



Assessing the Needs and Assets of San Bernardino County Families

Ontario-Montclair –
West End Region

December 2013



Between March and November 2013 Harder+Company Community Research

conducted eight community asset-mapping sessions throughout San Bernardino County with the goal of better understanding the needs, assets, resources, and gaps in services that families with young children in San Bernardino County face. Each session consisted of interactive activities for parents, community residents and local service providers that focused on a broad range of topics, from early education and medical resources to places where children can be active and community sources of pride. This report presents the findings from the Ontario-Montclair Asset Mapping session conducted on March 26, 2013.

The Approach: Asset Mapping

For this project, First 5 San Bernardino and Harder+Company Community Research adopted asset mapping as an approach to understanding community needs. Asset mapping has at least two important advantages over other traditional needs assessment approaches that made it well-suited to meet First 5 San Bernardino’s goals: it is **strengths-based** and **inclusive**.

Asset mapping focuses first on what is available and working in a community. These resources can then be leveraged to help address the needs of that same community – allowing for a strengths-based approach to problem solving. Simply put, being aware of both the resources and needs of a community allows for the development of more strategic solutions that have a higher likelihood of achieving outcomes. Traditional needs assessment focuses primarily on what’s missing from a community.

Second, asset mapping is inclusive – the technique makes it possible for a diverse group of people to work together to describe and understand the community. First 5 San Bernardino was eager to include a strong parent perspective in this project alongside the professional knowledge that service providers and leaders bring. Anyone who lives in a community is well-positioned to participate in asset mapping regardless of education, literacy level, language spoken or prior experience with this type of activity. Asset mapping truly allows a seat at the table for anyone with firsthand knowledge of the community.
















Asset mapping sessions resulted in lively discussions and debates about every community we conducted them in. We hope the information in this brief report conveys the passion that community members brought to the session. We are indebted to them for their time and participation in this process.

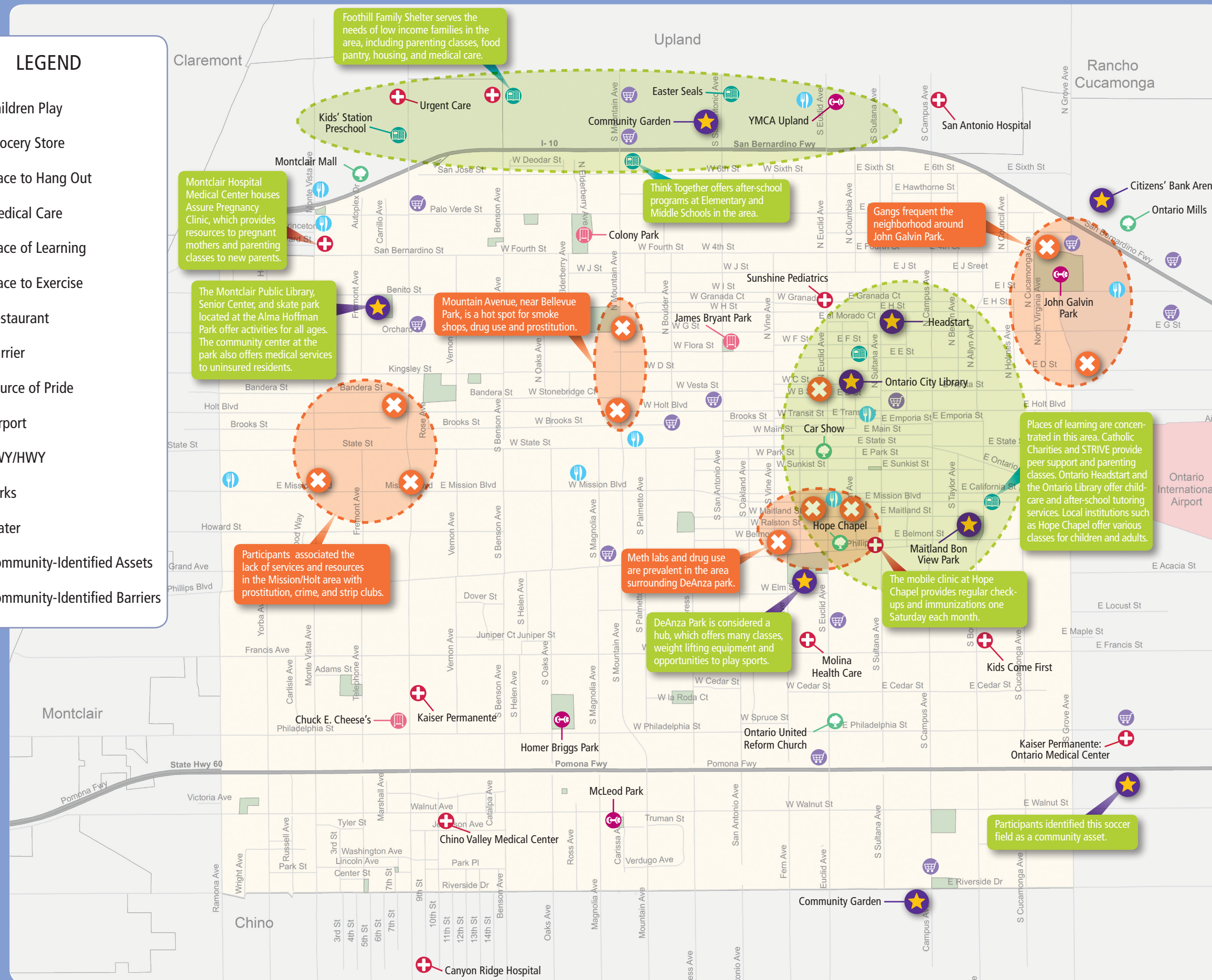
About this report:

