



STRENGTHS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

City of Austin Community Youth Development

Fiscal Year 2023



APRIL 28, 2023

CITY OF AUSTIN

6800 Burleson Road, Building 310, Suite 295, Austin Texas 78744



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Executive Summary

The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) has provided funding to the City of Austin for the Community Youth Development (CYD) program for over 25 years. The goal of this funding is to provide preventative services to zip-codes in the state of Texas that exhibit high referral rates to the juvenile justice system. Based on this criterion, the 78744 zip-code in Austin, TX, also known as Dove Springs, is identified as one of the zip-codes that qualifies for this funding program.

The Community Strengths and Needs Assessment (CSNA) is a biennial report prepared by the CYD team in collaboration with the Community Collaborative Committee (CCC) and the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC). The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed overview of 78744 community strengths, needs, gaps in services, and recommendations as they pertain to positive youth development. The data collected by this report will inform the CYD program's initiatives for the 2024 fiscal year.

This report will provide an overview of the community of Dove Springs, in addition to the current outlook of the community as it pertains to positive youth development. The report will also provide demographic information on the current community members in Dove Springs. Finally, this report will share the data collected throughout the CSNA process and how it informs the recommendations of the CYD program's upcoming fiscal year.



Community Overview

Service Area

The 78744 community, also known locally as Dove Springs, is composed of the southeast corner of Austin, Texas. This area is approximately 21.4 square miles, shown in by the red outline in *Figure 1*, consisting of local institutions including the following:

- Southeast Branch of Austin Public Library
- George Morales Dove Springs Recreation Center
- Austin Municipal Court
- Central Texas Food Bank
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Headquarters
- McKinney Falls State Park

These institutions provide important services and drive community engagement for the estimated 48,524 Dove Springs residents, as of 2021 (US Census Bureau, 2021).

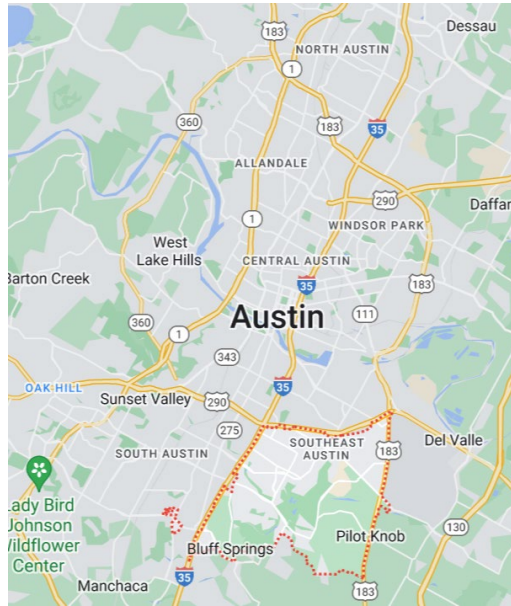


Figure 1. Map of 78744

The population of this community makes it the 136th most populated zip code in the state, out of over 1,900 (CITE, Texas Demographics). It is a racially diverse community with breakdowns of Hispanic (68.1%), White (19.5%) and Black (8.3%), as highlighted in the comparison of demographic estimate statistics shown in Figure 2 (US Census Bureau, 2021).

	White (Non-Hispanic)	Hispanic	Black
Dove Springs (78744)	19.5%	68.1%	8.3%
Austin	47.8%	33.1%	7.7%
Texas	40.3%	40.2%	13.2%



United States	59.3%	18.9%	13.6%
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Figure 2. Table of Demographic Estimates (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021)

A little over half of the residents of Dove Springs speak a language other than English, with 48.9% speaking Spanish as well (US Census Bureau, 2021). Additionally, about a quarter of the population is under the age of 18 years old with a median age of 31.8 (US Census Bureau, 2021).

Education

The students of the 78744 community are served by the Austin Independent School District, the Del Valle Independent School District, and local charter schools. There are zero AISD or DVISD high schools directly located in Dove Springs, but many students attend Crockett, Akins, and Travis High Schools, along with KIPP, Harmony, Wayside, and IDEA public charter schools (CITE, AISD). Additionally, there are 8 middle/intermediate schools and 14 elementary schools directly in the 78744 neighborhoods.

Most residents in the Dove Springs community lack degrees in higher education. Rates of high school and college completion are lower than those of surrounding communities, as shown in Figure 3 (US Census Bureau, 2021).

