in analysis. Evaluation Studio researchers and Alliance for Girls will have access to this recording. We have planned this interview to take 30 minutes.

Part II: Introductions

You were selected to be interviewed today because your organization was identified as having a great deal to share about programming that focuses on protective factors

and positive youth development, and what radical safety looks and feels like for girls of color and gender-expansive youth in specific spaces, such as social media, home, school, girl or gender-expansive youth-focused organizations (hereafter, "CBO"), neighborhoods, and public spaces. This listening session aims to learn more from your expertise and work and gain new insights.

Did you have any questions before we start?

Part III: Background/Promising Practices and Outcomes

> *• Can you briefly describe the work you/your organization do/does specifically with girls/girls of color/gender-expansive youth?*
>
>> *• (If you don't work specifically with girls/gender-expansive youth) Can you briefly describe the work you/your organization does to promote positive youth development?*

> *• What are the best ways to support positive, nurturing, and loving relationships for girls and gender-expansive youth?*
>
>> *• What is your organization's (radical) vision of safety?*

> *• How does your organization determine or know if your programming or practices are "successful"? (How do you know it is working?)*

> *• What barriers does your programming face, which keep you from achieving the imagined space of safety?*

> *• What role could large networks like Alliance for Girls have to help support and advance your efforts?*

> *• Did you have any other closing thoughts or comments?*

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. You will receive a $10 Target gift card by email or text. We will notify you of any updates on the Promising Practices Report, and if you have any other questions or follow-up comments please feel free to get in touch. You will be receiving a copy of the report when it is published.

Stakeholders, Informational, Schools, Mental Health

Part I: Instructions

Hello. Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed today. This interview is being conducted on behalf of Alliance for Girls and will serve to help develop a Promising Practices Report. The unique focus of this report is to fill in a gap in research and reported practices that look at programs, interventions, and supports focusing on protective factors, positive youth development, and strengths-based programming that foster safety, confidence, and healthy relationships for girls, girls of color and gender-expansive youth.

> We use Alliance for Girls' definition of "girls" as gender-expansive youth (cis-girls, trans-girls, non-binary youth, gender non-conforming youth, gender queer youth and any girl-identified youth).

> We define "protective factors" as skills, strengths, and supports that foster resilience and healthy social and emotional development in young people.

> We define "positive youth development" as specific competencies that encourage healthy youth development including competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring.

> We define "youth" as up to age 24.

To facilitate note-taking, may I record this interview? Interviews with stakeholders are not anonymous as we intend to highlight the work that organizations are doing. However, if we talk about something sensitive that you wish to not be shared or not attributed to you or your organization directly, we will gladly remove any identifying markers in analysis. Evaluation Studio researchers and Alliance for Girls will have access to this recording. We have planned this interview to take 30 minutes.

Part II: Introductions

You were selected to be interviewed today because you were identified as someone who would have a great deal to share about programming that focuses on protective factors and positive youth development, and what radical safety looks and feels like for girls, girls of color, and gender-expansive youth. This listening session aims to learn more from your experiences and gain new insights.

Did you have any questions before we start?

Part III: Background

• Can you briefly describe the work you do specifically with girls/girls of color/gender-expansive youth to promote positive youth development?

Part IV: Promising Practices and Outcomes

> *• What are the best ways to support positive, nurturing, and loving relationships for girls and gender-expansive youth?*
>
> *• What is your radical vision of safety?*
>
> *• How does intergenerational support (parents and families) fit into this dialogue of safe spaces and healthy relationships for girls and gender-expansive youth?*
>
> *• How does interaction with schools and communities fit into this dialogue of safe spaces and healthy relationships for girls and gender-expansive youth?*
>
> *• How does your organization determine or know if your programming or practices are "successful"?*
>
> *• What's a recent achievement at your organization that you feel proud of?*
>
> *• What are some outside programs or practices that have been incredibly effective in promoting safety and healthy relationships for girls through protective factors and positive youth development? Explain how?*
>
> *• What are some existing barriers and challenges that you or others face in creating these spaces of radical safety and positive relationships for girls and gender-expansive youth?*
>
> *• What role could large networks like Alliance for Girls have to help support and advance your efforts?*
>
> *• Did you have any other closing thoughts or comments?*

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. You will receive a $10 Target gift card by email or text. We will notify you of any updates on the Promising Practices Report, and if you have any other questions or follow-up comments please feel free to get in touch. You will be receiving a copy of the report when it is published.