The fold out map to the right provides an overview of the *mappable* assets and needs in Ontario-Montclair. The report that follows provides more detailed information about the community-identified assets and needs.

MAPPING SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY'S NEEDS AND ASSETS

LEGEND

-  Children Play
-  Grocery Store
-  Place to Hang Out
-  Medical Care
-  Place of Learning
-  Place to Exercise
-  Restaurant
-  Barrier
-  Source of Pride
-  Airport
-  FWY/HWY
-  Parks
-  Water
-  Community-Identified Assets
-  Community-Identified Barriers



Ontario Montclair Asset Mapping

This summary map shows community-identified assets and needs in the Ontario-Montclair community. During the asset mapping workshop a mix of 24 local parents, residents, and service providers worked together to identify current community strengths and challenges. Participants discussed a broad range of assets including schools, child care, food outlets and health care facilities. Although this is not an exhaustive list, First 5 San Bernardino and key community partners can use this map to identify existing resources that can be built upon to strengthen the foundation of services for children 0-5 and their families.

Key Findings:

-  The City of Montclair and the City of Ontario have many resources, but families are unable to access them due to a lack of public transportation, poor neighborhood walkability and safety concerns.
-  Most community members are concerned with the prevalence of drugs, prostitution, and gang activity that is concentrated near the intersection of Mission Street and Holt Avenue.
-  A lack of affordable housing remains a big concern for families in the Ontario-Montclair region.
-  Local parks and city-run community centers are highly utilized and a source of pride.
-  The Ontario-Montclair School District is highly regarded amongst community residents. Many families take pride in their local schools.

MARCH 2013

What does every day life look like for parents and community members in Ontario-Montclair?

Ontario and Montclair are two geographically adjacent cities located in the West End Region of San Bernardino County. While each city is an independent entity, the two communities share a school district.¹ As a result many service providers and residents themselves view the resources and needs of these two communities as shared. The two communities have quite a number of assets: local parks and libraries are heavily utilized by families, medical care is available for both insured and uninsured residents, and many services are available locally. Yet lack of quality public transportation makes even nearby resources inaccessible to some families. Residents report that there is a lack of affordable housing for families in the Ontario-Montclair region.



Facilitators helped parents map out where they grocery shop, take their children to school and receive medical care.