Percentage of Population with Education

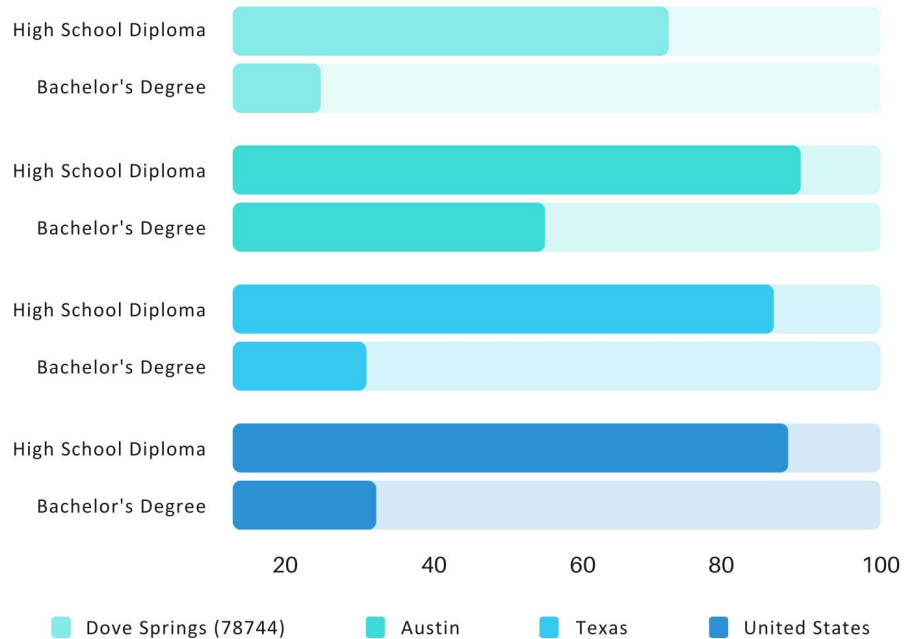


Figure 3. Population with Education (CITE, U.S. Census Bureau)

Socio-Economic

A 2018 report by the University of Texas highlights many East Austin neighborhoods as vulnerable to gentrification, which is considered “pushing the city’s low-income residents, who are often people of color, farther from the jobs and public services that help people climb the socioeconomic ladder” (CITE, Texas Tribune article). Figure 4 marks in red the areas with populations that are most vulnerable to gentrification based on a set of risk factors outlined by the study (CITE, UT).

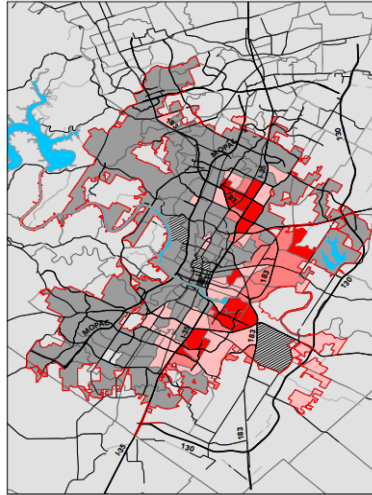


Figure 4. Most Vulnerable Census Tracts (University of Texas, 2018)

An estimated number of almost 6,700 residents of Dove Springs are below the poverty level, which equates to approximately 13.8% of the population (US Census Bureau, 2021). Compared to surrounding regions, the percentage is higher than the City of Austin, higher than the rate within the United States as a whole, and lower than the overall percentage for the State of Texas, shown in Figure 5.

	Dove Springs (78744)	Austin	Texas	United States
Percentage	13.8%	12.5%	14.2%	11.6%

Figure 5. Percentage of Population Living in Poverty (US Census Bureau, 2021)



Other important statistics listed by the U.S. Census Bureau that impact the Dove Springs community are:

- Up to 29.8% of children in this community receive some sort of public assistance including SNAP
- 23.3% of children have lived in households under the poverty level in the past 12 months
- Of youth between the ages of 16 to 19 years old, approximately 24% identify as unemployed; however, overall rates of employment for residents in the community are higher than surrounding areas, shown in Figure 6
- Median income in 2021 in Dove Springs was \$13703 lower than the city of Austin as shown in Figure 7
- The percentage of those with internet access in 78744 (86.3) is lower than Austin (91.2)

	Dove Springs (78744)	Austin	Texas	United States
Employment Rate	78.1%	74.6%	64.6%	63.1%

Figure 6. Percentage of Population in Labor Force (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021)

	Dove Springs (78744)	Austin	Texas	United States
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Median Household Income	\$65,262	\$78,965	\$67,321	\$69,021
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Figure 7. Median Household Income (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021)

Health

The Dove Springs community has a higher percentage of uninsured residents than the United States and other surrounding communities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). A comparison of these rates is shown in Figure 8. These rates increase up to 26.8% for Hispanic or Latino residents and nearly double for the residents in the community who are not United States citizens.