Girls

Part I: Instructions

Hello. Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed today. This interview is being conducted on behalf of Alliance for Girls and will serve to help develop a Promising Practices Report. The unique focus of this report is to fill in a gap in research and reported practices that look at programs, interventions, and supports focusing on protective factors, positive youth development, and strengths-based programming which foster safety, confidence, and healthy relationships for girls of color and gender-expansive youth.

> We define "girls" as gender-expansive youth (cis-girls, trans-girls, non-binary youth, gender non-conforming youth, gender queer youth and any girl-identified youth).

> We define "protective factors" as skills, strengths, and supports that foster resilience and healthy social and emotional development in young people.

> We define "positive youth development" as specific competencies that encourage healthy youth development including competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring.

> We define "youth" as up to age 24.

To facilitate note-taking, is it okay if I record this interview? Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous. Only Evaluation Studio and Alliance for Girls researchers will have access to this recording. In analyzing interviews, responses and data will not be marked or associated with any individual, but be used to aggregate themes around any promising practices. We have planned this interview to take 30 minutes.

You have the right to not answer or skip any question you do not wish to answer. You also have the right to stop the interview if you need to. If at any point a question or topic feels triggering, please let me know, and we'll provide any resources you request, want, or need.

Part II: Introductions

You were selected to be interviewed today because you have participated in a program, group, or organization that encourages and engages girls and young people to tap into their skills and strengths.

This interview aims to learn more from your experiences and gain new insights.

Did you have any questions before we start?

Part III: Promising Practices and Outcomes

- *Can you describe when you first heard about (program/group/organization)? What made you want to sign up and start participating?*

- *Do you feel your participation in (program/group/organization) has affected your relationships in your life? In what ways and with whom?*

- *What are the best ways to support positive, nurturing, and loving relationships in your life? These relationships include your family, friends, partners, teachers, and peers.*

- *What would you need from your community to have feelings of safety, confidence, and happiness in every space you exist?*

  - *What would you need at home?*

  - *What would you need from school? (If applicable)*

- *(If time permits) What does safety look and feel like for you?*

- *Did you have any other closing thoughts, comments, or questions you would like to share?*

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. You will receive a $10 Target gift card by email or text. We will notify you of any updates on the Promising Practices Report, and if you have any other questions or follow-up comments please feel free to get in touch.

Girls Listening Session (October 2019)

WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT (2 minutes)

We are committed to creating a fun, safe, nonschool environment in the room. The room will be set up in a way that supports an intimate environment. Each person will be welcomed as they come in, asked to sign in, and provided a name tag to write their first name on. Music will be playing as participants walk into the room.

Alliance for Girls is conducting a series of listening sessions consisting of focus groups and interviews to hear firsthand what radical safety looks like in the community and in schools for girls, and more specifically girls of color. We want to know how can we get there, and what programs and supports have been helpful to you in feeling confident, supported, resilient, and powerful. Your voice and insights will inform a report for girls and adult allies, member organizations of AFG, and the community as a whole.

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Warm-up: As a way to get to know each other before we start, we wanted to take a few minutes to do a quick and fun warm-up game called Hello Questions. There are two goals of this game: 1) to use our whole being to communicate, including our hands, body, eyes, and words, and 2) to ask questions, but not answer.

