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SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

**Tri-County Community  
Asset Investment Portfolio  
Final Report  
Santa Cruz County**

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April 2003

Prepared by:

Kate Dunham  
Vinz Koller  
Johanna Laco

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Prepared for:

The Workforce Investment Boards  
of Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties

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**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
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## I. Executive Summary

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### Introduction

The Tri-County Community Asset Investment Portfolio Final Report provides information on workforce development assets and gaps within the three counties of Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito. The purpose of this report is to assist the Workforce Investment Boards and staff of these three counties with determining where to focus future efforts to meet the workforce needs of all county residents. To provide a complete picture of each county's workforce system, an attempt was made to include all workforce development services and providers, rather than focusing solely on those funded by the Workforce Investment Act. As a result, the workforce programs discussed in this report are funded by a variety of local, state, federal, and private sources and provide a broad spectrum of workforce services.

Because of limited resources and its broad mandate, the Community Asset Investment Portfolio Final Report does not present comprehensive data or strategies for each asset and gap identified below. Instead, the report includes a broad description of each county's workforce system which is designed to serve as a starting point for more detailed discussions or research efforts.

This report is the result of a year-long process involving a large scale data collection effort described below and the creation of three interim documents: a needs assessment, an inventory of services, and an asset and gap report. Information from each of these reports is summarized in this final report.

### Community Asset Investment Portfolio Data Sources

The Community Asset Investment Portfolio Final Report is based on a number of data sources, including two linked web-based surveys of workforce service providers, extensive reviews of secondary data, interviews with industry representatives and stakeholders, and focus groups with employers, customers and service providers. Data collection for the portfolio began with a review of secondary data sources such as Census data, labor market information from the Employment Development Department, and state educational data from the California Department of Education.

Following the review of secondary data, focus groups were held with small groups of employers, service providers and youth and adult customers in each county. These focus groups, which were held in June and July 2002, focused on collecting participant assessments of workforce needs and issues in each county. Lasting approximately 90 minutes, the 13 focus groups (4 each in Santa Cruz and San Benito counties and 5 in Monterey County) included from 3 to 16 participants. Focus group participants were selected by county WIB staff to represent a broad spectrum of opinions and backgrounds, but typically fewer than half of those invited were able to attend. In Santa Cruz County, all focus groups took place on June 27 and included the following numbers of participants: youth customers, 3 participants; adult/dislocated worker customer focus group, 9 participants; employer focus group, 7 participants; youth and adult service providers/stakeholders focus group, 15 participants.

From late June to early August, 12 interviews (4 in each county) with representatives from key industries were also conducted. The industries and representatives to interview were selected in consultation with county WIB staff. In Santa Cruz County, interviews were conducted with the following representatives: These interviews included, Jess Brown, Santa Cruz County Farm

## Executive Summary

Bureau, July 2, & 9, 2002; Marvin Labrie, Physicians Medical Group, July 9, 2002; Steven Beedle, Tech Alliance, June 14, 2002; Jo Anne Dlott, Seaside Company, August 16, 2002.

After the conclusion of the focus groups and interviews, two linked web surveys of Tri-county workforce service providers were administered from August 15 to October 11, 2002. 130 out of a total of 323 (response rate 40.25%) workforce organizations in the three counties responded to the first survey, while 104 organizations responded to the second survey. To encourage a high response rate, each surveyed organization received two follow up letters and two phone calls encouraging completion of the surveys.

Surveyed providers primarily included organizations that offer workforce services for youth, adults and employers, such as vocational training, job search assistance, career counseling, pre-screening of job applicants, and summer employment. Because of the importance of support services to customer success in the labor market, providers of support services such as childcare, substance abuse treatment, and housing were also included in the survey. As it turns out, most support service providers who responded also provide workforce services. Providers were selected for inclusion in consultation with county staff primarily based on existing local databases of service providers.

The first survey gathered basic information about each provider and detailed information about each of the provider's programs and locations. The information on programs included information on the specific workforce services provided, target populations, ages, and areas served. The second survey included sections on budget size, number of service locations, number of participants served annually, the extent to which those surveyed considered certain target groups (such as dislocated workers or young offenders) underserved, and the perceived availability of a number of workforce services for youth and adults in each target community. All of the information collected during both surveys was self-reported by providers who were not asked to provide documentation or verification for their submissions. In addition, decisions about what constituted a provider, program and service were self-defined by survey respondents. In general, a provider was an organization which operated from 1-6 workforce programs, and a program was considered a unit of a provider that offered one or more services.

Finally, once preliminary workforce gaps were developed, additional research on each of these gaps was conducted in early January, 2003. This research consisted of phone interviews and discussions with a number of key workforce development stakeholders and WIB members in each county.

### **This Report**

This final Community Asset Investment Portfolio report is divided into a Regional Summary and three sub-reports focusing on each county. This sub-report will focus on Santa Cruz County. The report begins with a section presenting data on youth workforce assets and gaps followed by a section on adult workforce assets and workforce gaps. The workforce asset sections of the report are based on a summary of data collected from the two linked web-surveys described in detail below. The workforce gap sections of the report were developed through a multi-stage process. First, an initial set of gaps was identified by comparing data on workforce needs with data on available workforce services. Next, these gaps were analyzed and refined in collaboration with WIB staff from each county and additional research was carried out to finalize the gaps and possible policy strategies.

### Youth Workforce Assets

Using an asset-based approach, this section of the report outlines the strengths of Santa Cruz County youth workforce services, providing a crucial foundation for the gap analysis which follows. Included in this section is a snapshot of Santa Cruz County youth, information on Santa Cruz County workforce providers, descriptions of the types of workforce services available for youth, and a breakdown of workforce services available by region. This section of the report is based on data collected from two linked web surveys of Tri-county workforce service providers that were administered from August 15 to October 11, 2002.

#### Overview of Santa Cruz County's Youth Population

- Santa Cruz County has **70,190** residents who are **19 years old or younger**, comprising **27.5%** of the county's population.

#### Providers of Workforce Services

- The first internet survey found that Santa Cruz County is served by **57** workforce service providers<sup>1</sup>, **3** of which **provide only support services**.
  - **Older youth** (18-21) in Santa Cruz County are served by **51** workforce providers, **1** of which provide **only support services**.
  - **Younger youth** (14-17) in Santa Cruz County are served by **34** workforce providers, **1** of which provide **only support services**.
- **74%** of these workforce providers indicated they **operate only one workforce program**.
- **Half of all workforce providers** responding to the question on number of service locations (15 providers) indicated they operate **one service location**. Twelve providers have between two and five service locations, one provider has between six and ten service locations, and three providers have ten or more locations.
- **One-third of the providers** who responded to the question on number of participants served annually said they serve more than **1,000 participants** annually (10 providers).

#### Workforce Programs and Services

- In Santa Cruz County **85 workforce programs**<sup>2</sup> indicated they serve **older youth**, **2** of which provide **only support services**. **53 county programs** indicated that they serve **younger youth**, **2** of which provide **only support services**.
- **49%** of workforce programs serving **older youth** provide **job search services**, as do **45%** of those serving **younger youth**.

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<sup>1</sup> In general, a provider was an organization which operated from 1-6 workforce programs.

<sup>2</sup> In general, a program is a unit of a provider that offers workforce services.

## Executive Summary

- **73%** of workforce **programs serving older youth** provide **training related services**, as do **68% of those** that **serve younger youth**.
- **46%** of workforce **programs serving older youth** offer **other workforce services**, as do **74%** of those **serving younger youth**.
- **25%** of workforce **programs serving older youth** provide **support services**, as do **30%** of those **serving younger youth**.

### Youth Workforce Gaps

This section of the report presents three youth workforce gaps which were identified through a multi-stage process. First, an initial set of gaps was developed by comparing data collected in the needs assessment with services data collected during the inventory of services. Next, these gaps were analyzed and refined in collaboration with WIB staff from each county and additional research was carried out to finalize the gaps and possible policy strategies.

**Gap #1: Young workers, particularly limited English speakers, lack strong basic skills in English and math.**

#### Background:

A number of high schools around the county have struggled academically<sup>3</sup> and many youth leave high school without basic skills proficiency.

The communities of Watsonville and Freedom have the highest number of limited English-speaking residents and the lowest levels of educational attainment in the county. Watsonville also has the highest percentage of residents at the lowest level of literacy.

#### Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:

- Support policies to enable local schools to ensure that all students graduate with strong basic skills in English and math.
- Make mastery of basic skills a priority for all Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council sponsored youth programs.
- Develop policies to create better articulation between different educational systems (high schools, adult schools and community colleges) providing basic skills training.
- Develop policies to encourage employers and training providers to develop a common definition of basic skills proficiency which could lead to a recognized standard.

**Gap #2: More coordination is needed between youth-serving workforce agencies to overcome funding constraints and limited resources.**

#### Background:

The current environment of state and federal funding cuts makes coordination between youth-serving workforce providers a critical way to ensure that all youth receive the workforce services they need. Currently, because many providers and youth lack sufficient information on existing services, youth often do not know where to go to receive the services they need.

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<sup>3</sup> Based on Academic Performance Index (API) rankings and dropout rates. See body of the report.

### **Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Continue to make coordination a focus of Youth Council Activities.

**Gap #3: More educators and students need to better understand the skills and behaviors required for success in the workplace.**

### **Background:**

Both students and their teachers need to have a current and realistic picture of the skills, education and behaviors required for success in today's workplace. This kind of knowledge helps youth begin thinking about possible careers and ensures that teachers are covering relevant skills and behaviors in their classrooms.