Families utilize multiple grocery stores in the area, but sometimes

healthy and affordable options are inaccessible. In contrast to other regions of the county, Ontario-Montclair has a sizeable selection of grocery stores (see map). Participants frequent grocery stores convenient to their place of residence and places like *Stater Bros*, *Food 4 Less*, *Cardenas*, *Sam's Club* and *Wal-Mart* because they often have specials or less expensive food items. WIC stores also provide accessible food options to residents in the area. However, residents reported there is a lack of grocery stores in certain parts of the community (for example, see the southwest area of the map), which forces some residents to buy groceries at local liquor and convenience stores, where prices are higher and options are limited, especially for more healthful foods. While there are a number of specialty markets like *Trader Joe's* and *Sprouts* in nearby Upland and Claremont with a diverse array of fresh fruits and vegetables, service providers indicated that their clients are unlikely to visit these stores due to cost and transportation barriers.

¹ The Ontario Montclair School District

Participants indicated that most of the restaurants in the area are fast-food establishments. High quality restaurants with healthier food options are located in neighboring Claremont Village and Chino Hills however, they are often inaccessible to Ontario-Montclair families due to distance and cost.



Community members value places where they can gather and exercise.

Local parks play multiple and important roles in the West End. *DeAnza Park* is a community park where people play soccer, workout on exercise equipment and attend classes – participants identified it as a community asset. Other parks, such as *Homer Briggs Park*, *John Galvin Park* and *McLeod Park* are also utilized for exercise. Families take their children to *Colony Park* and *James Bryant Park* to play. In addition to the available parks, some apartment complexes provide play areas for kids. Other play venues include Chuck E. Cheese’s, the outdoor mall in Chino Hills and Victoria Gardens.

• • •
“Mission [Blvd.] drives things out of the area; there is a void in Mission.”

~Ontario-Montclair Participant

Although some of the parks in the West End Region hold great value to community members, they are concerned about gangs and drug-use around important community sites like *John Galvin Park* and *DeAnza Park*. Participants expressed similar concerns about the areas around Holt Blvd., Mission Blvd., and Mountain Ave. The prevalence of illicit, dangerous activities stifles development in the area.

Community Desires for the West End Region

The word cloud to the right illustrates resources participants most desire for Ontario-Montclair and surrounding cities.

Participants were asked to name things they would like to see in their community. Words appearing in larger type appeared more frequently in their responses. Overall community members desire **better transportation, grocery stores, and accessible parks.**



How do parents care for their families' health?



Routine, specialized and prenatal medical care is accessible in the region. Participants reported that regular and emergency medical care is readily

available in and around Ontario-Montclair. Multiple *Kaiser Permanente* locations, *San Antonio Hospital*, *WIC* and *Molina Medical Group* provide valuable medical services in the area. Other options available for those West End residents needing special assistance include the *Montclair Community Center*, which offers medical care for uninsured residents, and a mobile medical clinic at *Hope Church* that includes doctors and provides basic medical services and immunizations. Despite the presence of multiple healthcare and medical institutions, there seems to be a great need for medical care in the area because participants noted that the mobile clinic is consistently “packed” with people seeking services.

Prenatal care is also available at multiple medical establishments, including *Molina*, and *Kaiser*. *Montclair Hospital Medical Center* houses *Assure Pregnancy Clinic*, which provides resources to pregnant mothers and classes for new parents. It is a valued resource for many parents because it offers parenting and prenatal services. *Planned Parenthood* partners with other local service providers, such as *Foothill Family Shelter*, to provide medical services and information to families in the area.



Community members utilized stickers to identify where they receive medical care.



Ensuring children practice good oral health is a priority for parents, but most feel there continues to be a lack of services and information to ensure this.

Every participant indicated they attempt to instill good oral health habits in their children, including brushing their teeth, flossing, and using mouthwash daily. However, many parents continue to face challenges in ensuring their children maintain good oral health. Although more than half of parents reported that they take their children to the dentist every six months, they also cited a lack of pediatric dentists, affordable care and transportation as barriers to ensuring regular oral health care for children. Some community members rely exclusively on free dental care (such as that provided at health fairs and mobile clinics) for themselves and their children.