	Dove Springs (78744)	Austin	Texas	United States
Percentage of Population Uninsured	21.7%	13.9%	20.4%	9.8%

Figure 8. Persons Without Health Insurance (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021)



Additionally, the percentage of the community with a disability is higher than those of surrounding communities; these numbers are shown in Figure 9 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

	Dove Springs (78744)	Austin	Texas	United States
Percentage of Population with Disability	10.3%	6.7%	8.0%	8.7%

Figure 9. With a Disability (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021)



Data

Overview of Methodology and Tools

The goal of the Fiscal Year 2023 CSNA was to include the youth and Community Collaborative Committee members at full capacity to plan and participate in survey questions and distribution. The committee is comprised of 15 YAC youth, 3 City of Austin CYD Staff, 3 City of Austin CYD subcontractors and 2 Community Members. The Community Collaborative Committee began the CSNA planning process in November of 2022 at the first quarterly CCC meeting. The CCC then met in February 2023 and discussed survey questions and how they would administer the FY23 surveys.

The discussion provided us with a timeline of the process we were to follow to ensure we were able to have the youth and CCC members have a voice to create the FY23 CSNA survey.

The timeline is as follows:

FY23 CSNA Timeline		
November 2022	1st Quarter CCC Meeting	Review of FY23 CSNA Timeline
February 2023	2nd Quarter CCC Meeting	Approval of the Survey Questions and distribution timeline
April 2023	Resource Fair	Mass Community Distribution of Survey

Based on the timeline, the CCC, YAC and City of Austin’s CYD program worked together to ensure that all voices were heard and that changes were made to accommodate the diverse groups, focusing on what the community really needed. By engaging the community directly, we were able to



gather detailed information, giving us a part of a clear picture of the true needs, strengths and challenges that face the community at large.

Creation of Survey

The data points used to collect information on the community focused on a group discussion at the second quarter meeting between CCC adult members and YAC youth. The discussion focused on what they felt were the current needs in the community and how to best record this information. During the meeting, the youth and adults were shown previous surveys used, and members decided to proceed with the survey presented.

The Community Strengths and Needs Assessment Survey was the same template used in our 2021 CSNA Survey, community members were content with the survey and advised that no changes were needed. The survey is a product of an integrated quantitative and qualitative research approach.

Distribution of the Survey

Once surveys were approved by the CCC and YAC youth, the surveys were distributed via [Microsoft Forms](#) (electronically) and also physical surveys. Youth partook in block walking, tabling at public events, and the Community Resource Fair. The Community Collaborative Committee also held a resource fair on Saturday, April 22nd 2023 at the Dove Springs Park. During this resource fair youth went to community members to ask them to complete the survey. Also, during the event staff provided translation and assisted Spanish speaking community members with the electronic CSNA. In addition, the online survey was distributed to different community stakeholders such as Council



Woman Vanessa Fuentes, who represents the Dove Springs neighborhood, and Dove Springs Proud.

The electronic link was sent to over 100 community members.

Fiscal Year 2023 Survey Results

Community Demographics

The CSNA had 154 responses from the data collection methods discussed above. The average time to complete the digital survey was six minutes. Out of these responses, 74 were from adults and 79 were from youth under the age of 18 with 13 in the range of 6-10 years and 66 between 11-17 years. A percentage breakdown of the ages is shown in Figure 10.

