

# What a Good Resource Map Can Do

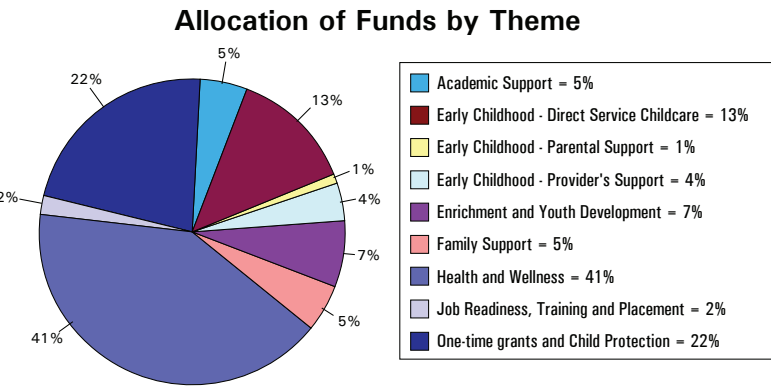
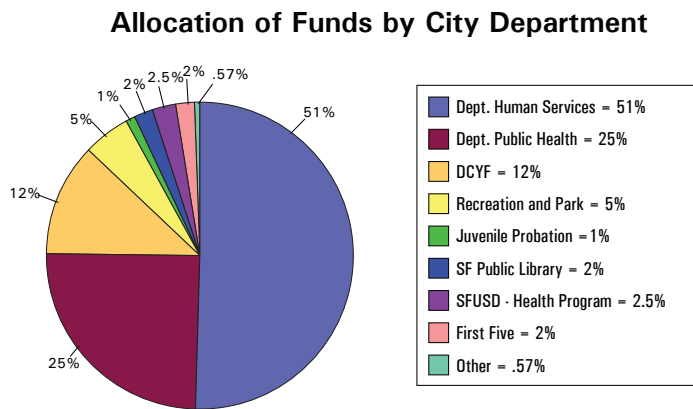
Government agencies, intergovernmental commissions, task forces and policy and advocacy organizations have always relied on some level of data on investments in children, youth, families and communities to do their jobs. So the answer is clearly not to just give decision makers more numbers. Instead, the answer is to present the data so that it tells as much about people as it does about dollar amounts.

Children, Youth and Families resource maps<sup>1</sup> can help decision makers get a birds-eye view of how much is being spent across departments and programs. Though CYF maps come in many forms, a quality CYF map is different than traditional public reports on spending in key ways:

● **It focuses on children and youth, not departments and agencies**

Unlike traditional public accounting that describes funding by agency, line item or program, a CYF resource map cuts across bureaucratic boundaries to help decision makers assess their overall investments in children, youth and families. Instead of facts and figures on departments or specific services, CYF maps answer the questions about people and priorities. For example, how much are we spending on treatment versus prevention? What is our investment in specific populations, such as older youth or young children? How much are we investing across multiple agencies? How are those investments changing over time?

**San Francisco’s CYF resource map shows both spending by department and by theme. This allows decision makers to answer questions about people and priorities as well as about agencies and programs.**



Source: [www.dcyf.org/Pubs/csap/CSAP\\_final\\_1125.pdf](http://www.dcyf.org/Pubs/csap/CSAP_final_1125.pdf)

● **It shows the forest and the trees**

Decision makers will always need data and financial information about specific issues (the trees). However, when done well, CYF resource maps help leaders ensure they are making smart decisions about the full range of investments in children, youth and families (the forest). Armed with this information, policy makers and community leaders can make better long- and short-term plans for funding.

**Contra Costa County’s CYF Resource Map lets decision makers track spending by program (the trees) and by how these programs fit into overall investments in broad goals for children, youth and families (the forest).**

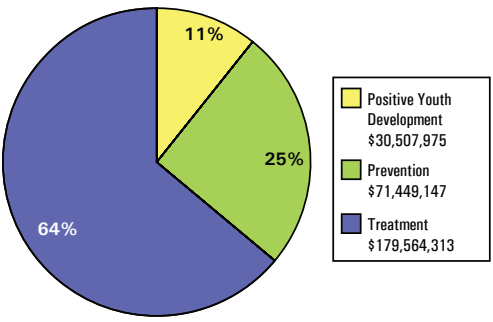
Programs	Children Ready for & Succeeding in School	Children & Youth Healthy & Preparing for Productive Adulthood	Families that are Self-Sufficient	Families that are Safe, Stable & Nurturing	Communities that are Safe & Provide High Quality of Life
AB 3622 Mental Health Program	✓				
Adoptions	✓	✓		✓	
After School Program – George Miller	✓	✓		✓	
Ambulatory Care Services	✓			✓	
Bay Point Family Health Center	✓	✓			✓

Source: [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cao/reportcard](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cao/reportcard)  
Specifically [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cao/reportcard/CFSB/GeneratedItems/t10.doc](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cao/reportcard/CFSB/GeneratedItems/t10.doc)

● **It helps leaders identify and align spending with priorities**

By helping show connections between funding allocations and goals, CYF resource maps can help policy makers identify where there are existing investments that might be reallocated toward higher priority programs or initiatives. The “big picture” perspective in CYF maps can also help guard against quick fix mapping shifts. What’s more, by providing multiple ways to look at investments in children, youth and families, CYF maps can help policy makers set broad goals, e.g., shifting dollars from treatment to prevention, and track progress over time.