We'll start by gathering around in a circle. You'll say your name, and using a gesture and eye contact you'll pass a question to another person. The next person doesn't answer the questions, but receives the question, and passes a new question to someone else in the circle. So for an example I might start and say "Hi I'm Linda Lu," then I'd make a gesture to Livier and "ask do you have a cat?" Livier would introduce herself and look at Brenda and ask "what's your favorite color?"—and so on and so forth until we've gone around a few times. This is about establishing connections and not being tempted to answer the questions.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES (10 minutes)

Stand up if: Each participant will be given a sheet of paper and will be asked to do some radical imagining. The coordinators will give all the girls a piece of white paper. With this piece of paper you will ask all the girls to draw out a scenario:

> "Imagine a community for girls that is safe and free of violence (no toxic gender norms, no harassment or any type of violence). Imagine that only you girls worked to create this community."

You will then give the girls 3 to 5 minutes to draw out their imaginative community. Once all the girls are done. You will begin to ask the questions:

"Stand up if you included schools in your community."

The girls that drew out schools in their drawing would stand up. Then you select a girl who will choose something from their drawing and say:

"Stand up if you included family members in your community"

The girls that drew out family members in their drawing would stand up. And so on…

AGREEMENTS (2 minutes)

The facilitator will spend 2 to 3 minutes developing agreements for the listening session. Each group must have an agreement that everything said in the group will be anonymous and confidential, which means no names will be attributed to any specific persons and the facilitators, or those present will not share what is said with others; only general themes from the sessions will be shared.

Livier will mention that the only time we may have to break confidentiality is to provide resources and support if someone is being harmed. Additionally, if anyone in the room needs resources and support, Livier is a trained social worker and case manager; Livier will provide her information, as well as available resources and services.

PROMISING PRACTICES QUESTIONS (35 minutes)

Questions:

- [*Round robin*] Take a second and close your eyes. I want you to think about one relationship in your life that makes you feel safe, happy, confident, and supported. What does a positive, nurturing, loving relationship look and feel like?

- Sometimes our feelings can be described in a variety of ways. It might have a color or a feeling? For instance, I think about my relationship with my son and it's bright yellow and feels warm and joyous.

- Let's go around and talk about who that relationship is with? What color does it embody? How does it make you feel?

- In what ways is it positive, nurturing, and loving?

• [***Round robin***] Can anyone think of any programs, groups, or clubs that you have been a part of or know of that make you feel those same feelings of safety, confidence, happiness?

> • Tell me about this program, group, club?

> • How does it make you feel safe, confident, happy?

• [***Optional round robin depending on time***] What would you need from your community to have these feelings of safety, confidence, and happiness in every space you exist?

> • At home?

> • At school?

> • In your neighborhood?

> • In your community?

REFLECTION AND CLOSING (2–3 minutes)

We really want to thank all of you for contributing your voice and trusting us with your insights. Please remember to collect your gift cards.

To close out this focus group I want us all to just say one thing that we are grateful for.

English/Spanish Parents Listening Sessions (December 2019)

WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT (2 minutes)

As people come in, hand out a survey. Livier to welcome everyone and briefly introduce Alliance for Girls and explain the Promising Practices report and the parents' survey.

We are committed to creating a nurturing, attentive, and safe environment in the room. The room will be set up in a way that supports an intimate environment. Each person will be welcomed as they come in, asked to sign in, and provided a name tag to write their first name. They will also be handed a parent survey to fill out.

Alliance for Girls is conducting a series of listening sessions consisting of focus groups and interviews to hear first-hand what radical safety looks like in the community and in schools for girls, girls of color, and gender-expansive youth. We want to know how we can get there, what programs and supports have been helpful to you and your daughters/girls in feeling confident, supported, resilient, and powerful. Your voice and insights will inform a report for girls and adult allies, member organizations of AFG, and the community as a whole.

Alliance for Girls (Allianca para las ninas) es una organizacion basada en Oakland. Y lo que nosotros hacemos es trabajamos y apollamos a organizaciones que trabajan con ninas y jovenes.