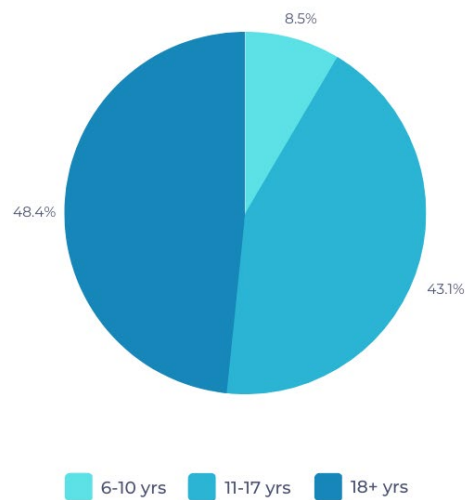


Figure 10. Age of Respondents

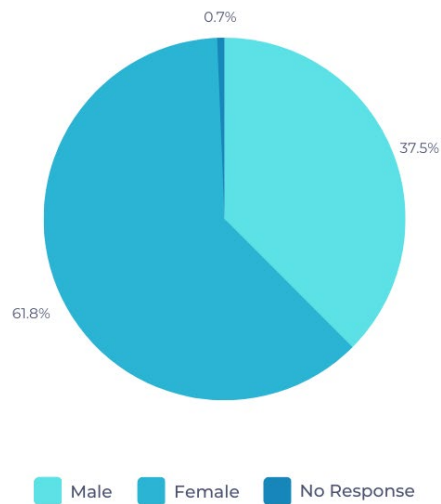


Figure 11. Gender of Respondents



The gender breakdown of respondents leaned more toward female with 94 responses, 57 males, 1 as “Other” and 1 with no response, shown in Figure 11. Of the youngest age range, 2 identified as male, 10 females, and 1 chose “Other”. The students between 11-17 years old were identified as 44 males and 35 females. Finally, those 18 years and older identified as 25 males, 48 females, and 1 had no response.

Community Affordability

As housing costs continue to rise in the Austin area, the first section of the CSNA asked respondents to state whether they feel the Dove Springs area has remained affordable to them and if they have personally felt an increase in the overall cost of living. Figure 12 shows responses from residents of all age ranges compared to the response rates of adults ages 18 and older. While 68% of all respondents felt as though they could afford to live in the Dove Springs neighborhood, adults were less likely to agree with just over half identifying that they feel they can afford it. This is a decrease from the findings in our 2021 CSNA results which showed that 81% of residents felt as though they could afford to live in the neighborhood.

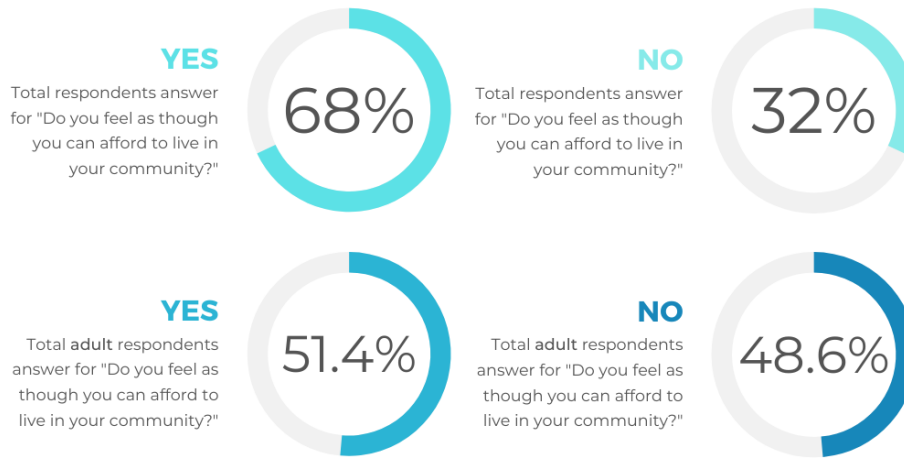


Figure 12. Responses for Community Affordability

A large majority of respondents of this year's survey said they have personally experienced an increase in the cost of living, which is in line with the raising costs of everyday goods and services in the recovery of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The responses of those in the affirmative increase even more when looking solely at the responses of adults with over 90% saying yes, as shown in Figure 13. This is a 30% increase from the responses of the CSNA from two years ago.



Figure 13. Responses for Experienced Increase of Cost of Living

Community Resources

An increase in the costs it takes to live in the Dove Springs and Austin area could impact the community’s need for resources. The CSNA asked neighbors if they knew what resources are available in the 78744 community and over 60% of them said they do not, shown in Figure 14.