Parents are eager to receive practical information to help their young children develop good oral health habits but feel sources of obtaining such information are limited in the region. Some parents reported receiving information from their dentists but the majority of parents rely on community resources such as health fairs, free dental screenings provided by *Loma Linda Medical Center* as well as family members and neighbors where they can obtain information for free. Parents felt that oral health information is lacking specifically for children under the age of one.

Identifying parent’s practice and knowledge:

Community members utilized “placemats”, like the one pictured here, and worked in teams to identify dental health practices, challenges, and gaps in services.

Supporting healthy & thriving FAMILIES!

Tells us about yourselves:

Age: _____ How many children live with you? _____ How many are under 1? _____
 Are you a: _____ Parent _____ Grandparent _____ Service Provider
 _____ Foster Parent _____ Other: _____

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What kinds of dental health activities does your family practice regularly?
 Ex. Brushing teeth daily, flossing, etc.:

What are some of the difficulties to maintaining good dental health?

To keep my family healthy, the three most important things are:

Where do you get information about your child's dental health? Ex. Community events, mobil clinics, dentist, family, etc.

harder+company FIRST5

What learning opportunities are available for young children and their families?



Parents value education for their children and opportunities to learn together.

All the parent participants report engaging in educational activities with their children regularly; this includes things like reading to them, playing educational games, taking field trips to museums and participating in outdoor activities. Parents also take advantage of educational resources provided by community based organizations in the area. For example, *Catholic Charities*, *Foothill Family Shelter*, *Hope Chapel* and *STRIVE Mental Health Systems* provide valuable peer support and parenting classes. The *Ontario Public Library*, *Montclair Public Library* and *Think Together* offer afterschool programs and tutoring services for school-aged children. However, affordable preschool and childcare is limited to the *Ontario Headstart* and *Kids' Station Preschool*. Participants felt there is a need for more children's activities to be offered at libraries, Headstart and preschool locations.

Summary of community-identified needs in Ontario-Montclair

- Montclair and Ontario have many resources, but families are often unable to access them due to a lack of public transportation, poor neighborhood walkability and safety concerns in some areas.
- While most residents have access to a variety of grocery stores to purchase healthy food, residents who lack transportation or live in certain areas of the city frequently shop at liquor or convenience stores, which are expensive and have fewer healthy food options.
- Community members are concerned about the prevalence of drugs, prostitution and gang activity – especially along Mission Blvd and Holt Blvd – and their effects on the community.
- There is a need for safe places where families can gather and play.

Summary of needs in the West End Region*

*Community members were asked to name some things that families with young children need that currently are not available in the region. The “word cloud” to the right illustrates their responses. Words appearing in larger type appeared more frequently in their responses. Overall, **better transportation, resource centers** and **community gardens** appear to be the largest needs for families in the West End Region.



Summary and conclusions

The communities of Ontario and Montclair care deeply about the well-being of young children and their families. While compared to other regions of the county, the West End is generally resource-rich, however, families of young children often struggle to access those resources, due to transportation, cost and awareness. There is a perception that some important community resources (such as parks) and community developments along specific corridors is inhibited by crime. Many families with young children live adjacent to these areas and struggle to raise their children in neighborhoods that do not always feel safe. The rich base of community resources and strong sense of community pride, will serve as assets in First 5 San Bernardino's work to improve life for children zero to five and their families in the West End.

THANK YOU!

Many thanks to the community residents who attended this event and worked diligently to identify their community's needs and assets. We also want to thank local non-profits and churches that helped recruit community members and provided their knowledge and support every step of the way.



First 5 San Bernardino was created in December, 1998 in order to realize the benefits of Proposition 10 (California Children and Families Act) for the County's youngest residents and their families. The act created a program for the purpose of promoting, supporting, and improving the early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age.

Vision – All children in San Bernardino County are healthy, safe, nurtured, eager to learn and ready to succeed.

Mission – Promote, support and enhance the health and early development of children prenatal through age five and their families and communities.



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