### **Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Develop policies to support expansion or replication current programs within Santa Cruz County providing opportunities for students and educators to better understand the skills and behaviors required for workplace success.
- Develop policies to strengthen or expand programs in county high schools to increase student knowledge of workplace skills and career opportunities.
- Develop policies to increase opportunities for increased communication between educators and employers regarding workplace skills and behaviors.

### Adult Workforce Assets

Using an asset-based approach, this section of the report outlines the strengths of Santa Cruz County adult workforce services, providing a crucial foundation for the gap analysis which follows. Included in this section is a snapshot of Santa Cruz County adults, information on Santa Cruz County workforce providers, descriptions of the types of workforce services available for adults, and a breakdown of workforce services available by region. This section of the report is based on data collected from two linked web surveys of Tri-county workforce service providers that were administered from August 15 to October 11, 2002.

#### Overview of Santa Cruz County's Adult Population

- Santa Cruz County has **194,861** residents who are **18 years old and older**, comprising **76.2%** of the county's population.

#### Providers of Workforce Services

- The first internet survey found that Santa Cruz County is served by **57** workforce service providers<sup>4</sup>, of which **3** provide only support services.
  - **Adults** (22 and older) in Santa Cruz County are served by **50** workforce providers, **1** of which provides only support services.
  - **Older youth** (18-21) in Santa Cruz County are served by **51** workforce providers, **1** of which provides only support services.
- **74%** of these workforce providers indicated they **operate only one workforce program**.
- **Half of all workforce providers** responding to the question on number of service locations (15 providers) indicated they operate **one service location**. Twelve providers have between two and five service locations, one provider has between six and ten service locations, and three providers have ten or more locations.
- **One-third of the providers** who responded to the question on number of participants served annually said they serve more than **1,000 participants** annually (10 providers).

#### Workforce Programs and Services

- In Santa Cruz County **75 workforce programs**<sup>5</sup> indicated they serve **adults**, **2** of which provide **only support services**. **85 county programs** indicated that they serve **older youth**, **2** of which provide **only support services**.

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<sup>4</sup> In general, a provider was an organization which operated from 1-6 workforce programs.

<sup>5</sup> In general, a program is a unit of a provider that offers workforce services.

## Executive Summary

- **49% of workforce programs serving adults and older youth provide job search services.**
- **73% of workforce programs serving adults and older youth provide training related services.**
- **41% of workforce programs serving adults offer other workforce services, as do 46% of those serving older youth.**
- **23% of workforce programs serving adults provide support services, as do 25% of those serving older youth.**

### Adult Workforce Gaps

This section of the report presents three adult workforce gaps which were identified through the Community Asset Investment Portfolio Process. First, an initial set of gaps was developed by comparing data collected in the needs assessment with services data collected during the inventory of services. Next, these gaps were analyzed and refined in collaboration with WIB staff from each county and additional research was carried out to finalize the gaps and possible policy strategies.

**Gap #1: Employers need assistance finding qualified applicants for certain hard-to-fill technical positions.**

#### Background:

Despite the current sluggish economy which has resulted in a large supply of workers for most positions, employers continue to have difficulty filling certain technical positions. These positions include many in the health care sector as well as other specific occupations such as diesel mechanic or maintenance mechanic.

#### Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:

- Support policies to develop additional programs to help employers recruit for hard-to-fill positions. This could be accomplished by:
  - Determining which specific positions employers continue to have difficulty filling. Only programs with strong employer support and participation will succeed.
  - Researching the availability of training, current and future labor market demand, and wage prospects. This could be done with data from the California Employment Development Department's Labor Market Information Division or US Works. Positions in sectors with limited current or future labor market demand will not be successful.
  - Working with local employers to develop customized training programs to fill these needs.

Possible hard-to-fill positions include:

- Additional health care occupations. The health care sector continues to have the greatest difficulty in finding and retaining qualified staff. The Health Careers Partnership could be expanded to include coordination of additional health care occupations.
  - Maintenance mechanics. Several employers in the needs assessment focus group mentioned that they had difficulty finding qualified workers in this occupation.
  - Administrative support positions.
  - Public safety officers.
  - Occupations in sectors recommended by the 1999 Santa Cruz County Regional Cluster Project, such as technology, which could be pursued once that sector rebounds economically.
- Develop policies to support coordination of sectoral training efforts within the county.

**Gap #2: Entry-level and low-skilled adult workers lack strong basic skills in English and math.**

### **Background:**

The communities of Watsonville and Freedom have the lowest levels of educational attainment in the county. Watsonville also has the highest percentage of residents at the lowest level of literacy.

### **Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Make mastery of basic skills a priority for all Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council sponsored youth programs.
- Develop policies to create better articulation between different educational systems (high schools, adult schools and community colleges) providing basic skills training.
- Develop policies to encourage employers and training providers to develop a common definition of basic skills proficiency which could lead to a recognized standard.
- Develop policies to improve coordination between training providers and employers to upgrade incumbent worker basic skills. These programs are typically most successful when they are geared to a specific workplace, take place on-site and are fully supported by the employer.

**Gap #3: Limited English-speaking adults, particularly farmworkers, need additional assistance to move into higher paying jobs.**

### **Background:**

Many limited English speakers are stuck in low wage employment such as field work and lack the skills to move into other higher paying positions or occupations. Often, the biggest barrier for these workers is their ability to communicate in English. This gap is greatest in the communities of Watsonville and Freedom which have the largest number of limited English-speaking adults and farmworkers.

### **Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Support policies to encourage local educational institutions to offer additional, short-term, vocational ESL classes targeted at farmworkers. Many ESL courses are too academic and assume that students will be able to continue their ESL studies over longer periods of time. However, many limited English speakers, particularly farmworkers, have time to study only for short periods and will be more likely to retain applied English that they can use in their jobs or in daily life.
- Develop policies to support increasing the number of vocational training programs with embedded vocational ESL components.
- Develop policies to support additional culturally appropriate outreach to limited English speakers, particularly farmworkers, to ensure that they know what services are available.

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## II. Introduction

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Surveyed providers primarily included organizations that offer workforce services for youth, adults and employers, such as vocational training, job search assistance, career counseling, pre-screening of job applicants, and summer employment. Because of the importance of support services to customer success in the labor market, providers of support services such as childcare, substance abuse treatment, and housing were also included in the survey. As it turns out, most support service providers who responded also provide workforce services. Providers were selected for inclusion in consultation with county staff primarily based on existing local databases of service providers.

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### **III. Youth**

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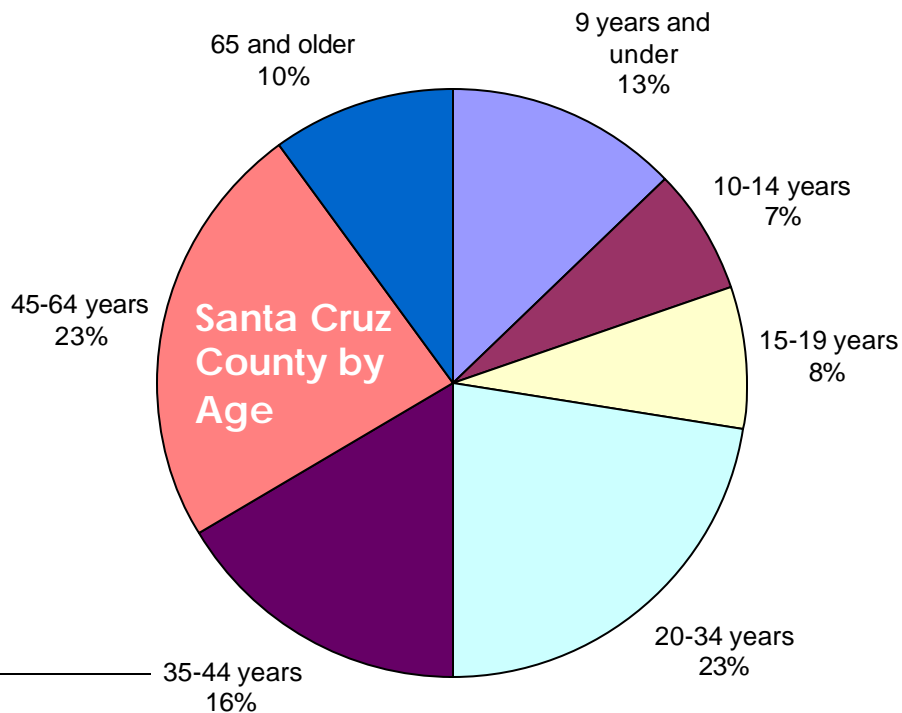
## Youth Workforce Assets

Santa Cruz County has much to offer its youth in terms of quality workforce services. Using an asset-based approach, this section of the report outlines the strengths of Santa Cruz County youth workforce services, providing a crucial foundation for the gap analysis which follows. Included in this section is a snapshot of Santa Cruz County youth, information on Santa Cruz County workforce providers, descriptions of the types of workforce services available for youth, and a breakdown of workforce services available by region. This section of the report is based on data collected from two linked web surveys of Tri-county workforce service providers that were administered from August 15 to October 11, 2002.

### Snapshot of Santa Cruz County Youth

In 2000, Santa Cruz County had 70,190 residents 19 and under, comprising 27.5% of the county’s population. By comparison, 30.1% of all California residents were 19 and under. Here is a detailed breakdown of the county residents 19 and under in 2000:

- **19,939** were aged 15-19
- **17,630** were aged 10-14
- **32,621** were aged 9 and under<sup>6</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Census 2000.

## Santa Cruz County Workforce Providers

Santa Cruz County is served by numerous workforce providers, many of whom serve youth. This section of the report includes information on these providers.