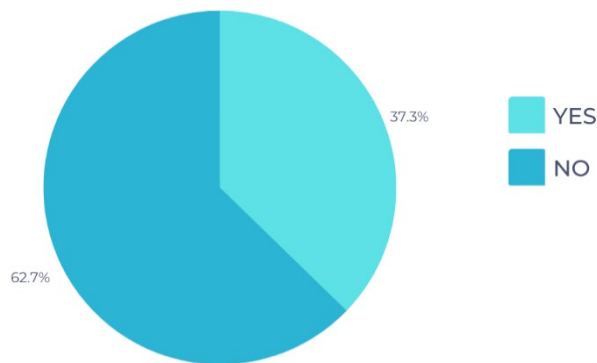


Figure 14. Responses for Knowledge of Community Resources



Next, residents were asked to list any places or methods where they were able to gain knowledge of resources they knew about. The responses are listed here ranging from highest response rate to lowest:

1. Do Not Know: 27
2. Online/Social Media: 26
3. No Response Given: 25
4. Recreation Center: 14
School: 14
5. News: 11
6. CYD/YAC: 10
7. Peers/Neighbors: 8
8. Email/Mail: 6
9. Church: 3
10. Austin Public Health: 2

The top qualitative response in this question supports the breakdown in Figure 14 showing that residents of Dove Springs do not know where to go in the community to get resources. For those who do know where to get resources, many of them are likely to find information online through websites, search engines, or social media. Others identify local community institutions, including schools, the George Morales Dove Springs Recreation Center, and the CYD/YAC members.

Looking more specifically at resources for college access and career advancement, the CSNA asked residents to state whether they knew where to look for jobs, if they thought there were enough jobs opportunities for young people, and if they knew where to get assistance for the job hunting and application process. A breakdown of these responses is shown below in Figure 15.

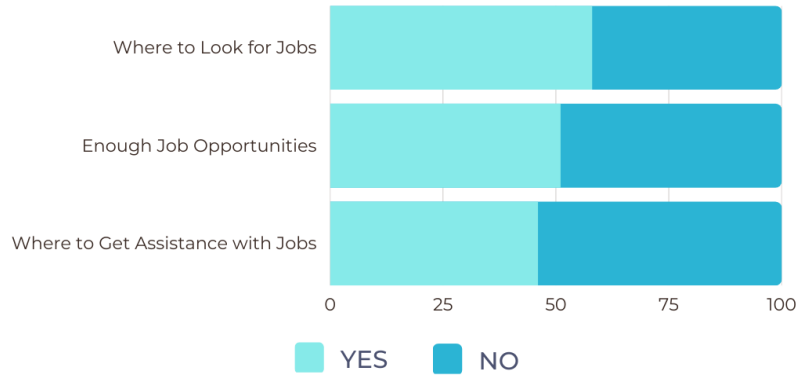


Figure 15. Overall Responses for Job Questions

Many residents (58%) state they know where to look for jobs, however, just under half know where they can get assistance with applying for these jobs (46%). These numbers change when looking closer at specific age ranges. The data show that people under 18 are slightly less likely to know where to look for jobs than the adults who responded to the survey, shown in Figure 16.

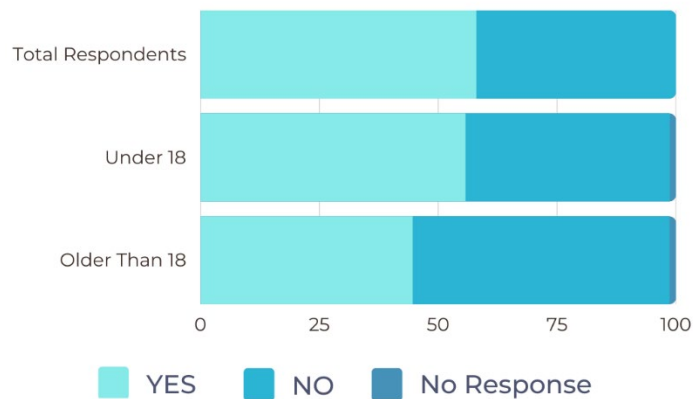


Figure 16. Responses by Age for Finding a Job



There are also different response rates based on age when respondents were asked if they believe there are enough job opportunities for young people. Young people under the age of 18 were more likely to say there are enough job opportunities for them while adults were less likely to believe there are enough opportunities. This comparison is shown in Figure 17.