**In Missouri, advocates tracked spending by broad goal area with the intention of helping policy makers understand their disproportionate investment in treatment versus front-end prevention. Graphic representations like these can help decision makers not only get a sense of where their money is being spent, but also set goals for shifting priorities – e.g., from treatment to prevention – over time.**



Source: [www.mokids.org/pdfs/youth\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.mokids.org/pdfs/youth_handbook.pdf)

# What It Takes to Get There

Developing a CYF resource map can and should be an important part of an overall effort for leveraging and better investing resources to improve young people’s lives. But it is only one part of a comprehensive, results-focused, data-driven policy making and program development effort. The more the links with complementary data and decision-making efforts can be anticipated, the more useful and powerful a CYF map will be. Ideally, a well-crafted CYF map will be:

● **Comprehensive**

It addresses spending on the range of supports and services for children, youth and families across a community.

● **Consistent with other efforts**

Often, communities struggle when their CYF resource map is organized one way, their children’s report card is organized another way, the children’s cabinet is organized a third way and so on. In a coordinated planning effort, the CYF map should be aligned with other efforts throughout the community to allow leaders to get direct answers to hard questions.

The Assessment pointed out that we need to look at our existing investment in youth services to more efficiently and effectively utilize those resources to improve services and outcomes for young people.

Kenneth Schwendeman,  
Executive Director, Kentucky Justice Cabinet Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

● **A collective process**

Ideally, a number of stakeholders, including policy makers, government officials, program leaders, advocates and community leaders will be engaged in the development of CYF resource maps. Too often, CYF maps are created by a narrow group of people, without engaging the full complement of relevant stakeholders. This is a key reason some maps end up sitting on shelves collecting dust, instead of informing action plans and collecting momentum.

● **A catalyst for action**

A CYF resource map can be a key aid in promoting needed changes — strategies for improving systems, assessing and aligning resources, mobilizing demand, and engaging youth and families. When done well, disseminated broadly and used in conjunction with other data tools, CYF maps can help to jumpstart interest in overall policy and program reform.

These opportunities do not come without hard work, however, and without a clear, careful plan to build a high quality CYF resource map from the bottom up. Creating a CYF map requires determining not just what information will be most useful to guide decision making, but how to gather, analyze, synthesize and publicize it. Even the most seasoned budgetary analysts and policy professionals will find that new approaches are necessary and new questions must be asked to do the job right. Getting started on this process will take planning, know-how and coordinated buy-in from the right stakeholders. Seeing the work through will mean devoting significant energy and resources to the process, however the potential reward is also significant — an opportunity to promote real improvements where they matter most.

<sup>1</sup> Efforts to take stock of investments are referred to by many different terms, such as “children’s budgets,” “youth budgets” and “maps of investments.” For purposes of this guide, we use the term Children, Youth and Families resource maps (CYF maps) to refer to data collection efforts summarizing spending on children, youth, families and/or communities in a given nation, state or locality.

## Adding It Up: What's Included

Want to learn more? With funding from Atlantic Philanthropies, the Forum for Youth Investment, in conjunction with The Finance Project, has created an accessible, comprehensive guide to each step of the CYF resource mapping process, from planning to implementation.

Designed to help decision makers and community leaders to both learn the importance of a good CYF map and lay out the process of creating or improving their own, the guide includes:

### Examples

Drawn from real-life decision makers, communities and the situations they face, *Adding it Up* is not an instruction manual: It is a demonstration guide, complete with the information needed to both understand the story and share it with others.

### Tips and Warnings

Most decision makers who have to talk about money and numbers appreciate the value of good advice: Not only about what works, but about what does not. This series contains easy-to-spot tips and warnings throughout to help chart a careful course through the CYF mapping process.

### Worksheets and Tools

Planners and conveners of CYF mapping teams will appreciate the value of having these thoughtful, ready-to-use tools on hand for each step along the way. What's more, answering the questions and following the worksheets provided can ensure a process that is better organized from beginning to end.

### Technical Resources

Whether from the government or advocacy sector, or working at the city, county or state level, this section can better inform stakeholders involved in implementing a good CYF mapping process. With links to CYF maps, sources of data and additional tools, these resources provide a wealth of information to help get the job done right.

This next generation paper by the Forum for Youth Investment and The Finance Project is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in producing a CYF resource map at the state, county or city level.

Mark Friedman, Director  
The Fiscal Policy Studies Institute

With funding from Atlantic Philanthropies, the Forum for Youth Investment and The Finance Project have created an accessible, comprehensive guide to each step of the CYF resource mapping process, along with tips, tools and examples from states and communities.

To learn more about how to obtain the guide and how to get a CYF resource map started in your community, contact the Forum at [youth@forumfyi.org](mailto:youth@forumfyi.org) or by phone at 202.207.3333.



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# ADDING IT UP

## A Guide to Mapping Public Resources for Children, Youth and Families



## Why Map Resources for Children, Youth and Families?

Imagine a world where leaders have access to the information they need to make good decisions. Imagine that before making a new investment or cutback in spending, policy makers know how children and youth are faring. Imagine they know how much is being spent, where those dollars are coming from, and how those investments have changed in recent years. Imagine policy makers having information on how effective specific programs and services are in helping children, youth and families to make progress. Finally, and most importantly, dream of policy makers and other community leaders pulling all of this information together and making the hard decisions with a better sense of the political, economic and social trade-offs involved.