- **Number of PROVIDERS in Santa Cruz County: 57**
- **Number of Providers only providing SUPPORT SERVICES: 3**
- **Number of Providers serving OLDER YOUTH (18-21): 51**
- **Number of Providers serving YOUNGER YOUTH (14-17): 34**
- **Number of Providers serving OLDER YOUTH providing only SUPPORT SERVICES: 1**
- **Number of Providers serving YOUNGER YOUTH providing only SUPPORT SERVICES: 1**

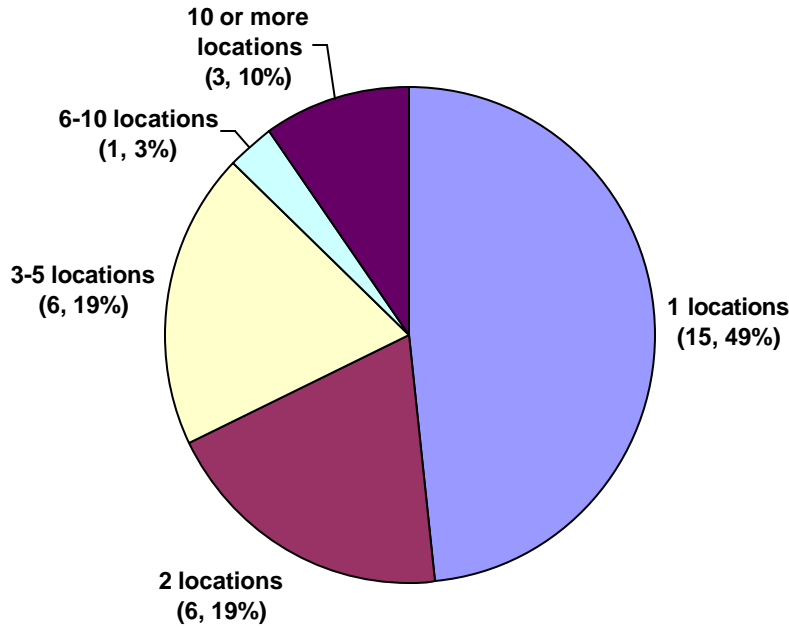
## Number of Workforce Programs Operated by Providers

Most Santa Cruz County Workforce Providers have few programs. For example, 42 providers have only one program and eight providers have two programs. The largest number of programs operated by a single provider is six programs.

Number of Providers with Single or Multiple Programs by Region <sup>7</sup>						
Number of Programs	Entire Santa Cruz County	North County	Mid County	South County	San Lorenzo Valley	North Coast/Davenport
1	42	37	37	40	34	34
2	8	6	5	6	7	5
3	4	1	4	4	3	4
4	1	0	0	1	0	0
5	1	1	1	1	1	1
6	1	1	1	1	1	1

<sup>7</sup> This data is for all surveyed workforce providers, rather than only those serving youth.

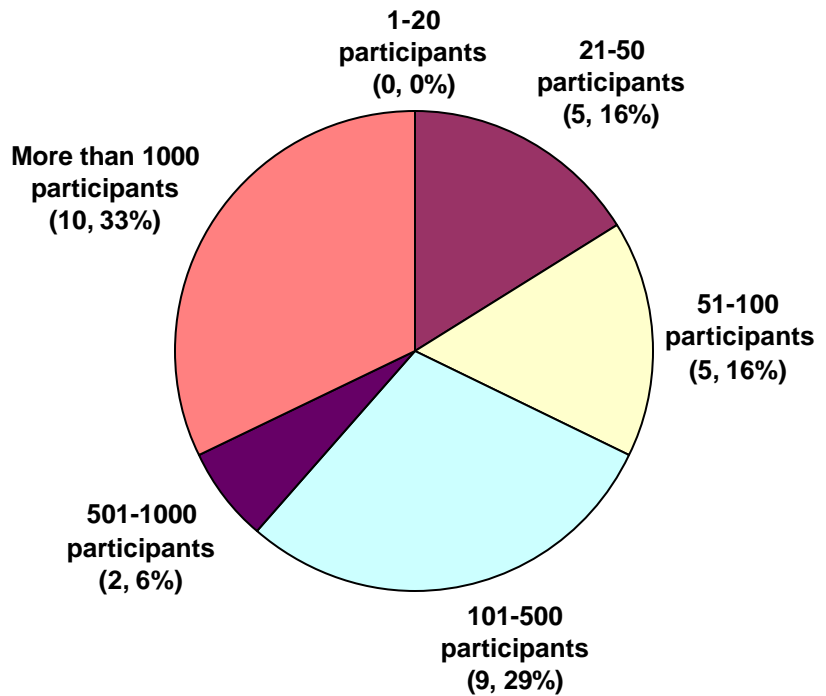
### Number of Workforce Provider Service Locations



In Santa Cruz County, half of workforce providers (15 providers) who responded to a question on the number of service locations they operate said they have only one. Twelve providers have between two and five service locations, one provider has between six and ten service locations, and three providers have ten or more locations.<sup>8</sup>

### Number of Participants Served Per Year by Providers

Additionally, one-third of the providers who responded to a question on the number of participants served annually indicated they serve more than 1,000 participants per year (10 providers). No providers said they serve between one and 20 participants in a year.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>8</sup> This data is for all surveyed workforce providers rather than only those serving youth.

<sup>9</sup> This data is for all surveyed workforce providers rather than only those serving youth.

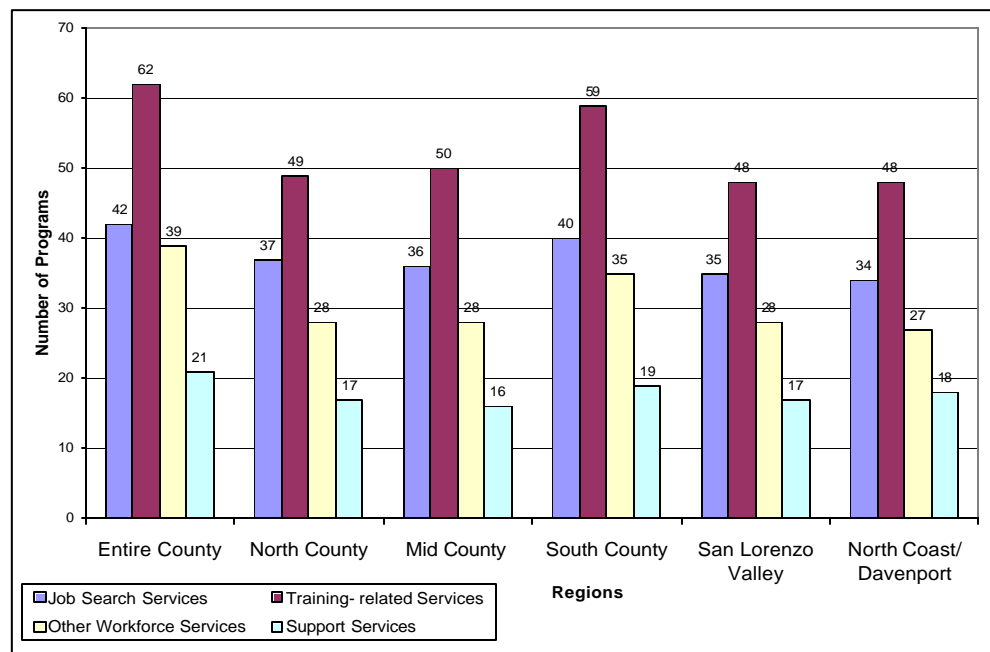
## Workforce Programs by Region

Older youth (18-21) in Santa Cruz County are served by 85 workforce programs, of which 2 provide only support services. Younger youth (14-17) in Santa Cruz County are served by 53 workforce programs, of which 2 provide only support services. Most workforce programs provide services in all regions of the county, with South County being served by the most programs.

Number of Workforce Programs for Youth by Region <sup>10</sup>				
Region	Older Youth		Younger Youth	
	Total	Only Support Services	Total	Only Support Services
Entire Santa Cruz County	85	2	53	2
North County	70	2	39	2
Mid County	68	2	38	2
South County	79	2	47	2
San Lorenzo Valley	67	2	36	2
North Coast/Davenport	66	2	35	2

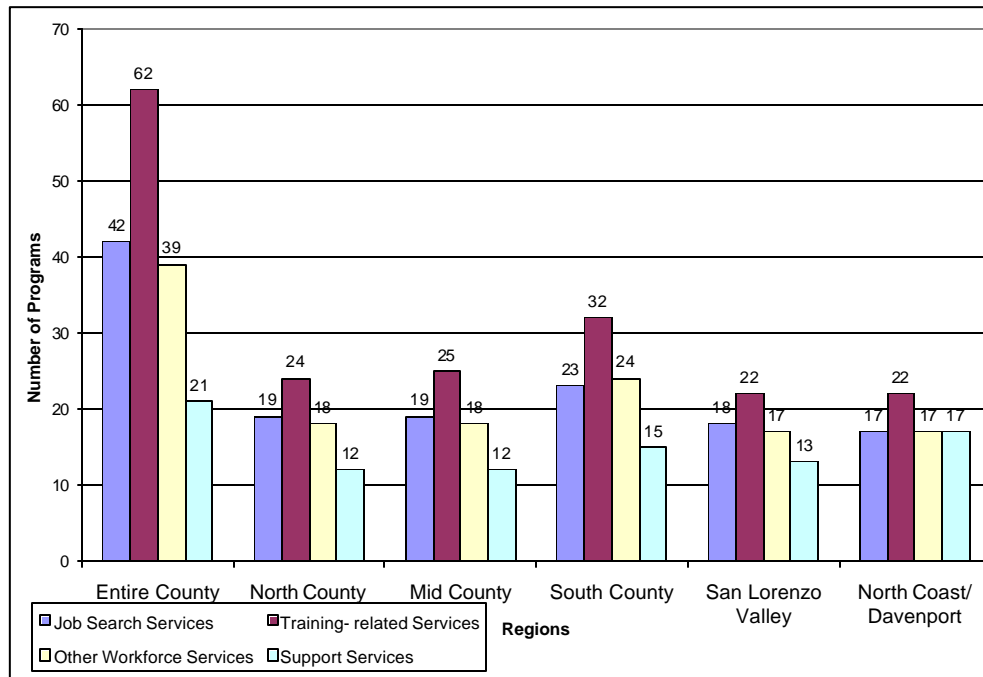
### Programs Providing Workforce Services to Older Youth

Across the six regions of Santa Cruz County, the most common workforce services available to older youth are training-related services, followed by job search services. Support services are the least commonly available services.