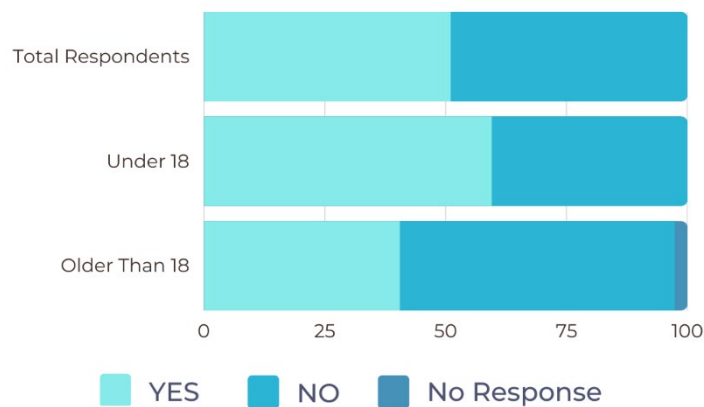


Figure 17. Responses by Age for View on Number of Jobs Available

Lastly, Figure 18 shows the comparison of age groups when looking for access to job hunting resources. 54% of total respondents said they did not know where to go to find community resources for job access. This number increases slightly to 57% for youth who do not know where to access these resources.

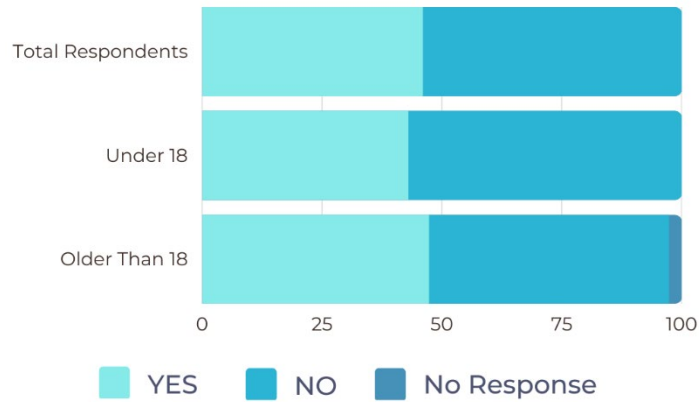


Figure 18. Responses by Age for Knowing Where to Get Job Assistance

The CSNA also asked if residents knew where to find information about access to college and higher education, and over 57% of respondents stated that they do know where to find this information.

Community Programs

The Community Youth Development program is one of many programs in the 78744 community that can provide the resources needed for neighbors. The collection of these programs is referred to as the Community Collaborative Committee (CCC). Survey respondents were only 17% likely to be familiar with this group of service providers, shown in Figure 19. However, two-thirds of respondents were open to learning more about the CYD and CCC programs.

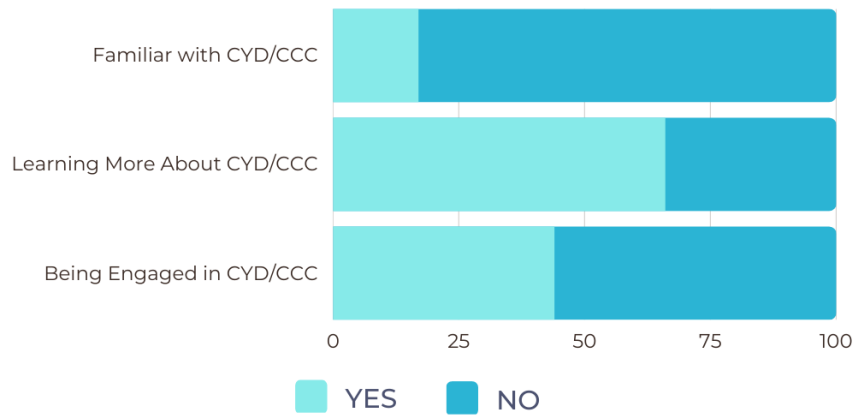


Figure 19. Engagement with the CYD/CCC Programs

These results show the openness of the 78744 residents to engage further in the programming offered by our department.

Community Summer Programs

As costs increase throughout the Austin area, the availability of free and engaging youth programming becomes more important for working parents. The next section of the CSNA asked respondents about the current offerings of summer programs for young people in the Dove Springs neighborhood.

Figure 20 shows response rates for these two questions. Just over half of respondents stated there are enough community programs offered to youth in the summer. However, two-thirds of



respondents believe that the programs offered are “interesting and relevant” to young people. These response rates are consistent among the age ranges reached by this survey.