Alliance for Girls está llevando a cabo una serie de sesiones, incluyendo grupos focales y entrevistas para escuchar de primera mano cómo se ve la seguridad radical en la comunidad para niñas y jóvenes, y jovenes de género expansivo. Queremos saber qué programas y apoyos han sido útiles para que sus hijas / niñas se sientan seguras, apoyadas, y poderosas. Su voz y sus puntos de vista informarán nuestro informe/ estudio.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES (10 minutes)

Brenda briefly introduces herself and explains the rules of the warm-up activity.

Brenda to facilitate the activity.

Warm-up: As a way to get to know each other before we start, we wanted to take a few minutes to do a quick community-building activity. There are two goals of this activity: 1) to bring our voices and awareness into the room 2) to share something we know about our children.

Let's gather in a circle. I'll toss the ball of yarn to someone. The person who catches the ball says their name and something about their child, such as what their child likes about school or their child's favorite home-cooked meal. Then they toss the ball of yarn to someone else who will share something about their child. Depending on the number

of people, we can go around a few times. When everyone has answered, we should have an intertwined and collective yarn piece.

Juntémonos en un círculo. Le arrojaré el hilo a alguien. La persona que atrapa la pelota dirá su nombre y algo sobre su hijx, como lo que le gusta de la escuela o la comida casera favorita de su hijx. Luego arrojan el ovillo a otra persona que compartirá algo sobre su hijx. Dependiendo del número de personas, podemos dar varias vueltas. Cuando todos hayan respondido, deberíamos tener una pieza de hilo entrelazada y colectiva.

AGREEMENTS (2 minutes)

Brenda to facilitate agreements and talk about confidentiality.

Acuerdo

Confidencialidad

Ananimato/Anonimo

Recording Consent

The facilitator will spend 2 to 3 minutes developing agreements for the listening session. Each group must have an agreement that everything said in the group will be anonymous and confidential, which means no names will be attributed to any specific persons and the facilitators or those present will not share what is said with others; only general themes from the sessions will be shared.

Livier will mention that the only time we may have to break confidentiality is to provide resources and support if someone is being harmed. Additionally, if anyone in the room needs resources and support, Livier is a trained social worker and case manager; Livier will provide her information, as well as available resources and services.

Livier mencionará que el único momento en que tendremos que romper la confidencialidad es proporcionar recursos y apoyo si alguien está en peligro. Además, si alguien necesita recursos y apoyo, Livier es un trabajador social capacitado y administrador de casos; Livier proporcionará su información, así como los recursos y servicios disponibles.

PROMISING PRACTICES QUESTIONS (40 minutes)

Livier and Brenda to facilitate main round of questions.

Questions: Round Robin

- Can you describe when you first heard about (program/group/organization)? What made you want to sign up and start participating?

- What keeps you coming back?

     - How has your participation in this program affected your relationship with your child?

- *What are the best ways to support positive, nurturing, and loving relationships for your child? These relationships include your child's family, friends, partners, teachers, and peers.*

- *¿Cuáles son las mejores maneras de apoyar las relaciones positivas, enriquecedoras y amorosas para su hijo/a? Estas relaciones incluyen la familia, amigos, socios, maestros y compañeros de su hijo/a.*

- *What has been your experience with supporting your child at school?*

- *¿Cuáles han sido sus experiencias en apoyar a su hijo/a en la escuela?*

- *What are some supports you would want to see to help you with caring for your children's safety?*

- *¿Cuáles son algunos apoyos que les gustaría tener para ayudar a cuidar la seguridad de sus hijo/as?*

- *Did you have any other closing thoughts or comments?*

- *¿Tienen otros pensamientos o comentarios finales?*

REFLECTION AND CLOSING (2–3 minutes)

Livier and Brenda to facilitate reflection and closing

We really want to thank all of you for contributing your voice and trusting us with your insights. Please remember to collect your gift cards and enjoy some snacks.

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