<sup>10</sup> Numbers are not unduplicated because many programs serve both older and younger youth and all regions of the county.

### Programs Providing Workforce Services to Younger Youth



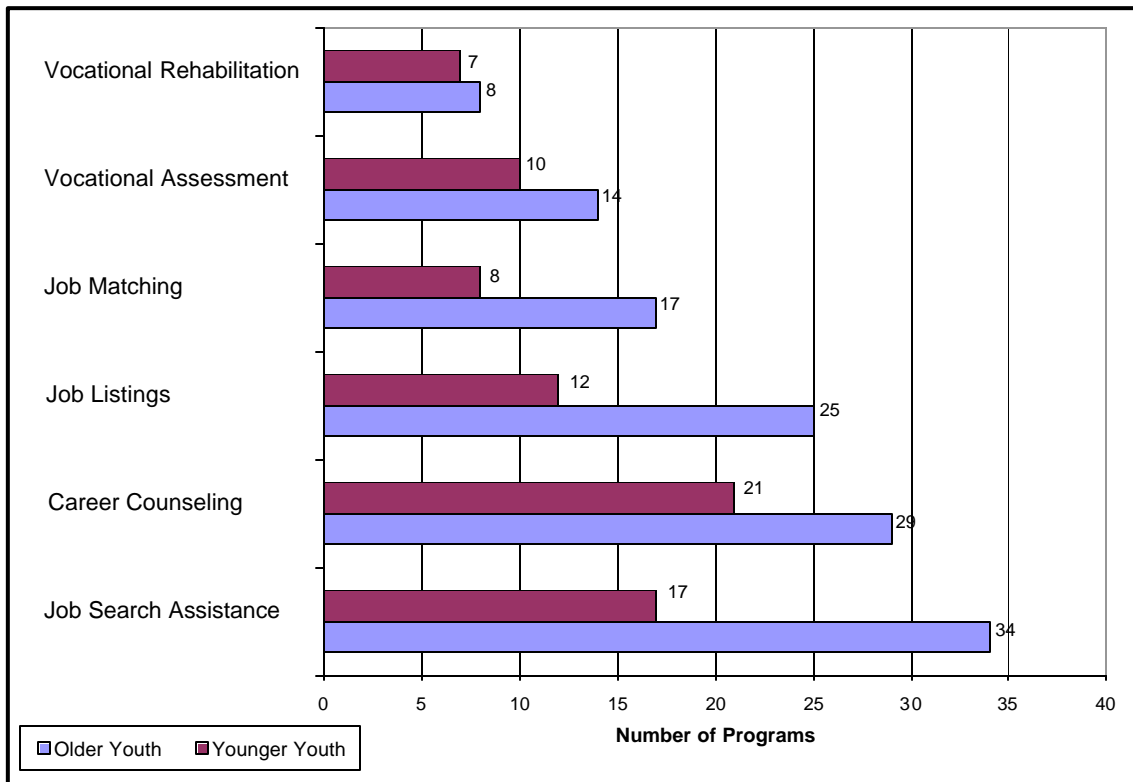
For younger youth, training-related services are also among the most commonly available services throughout Santa Cruz County. Support services are again the least commonly available services.

## Specific Workforce Services<sup>11</sup>

Youth in Santa Cruz County are served by a variety of workforce programs. This section provides information on specific workforce services available to youth including job search assistance, vocational and academic training, and support services such as child care. Typically, older youth have access to far more services than do younger youth. Please note that program numbers provided in this section are not unduplicated as many programs provide multiple services.

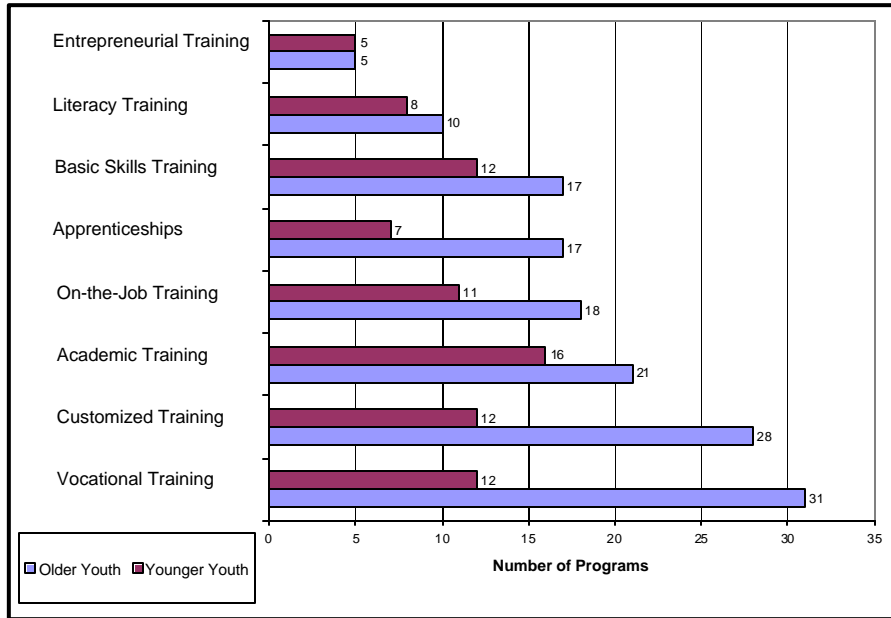
### Programs Providing Job Search Services to Youth

The most common services provided to both older and younger youth in Santa Cruz County are job search services. These include job search assistance, career counseling, job listings, job matching, vocational assessment and vocational rehabilitation. For older youth, 42 programs in Santa Cruz County provide job search services, and for younger youth 24 programs provide these services.



<sup>11</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all results in this section are from the Community Asset Investment Portfolio, Inventory of Services web survey.

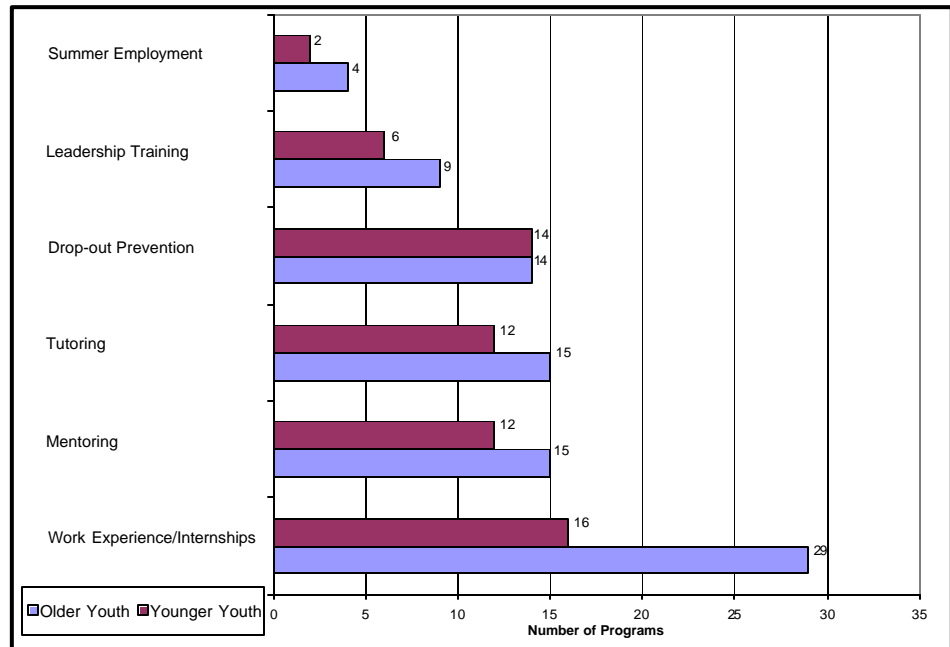
### Programs Providing Training Services to Youth



Training services include academic training, vocational training, literacy training, basic skills training, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and customized training. For older Santa Cruz County youth there are 62 programs that offer training related services, and for younger youth there are 36 programs offering these services.