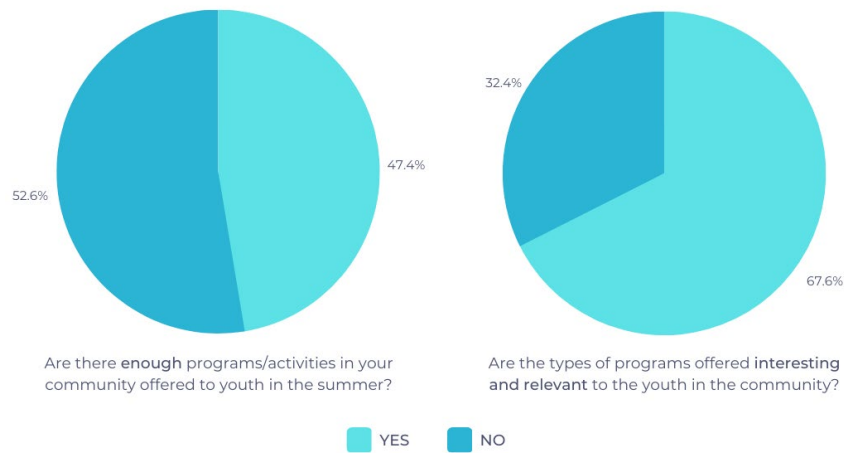


Figure 20. Questions about Summer Programs

Community members were next asked to list their desired types of programming, outside of what is currently offered. The responses were grouped by themes and are listed here ranging from highest response rate to lowest:

1. Sports (Other): 13
2. College/Career Readiness: 9
3. Sports (Soccer): 8
4. Art: 6
Swimming: 6
5. Nature: 5
6. Coding: 3



- Music: 3
- Theater: 3
- 7. Yoga: 2

These responses can shape the future programming for the CYD and CCC partners.

Community Public Spaces.

The last major section of the Community Strengths and Needs Assessments focused on Dove Springs community spaces, including parks, bus stops, sidewalk, and overall community safety. Overall, half of respondents said they are satisfied with the safety of these public spaces while half are not satisfied. A closer comparison is shown in Figure 21 due to a difference in satisfaction based on age. Adults are less likely to believe these spaces are safe while 55.7% of youth under the age of 18 are satisfied with the safety of these spaces.

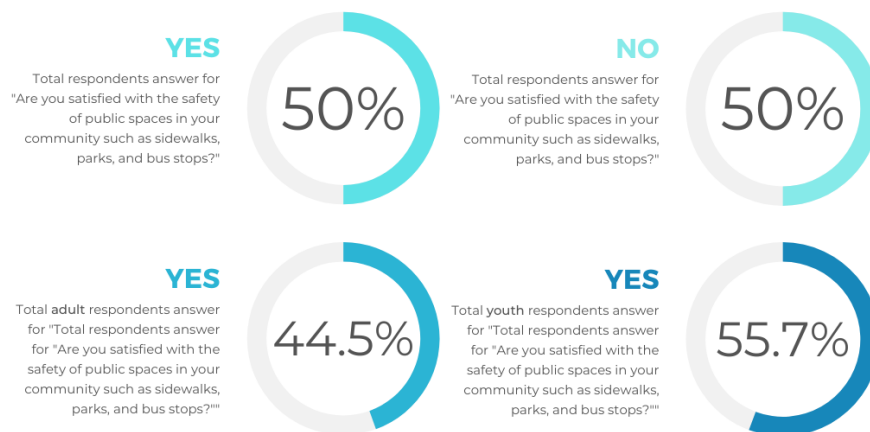


Figure 21. Comparison by Age on Safety of Public Spaces



Similar findings are shown in Figure 22 with a focus on the maintenance/appearance of these public spaces. Youth are more likely to be satisfied with these spaces with almost 60% agreement and adults are less likely to be satisfied at just over 43%.

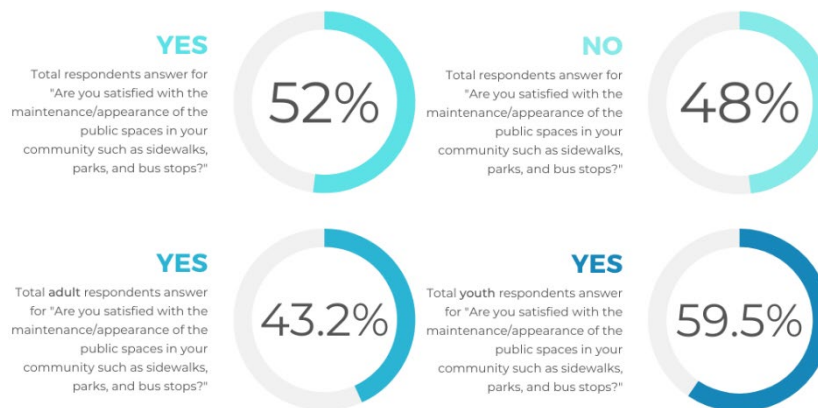


Figure 22. Comparison by Age on Appearance of Public Spaces

Respondents were more likely to respond with hesitation when answering questions about law enforcement and overall community safety. Over half of residents answered “sometimes” when asked if they trusted law enforcement and if they felt safe in the Dove Springs neighborhood, as shown in Figure 23.

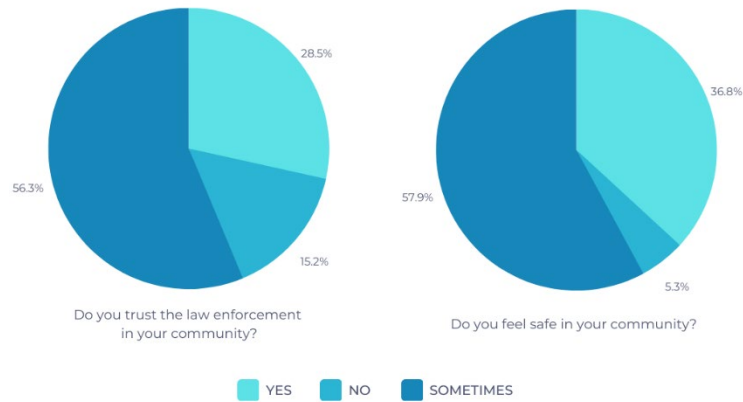


Figure 23. Questions about Community Safety

Both are changes from the 2021 CSNA responses, where residents were 43% “somewhat” trusting of law enforcement, 37% trusting, and 19% had distrust. In 2021, over 60% of respondents felt safe in their community (36.8% this year), 34% said “sometimes” feeling safe (57.9% this year), and 4% indicated they did not feel safe previously (5.3% this year).

Implication of Findings

The 2023 Community Strengths and Needs Assessment outlined many spaces for improvement where the Community Youth Development team can be impactful. With the rising cost of living throughout the Austin and Dove Springs areas, residents are likely to be searching for free and meaningful resources and programming. Many residents stated they do not know where they can locate resources, but a similar percentage were interested in learning about the CYD and CCC



programs. This is a space where this network of community groups could join to provide better advertising and outreach for community resources. A method could be through a united newsletter, online presence, or social media strategy, as residents were more likely to identify those mediums as effective ways to gain knowledge. This must come with the continued development of partnerships with other local institutions, including the local schools, recreation center, and public library, which were identified as other sources of information.

Another space of potential growth shown in the results of the CSNA is the need for increased access to summer programs. While programs were mostly viewed as engaging and interesting, the CYD and CCC team can continue to expand these opportunities by offering programs focused on those desired by community members, including sports, coding or STEM, college and career access, and free swimming instruction. These programs can expand the CYD recreational outreach, whether through local schools and community centers or through our own independent programs.

Lastly, the maintenance of public spaces is another way the CYD and CCC groups can help build collaboration and partnership between neighbors and local institutions. There is an ability to facilitate public space clean up days to improve the maintenance or host town halls where community members and leaders can come together to discuss ways to improve safety in the neighborhood.

There are many ways the CYD and CCC can implement the findings of this community assessment. These outcomes will shape the way these partnerships show up to continue the growth of the Dove Springs community and its neighbors.



Recommendations and Priorities for Strategic Planning

In review of the Fiscal Year 2023 Community Strengths and Needs Assessment we found that the programming that the Austin Public Health Community Youth Development (CYD) offers indicates that we are still on track with addressing needs and gaps in services for the 78744 community. As the CYD program provides programming and support for community stakeholders throughout the 2024 fiscal year, the 2023 CSNA report will serve as a guide and reference to inform our decisions regarding positive youth development in the 78744 community.

Our goal is not only to support but to empower our community youth and adults. We will continue to collaborate and partner with local organizations to bridge the gap in programming and build a stronger community. In addition to programming CYD offers, based on survey results, we will create a newsletter to provide the community with an overview of resources and increase our summer programming to reach more youth.

As we adapt our program to better serve the community, the CSNA report will serve as an important reference document.



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