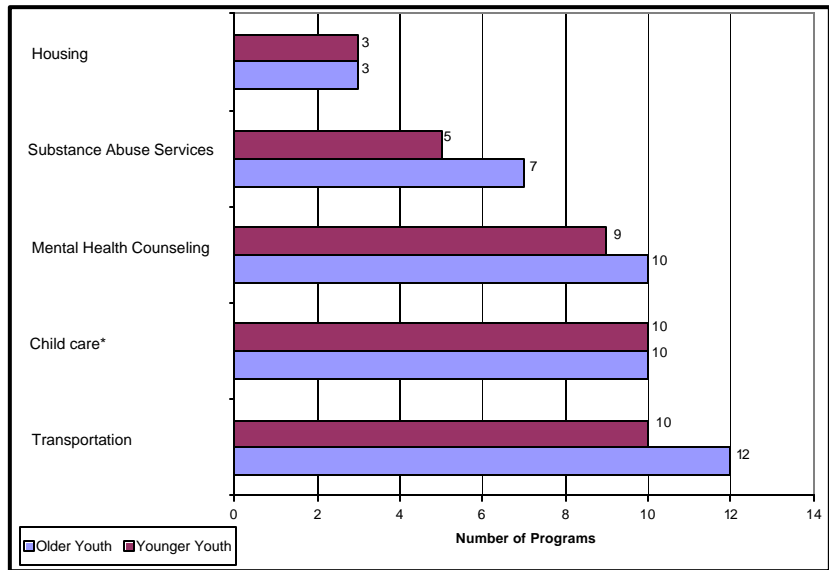
### Programs Providing Other Workforce Services to Youth

Work experience, mentoring, tutoring dropout prevention, leadership training and summer employment are all services commonly provided to youth. In Santa Cruz County there are 39 programs that offer other services to older youth, and 28 programs that offer these services to younger youth.



### Programs Providing Support Services<sup>12</sup> to Youth

Although support services such as transportation and child care are not core workforce services, they are often very important to ensuring youth are able to reach their career and vocational goals. In Santa Cruz County there are 21 programs that offer support services for older youth, and 16 programs that offer these services to younger youth.



<sup>12</sup> Because the focus of the Inventory of services was not on supportive services, the response rate for these programs was low and thus may undercount the availability of these services.

## Youth Workforce Gaps

This section of the report presents three youth workforce gaps which were identified through the Community Asset Investment Portfolio Process. First, an initial set of gaps was developed by comparing data collected in the needs assessment with services data collected during the inventory of services. Next, these gaps were analyzed and refined in collaboration with WIB staff from each county and additional research was carried out to finalize the gaps and possible policy strategies.

To provide WIB members with an understanding of the issues surrounding each gap, background information and a snapshot of current services and activities are included with each identified gap. In addition, a number of possible strategies for dealing with each gap are also included. Due to limited time and resources, the data and strategies presented for each gap are not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive. Instead, this information is designed to serve as a starting point to assist Workforce Investment Boards in determining where to focus future policy or research efforts.

### Gap #1: Young workers, particularly limited English speakers, lack strong basic skills in English and math.

#### Background:

A number of high schools around the county have struggled academically and many youth leave high school without basic skills proficiency.

- In 2001, four of the county's eight major public high schools had Academic Performance Index (API) rankings<sup>13</sup> below five (10 being highest) when compared to other similar schools around the state.
  - Soquel High and San Lorenzo Valley High were both ranked two.
  - Watsonville High and Harbor High were both ranked four.<sup>14</sup>
- Several county high schools had high four-year drop-out rates in 2000-01: Renaissance Continuation High (58.3%), Pajaro Valley Community Day School (33.3%), Delta Charter (18.2%), Watsonville High (15.9%), Ark Alternative School (10.9%) and San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District (9.5%).

The communities of Watsonville and Freedom have the highest number of limited English-speaking residents and the lowest levels of educational attainment in the county. Watsonville also has the highest percentage of residents at the lowest level of literacy.

- In 2000, 50.9% (approx 22,531 residents) of Watsonville residents lacked a high school diploma compared to 16.8% county-wide.<sup>15</sup> 45.6% of Freedom residents lacked a high school diploma.

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<sup>13</sup> Based on statewide standardized test scores.

<sup>14</sup> California Department of Education, Dataquest.

<sup>15</sup> 2000 Census

- In 2000, 70.7% of Watsonville residents and 60.4% of Freedom residents spoke a language other than English at home. 45.4% of Watsonville residents and 36.8% of Freedom residents said they spoke English less than “very well.” County-wide only 27.8% of residents spoke a language other than English at home and only 14.3% said they spoke English less than “very well.”<sup>16</sup>
- Pajaro Valley Unified School District serving the Watsonville area has 83% of Santa Cruz County’s 10,936 public elementary and secondary students who are classified English Learners (formerly limited English proficient).
- In 1996, 39% of Watsonville residents were at the lowest level of literacy compared to only 18% of residents countywide.<sup>17</sup>

### **Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Support policies to enable local schools to ensure that all students graduate with strong basic skills in English and math.
- Make mastery of basic skills a priority for all Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council sponsored youth programs.
- Develop policies to create better articulation between different educational systems (high schools, adult schools and community colleges) providing basic skills training.
- Develop policies to encourage employers and training providers to develop a common definition of basic skills proficiency which could lead to a recognized standard.

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<sup>16</sup> 2000 Census

<sup>17</sup> 1996 Synthetic Estimate of Literacy conducted by Portland State University.

**Gap #2: More coordination is needed between youth-serving workforce agencies to overcome funding constraints and limited resources.**

**Background:**

The current environment of state and federal funding cuts makes coordination between youth-serving workforce providers a critical way to ensure that all youth receive the workforce services they need. Currently, because many providers and youth lack sufficient information on existing services, many youth often do not know where to go to receive the services they need.

**Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Continue to make coordination a focus of Youth Council Activities.

**Gap #3: More Educators and students need to better understand the skills and behaviors required for success in the workplace.**

### **Background:**

Both students and their teachers need to have a current and realistic picture of the skills, education and behaviors required for success in today's workplace. This kind of knowledge helps youth begin thinking about possible careers and ensures that teachers are covering relevant skills and behaviors in their classrooms.

### **Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Develop policies to support expansion or replication current programs within Santa Cruz County providing opportunities for students and educators to better understand the skills and behaviors required for workplace success.
- Develop policies to strengthen or expand programs in county high schools to increase student knowledge of workplace skills and career opportunities.
- Develop policies to increase opportunities for increased communication between educators and employers regarding workplace skills and behaviors.

## Other Youth Issues Identified by the Gap Analysis

These additional issues were raised during focus groups held during the Needs Assessment but represent problems that are not clearly actionable by the Workforce Investment Board (WIB). They are included here because they are relevant to the workforce development system.

- Non-WIA eligible youth need stronger soft skills and employability skills, including a stronger work ethic.
- Youth need more access to career guidance in high schools.
- Youth do not have sufficient access to substance abuse services.
- Youth do not have sufficient access to mental health counseling.

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## **IV. Adults**

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## Adult Workforce Assets

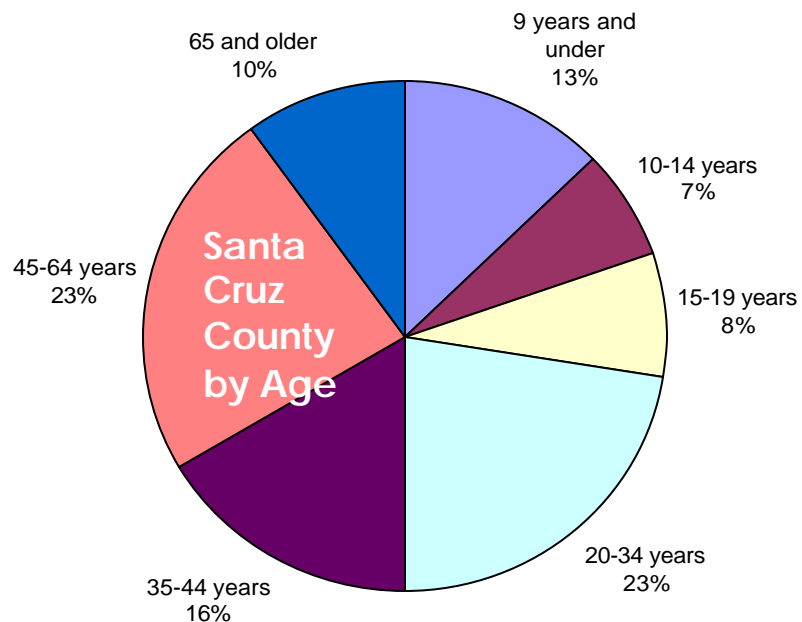
Using an asset-based approach, this section of the report outlines the strengths of Santa Cruz County workforce services for adults, providing a crucial foundation for the gap analysis which follows in the next section. Included in this section is a snapshot of the Santa Cruz County adult population, descriptions of the types of workforce services available for adults, information on programs delivering workforce services to specific target populations, and a breakdown of workforce services available by region. Information on services for older youth (18-21) is also included here as these customers can also be considered adults. This section of the report is based on data collected from two linked web surveys of Tri-county workforce service providers that were administered from August 15 to October 11, 2002.

### Snapshot of Santa Cruz Adults

#### Adult population

In 2000, Santa Cruz County had 194,861 residents 18 and older, comprising 76.2% of the county's population. By comparison, 72.7% of all California residents were 18 and over. Here is a detailed breakdown of county residents 18 and older:

- **14,341** were aged 18-20
- **244,456** were aged 20-64
- **25,487** were aged 65 and above<sup>18</sup>



<sup>18</sup> Census 2000.

### Santa Cruz County Workforce Providers

Santa Cruz County is served by numerous workforce providers, many of whom serve adults. This section of the report includes information on these providers.

- Number of PROVIDERS in Santa Cruz County: 57
- Number of Providers only providing SUPPORT SERVICES: 3
- Number of Providers serving ADULTS (22 and over): 50
- Number of Providers serving OLDER YOUTH (18-21): 51
- Number of Providers serving ADULTS providing only SUPPORT SERVICES: 1
- Number of Providers serving OLDER YOUTH providing only SUPPORT SERVICES: 1

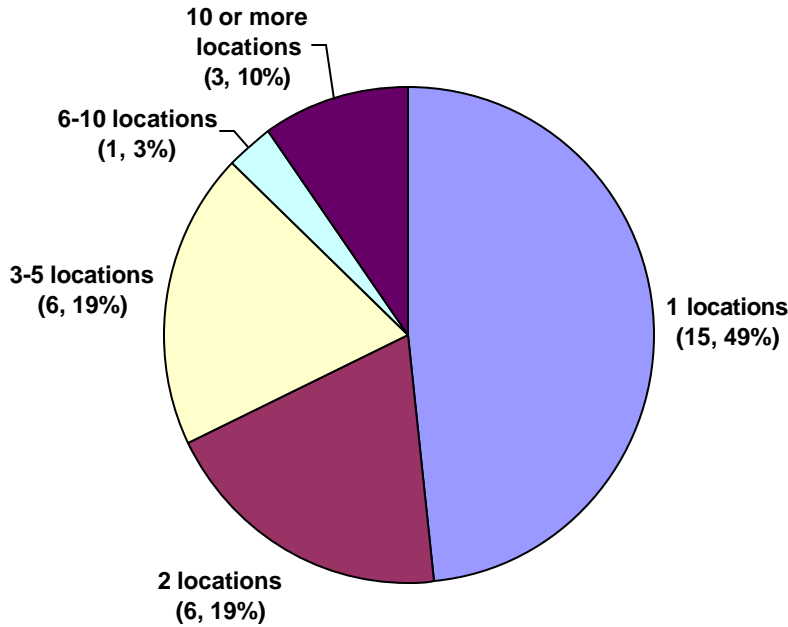
### Number of Workforce Programs Operated by Providers

Most Santa Cruz County Workforce Providers have few programs. For example, 42 providers have only one program and eight providers have two programs. The largest number of programs operated by a single provider is six programs.

Number of Providers with Single or Multiple Programs by Region <sup>19</sup>						
Number of Programs Entire	Entire Santa Cruz County	North County	Mid County	South County	San Lorenzo Valley	North Coast/Davenport
1	42	37	37	40	34	34
2	8	6	5	6	7	5
3	4	1	4	4	3	4
4	1	0	0	1	0	0
5	1	1	1	1	1	1
6	1	1	1	1	1	1

<sup>19</sup> This data is for all surveyed workforce providers, rather than only those serving adults.

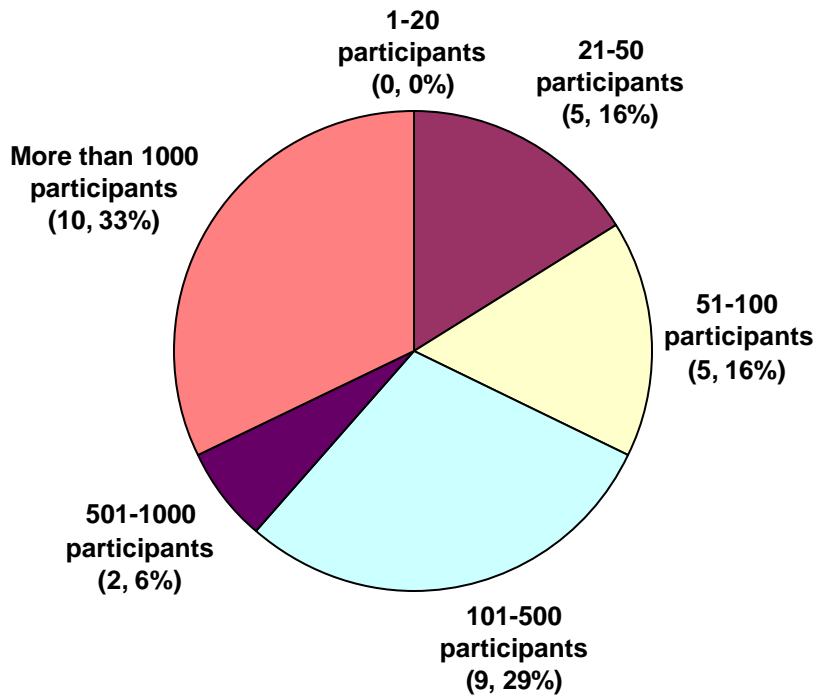
### Number of Workforce Provider Service Locations



In Santa Cruz County, half of workforce providers (15 providers) who responded to a question on the number of service locations they operate said they have only one. Twelve providers have between two and five service locations, one provider has between six and ten service locations, and three providers have ten or more locations.<sup>20</sup>

### Number of Participants Served Per Year by Providers

Additionally, one-third of the providers who responded to a question on the number of participants served annually indicated they serve more than 1,000 participants per year (10 providers). No providers said they serve between one and 20 participants in a year.<sup>21</sup>



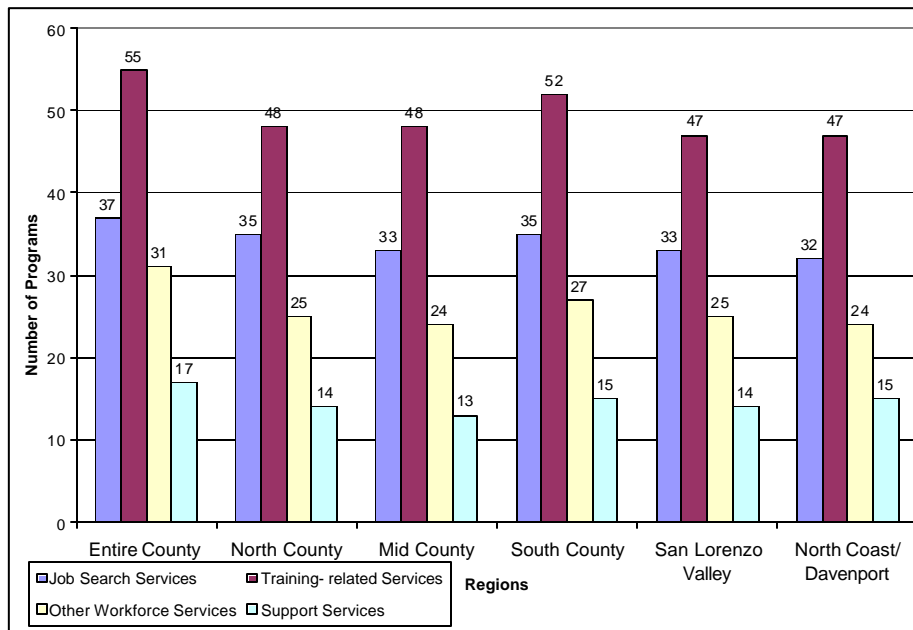
<sup>20</sup> This data is for all surveyed workforce providers rather than only those serving adults.

<sup>21</sup> This data is for all surveyed workforce providers rather than only those serving adults.

### Workforce Programs by Region

Adults (22 and older) in Santa Cruz County are served by 75 workforce programs, of which 2 provide only support services. Older youth (18-21) in Santa Cruz County are served by 85 workforce programs, of which 2 provide only support services. Most workforce programs provide services in all regions of the county, with South County being served by the most programs.

Number of Workforce Programs for Adults by Region <sup>22</sup>				
Region	Adults		Older Youth	
	Total	Only Support Services	Total	Only Support Services
Entire Santa Cruz County	75	2	85	2
North County	68	2	70	2
Mid County	65	2	68	2
South County	69	2	79	2
San Lorenzo Valley	65	2	67	2
North Coast/Davenport	64	2	66	2



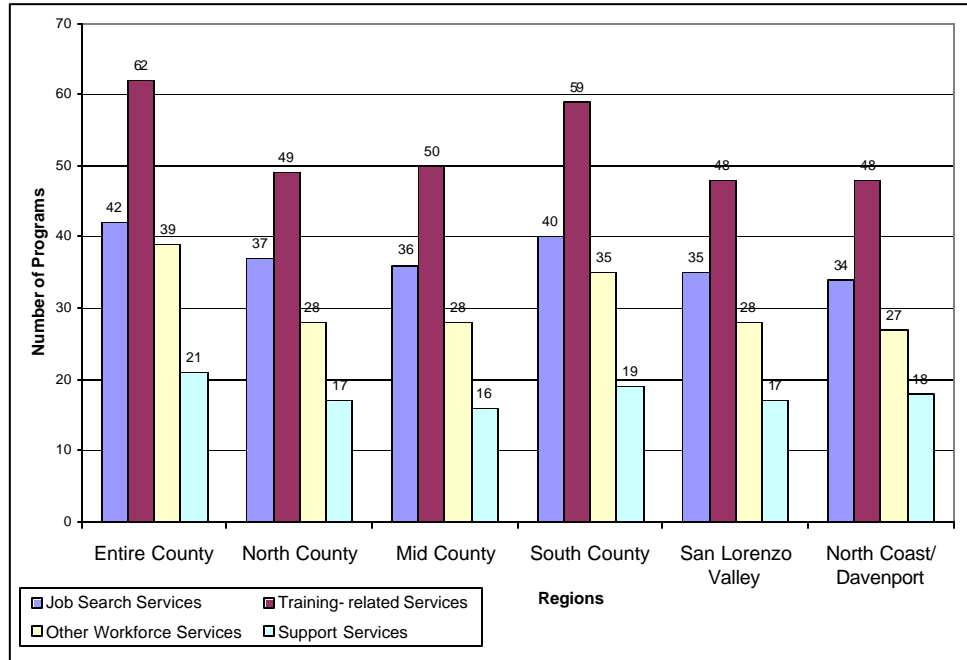
### Programs Providing Workforce Services to Adults by Region

For adults, training-related services are the most commonly available services throughout all regions of Santa Cruz County, followed by job search services. Support services are again the least commonly available service.

<sup>22</sup> Numbers are not unduplicated because many programs serve both older and younger youth and all regions of the county.

### Programs Providing Workforce Services to Older Youth by Region

Across all regions of Santa Cruz County, the most common workforce services available to older youth are training-related services, followed by job search services. Support services are the least commonly available services for older youth across each of the regions.

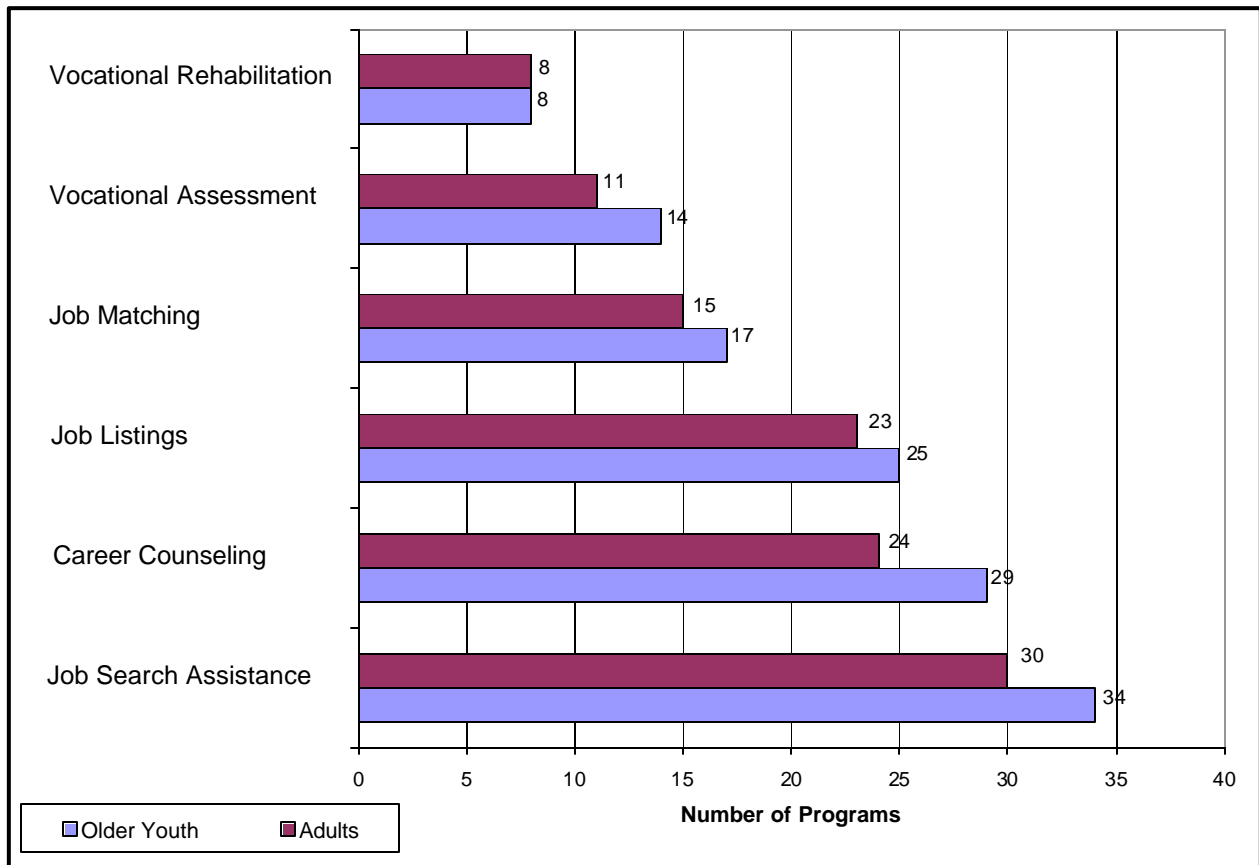


### Specific Workforce Services<sup>23</sup>

Adults in Santa Cruz County are served by a wide variety of workforce programs. This section provides information on specific workforce services, including job search assistance, vocational and academic training, and support services such as child care. Please note that program numbers provided in this section are not unduplicated as many programs provide multiple services.

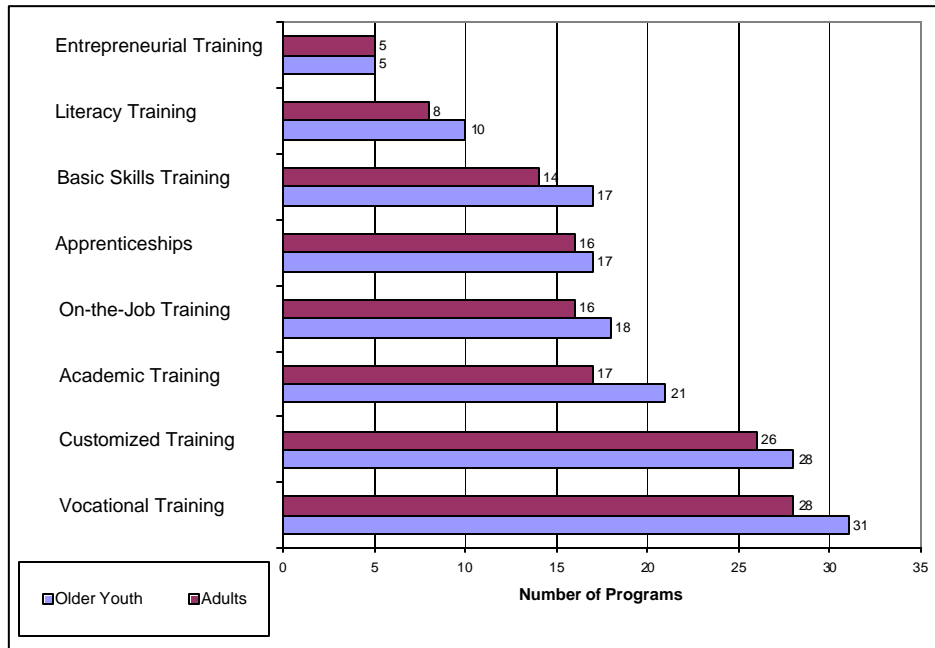
#### Programs Providing Job Search Services to Adults

The most common services provided to both adults and older youth in Santa Cruz County are job search services. These include job search assistance, career counseling, job listings, job matching, vocational assessment and vocational rehabilitation. In Santa Cruz County there are 37 programs that offer job search services to adults, and 42 programs that offer these services to older youth.



<sup>23</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all results in this section are from the Community Asset Investment Portfolio, Inventory of Services web survey.

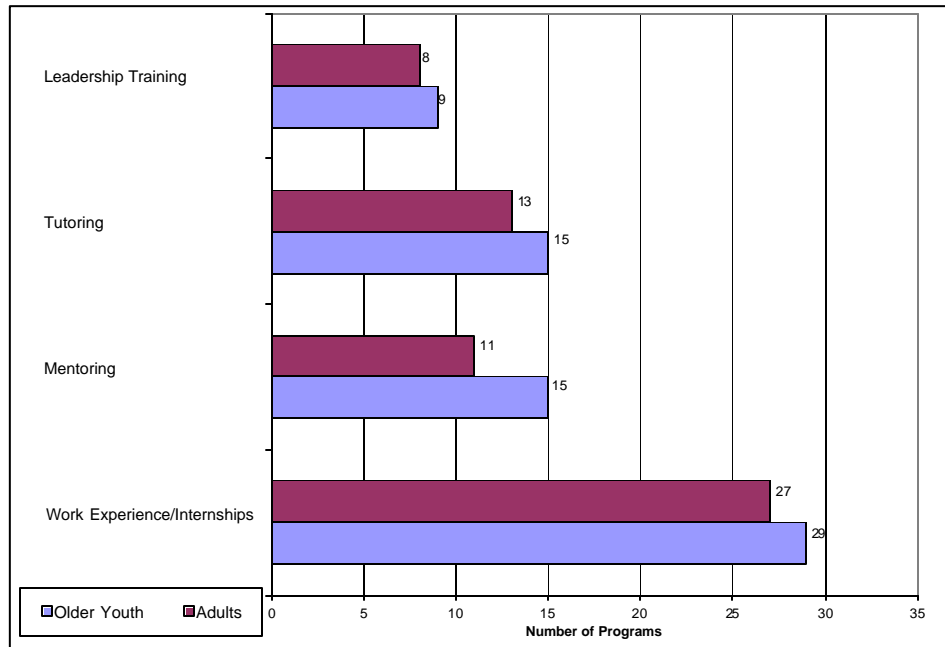
### Programs Providing Training Services to Adults



Training services, including both academic and vocational training, are also common adult services. In Santa Cruz County there are 55 programs offering training related services to adults, and 62 programs offering these services to older youth.

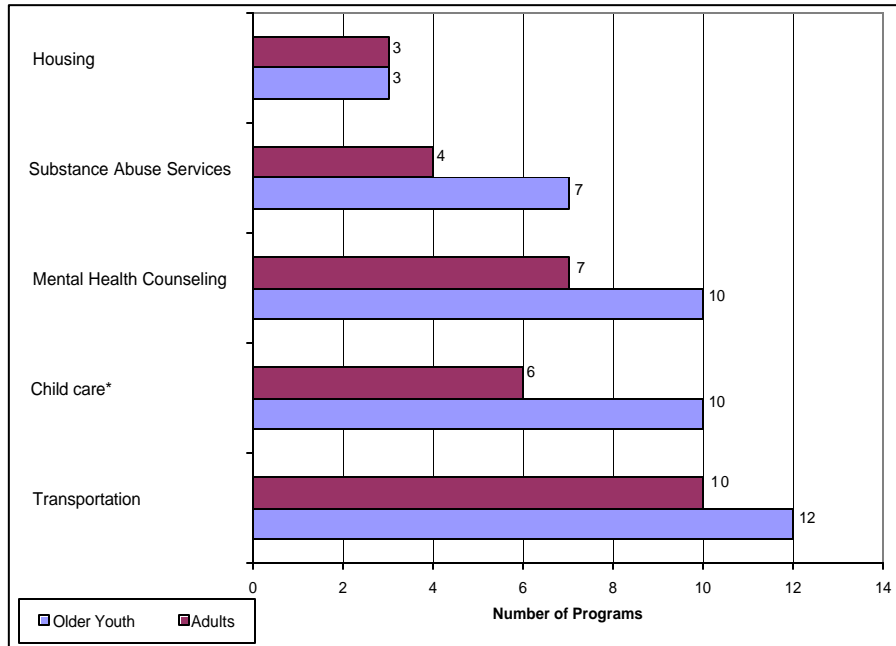
### Programs Providing Other Workforce Services to Adults

Work experience, mentoring, tutoring, and leadership training are also important workforce services for adults and older youth. For adults in Santa Cruz County, 31 programs offer other services, and for older youth 39 programs offer these services.



### Programs Providing Support Services<sup>24</sup> to Adults

Although support services such as transportation and child care<sup>25</sup> are not core workforce services, they are often very important to ensuring adults are able to reach their career and vocational goals. Support services are made available for adults by 17 programs and for older youth by 21 programs.



<sup>24</sup> Because the focus of the Inventory of services was not on supportive services, the response rate for these programs was low and thus may undercount the availability of these services.

<sup>25</sup> Childcare programs serve parents of all ages; eligibility depends on the age of the child.

## Adult Workforce Gaps

The next section presents three adult workforce gaps that were identified through the Community Asset Investment Portfolio Process. First, an initial set of gaps was developed by comparing data collected in the needs assessment with services data collected during the inventory of services. Next, these gaps were analyzed and refined in collaboration with WIB staff from each county and additional research was carried out to finalize the gaps and possible policy strategies.

To provide WIB members with an understanding of the issues surrounding each gap, background information and a snapshot of current services and activities are included with each identified gap. In addition, a number of possible strategies for dealing with each gap, are also included. Due to limited time and resources, the data and strategies presented for each gap are not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive. Instead, this information is designed to serve as a starting point to assist Workforce Investment Boards in determining where to focus future policy or research efforts.

### Gap #1: Employers need assistance finding qualified applicants for certain hard-to-fill technical positions.

#### Background:

Despite the current sluggish economy which has resulted in a large supply of workers for most positions, employers continue to have difficulty filling certain technical positions. These positions include many in the health care sector as well as other specific occupations such as diesel mechanic or maintenance mechanic.

#### Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:

- Support policies to develop additional programs to help employers recruit for hard-to-fill positions. This could be accomplished by:
  - Determining which specific positions employers continue to have difficulty filling. Only programs with strong employer support and participation will succeed.
  - Researching the availability of training, current and future labor market demand, and wage prospects. This could be done with data from the California Employment Development Department's Labor Market Information Division or US Works. Positions in sectors with limited current or future labor market demand will not be successful.
  - Working with local employers to develop customized training programs to fill these needs.

Possible hard-to-fill positions include:

- Additional health care occupations. The health care sector continues to have the greatest difficulty in finding and retaining qualified staff. The Health Careers

Partnership could be expanded to include coordination of additional health care occupations.

- Maintenance mechanics. Several employers in the needs assessment focus group mentioned that they had difficulty finding qualified workers in this occupation.
  - Administrative support positions.
  - Public safety officers.
  - Occupations in sectors recommended by the 1999 Santa Cruz County Regional Cluster Project, such as technology, which could be pursued once that sector rebounds economically.
- Develop policies to support coordination of sectoral training efforts within the county.

**Gap #2: Entry-level and low-skilled adults lack strong basic skills in English and math.****Background:**

The communities of Watsonville and Freedom have the lowest levels of educational attainment in the county. Watsonville also has the highest percentage of residents at the lowest level of literacy.

- In 2000, 50.9% (approx 22,531 residents) of Watsonville residents lacked a high school diploma compared to 16.8% county-wide.<sup>26</sup> 45.6% of Freedom residents lacked a high school diploma.
- In 1996, 39% of Watsonville residents were at the lowest level of literacy compared to only 18% of residents countywide.<sup>27</sup>

**Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Make mastery of basic skills a priority for all Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council sponsored youth programs.
- Develop policies to create better articulation between different educational systems (high schools, adult schools and community colleges) providing basic skills training.
- Develop policies to encourage employers and training providers to develop a common definition of basic skills proficiency which could lead to a recognized standard.
- Develop policies to improve coordination between training providers and employers to upgrade incumbent worker basic skills. These programs are typically most successful when they are geared to a specific workplace, take place on-site and are fully supported by the employer.

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<sup>26</sup> 2000 Census

<sup>27</sup> 1996 Synthetic Estimate of Literacy conducted by Portland State University.

**Gap #3: Limited English-speaking adults, particularly farmworkers, need additional assistance to move into higher paying jobs.****Background:**

Many limited English speakers are stuck in low wage employment such as field work and lack the skills to move into other higher paying positions or occupations. Often, the biggest barrier for these workers is their ability to communicate in English. This gap is greatest in the communities of Watsonville and Freedom which have the largest number of limited English-speaking adults and farmworkers.

- According a study completed in 2001, between 18,000 and 33,000 migrant and seasonal farmworkers reside in Santa Cruz County at any one time.<sup>28</sup> Most of these workers reside in south Santa Cruz county.
- In 2000, 70.7% of Watsonville residents and 60.4% of Freedom residents spoke a language other than English at home. 45.4% of Watsonville residents and 36.8% of Freedom residents said they spoke English less than “very well.” County-wide only 27.8% of residents spoke a language other than English at home and only 14.3% said they spoke English less than “very well.”<sup>29</sup>

**Possible Policy Strategies for Dealing with this Gap:**

- Support policies to encourage local educational institutions to offer additional, short-term, vocational ESL classes targeted at farmworkers. Many ESL courses are too academic and assume that students will be able to continue their ESL studies over longer periods of time. However, many limited English speakers, particularly farmworkers, have time to study only for short periods and are more likely to retain applied English that they can use in their jobs or in daily life.
- Develop policies to support increasing the number of vocational training programs with embedded vocational ESL components.
- Develop policies to support additional culturally appropriate outreach to limited English speakers, particularly farmworkers, to ensure that they know what services are available.

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<sup>28</sup> Farmworker Health and Housing Needs Assessment. Applied Survey Research, 2001

<sup>29</sup> 2000 Census

## Other Adult Issues Identified by the Gap Analysis

These additional issues were raised during focus groups held during the Needs Assessment but represent problems that are not clearly actionable by the Workforce Investment Board (WIB). They are included here because they are relevant to the workforce development system.

- County residents lack sufficient access to affordable housing.
- There is a shortage of all types of affordable child care and licensed infant and school-age child care providers.
- Adults lack sufficient access to substance abuse services.
- Adults lack sufficient access to mental health counseling.

## APPENDIX A

### Providers with Programs serving Santa Cruz County

Provider – Santa Cruz County	Number of Programs
Anzar High School	1
Aptos High School	1
COPE Centro Familiar	1
Cabrillo College	3
Caduceus Institute of Classical Homeopathy	1
California Department of Rehabilitation	2
California State University, Monterey Bay	4
Career Center	1
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Monterey	5
Center For Employment Training (CET) - Watsonville	1
Central Coast College	6
Children's Services International	1
City of Santa Cruz	1
Community Action Board	2
Community Bridges	3
Computer Trainers	2
Connections Shuttle	1
County of Santa Cruz-Volunteer Initiative Program	1
Del Monte Aviation	1
Department Of Rehabilitation - Santa Cruz County	1
Elischers Driving School	1
Emeline Child Care Center	1
Emergency Training Services	1
Gateway Center of Monterey County, Inc.	2
Go Kids, Inc.	2
Hartnell College	2
Monterey, Santa Cruz & San Benito Counties Sheet Metal Apprenticeship Committee	1
Mt. Toro Continuation School	1
NTMA Unilateral Apprenticeship Committee	2
New Horizons School	1
North Monterey County Alternative Education	1
Northern California Local 355 Landscape & Irrigation Fitters	1
Northern California Sound & Communication Apprenticeship	1
Northern California Surveyors JAC & Apprenticeships	1
Northern California Tile Industry JATC	1
Opportunity to Read - Literacy Center	1
Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance	1
Pajaro Valley Unified SD. Workability1 & TPP	1
Pajaro Valley Unified School District	1

<b>Provider – Santa Cruz County</b>	<b>Number of Programs</b>
Pipe Trades Training Center	1
Private Industry Training Center	1
Salinas Adult School	1
Santa Clara County Office of Education - Migrant Education Program	1
Santa Cruz County Probation Department	1
Santa Cruz County Regional Occupation Program	1
Santa Cruz County Tech Prep Consortium	1
Sunrise House	1
UC Santa Cruz	1
University of California Extension, Santa Cruz	1
Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County	3
Watsonville/Aptos Adult School	1
Workforce Santa Cruz County	2
WorldWide Educational Services of California	1
Youth Services, Inc.	1
the SPOT!	1

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