

How Parks and Green Space Support School Readiness



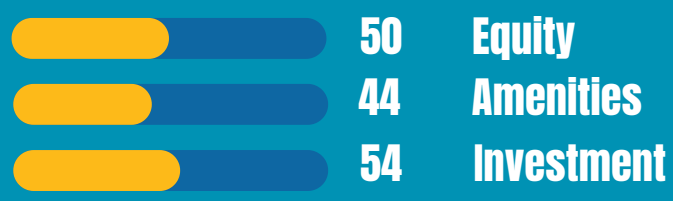
What is Kindergarten Readiness?

Kindergarten readiness (or school readiness) is **multifaceted** and means that **children are healthy and ready for kindergarten**, **schools are ready to meet the needs of children** entering their classrooms, and **families and communities are ready to support children's growth and development**.



In a **First 5 Alameda County study**, children were **more prepared** for kindergarten when they lived in neighborhoods with more community supports. These include having sidewalks, a **park or playground**, a library or a recreation center. It also includes the feeling of being safe, neighbors helping each other out, and places to go for resources.

Parks in Oakland, CA



Each city can earn a maximum of 100 points. Points are awarded for 14 statistical measures across five categories: acreage, investment, amenities, equity, and access. The final scores in each category are then averaged to generate each city's ParkScore.

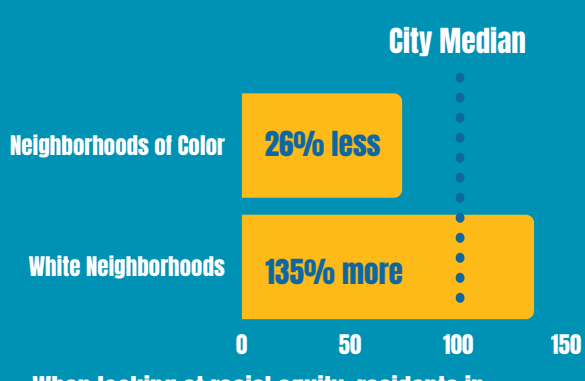


The City Oakland General Plan sets a goal of **4 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents** for parks that meet the active recreational needs of the community.

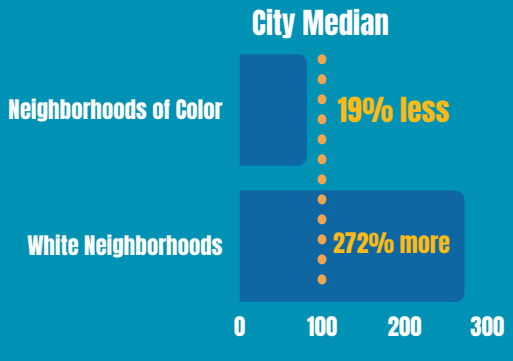


However, city-wide, Oakland only provides just **a little over 1 acre of local-serving parks per 1,000 residents**.

= 1,000 Oakland residents



When looking at racial equity, residents in **neighborhoods of color have access to 26% less park space per person than the city median** and 69% less than those in white neighborhoods.



Residents in **low-income neighborhoods have access to 19% less park space per person than the city median** and 78% less than those in high-income neighborhoods.

San Antonio Neighborhood At a Glance

- Population: ~5,500 residents
- Top 3 races and ethnicities:
 - Asian: 39.9%
 - Hispanic: 34.9%
 - Black: 17.4%*Data pulled from the US Census Bureau
- Healthy Places Index Score: 13.7
- Median Household Income: \$32.4k
- Reported Number of Neighborhood Assets: 3

The CA Healthy Places Index factors in various community conditions such as social, education, economic, environmental, etc. The census tracts representing the San Antonio neighborhood scored 13.7, meaning they have **healthier community conditions than just 13.7% of all other CA census tracts**.

Families earning at least \$50,000 per year were significantly more likely than lower income families to report the availability of each asset in their neighborhood, pointing to **the need to invest in assets for low-income communities**.

An Opportunity for Change - San Antonio Park

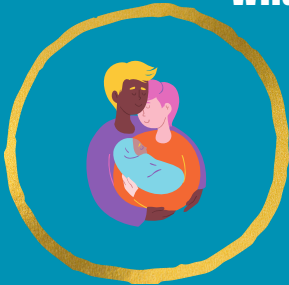
San Antonio Park is a centerpiece to the San Antonio neighborhood. However, the 10.6 acres of land is highly under-used by parents and their children. A survey conducted by the San Antonio Parent Action Research Team revealed that **out of the 65 participants they interviewed, only 5 reported taking their children to play in San Antonio Park**.

Many parents stated that the park doesn't offer the amenities needed for their children to thrive. The San Antonio Parent Action Group submitted a proposal to the City of Oakland for a full service Community Resource Center in San Antonio Park that would act as a hub for park activities that promote wellness, connection, culture and healing for people of all ages.



Reimagining San Antonio Park

What Can a Community Resource Center Offer?



Parent Support Groups



Sports and Recreation



Healthy Living and Cooking Classes



Access to Technology



Play Groups



Art and Cultural Classes

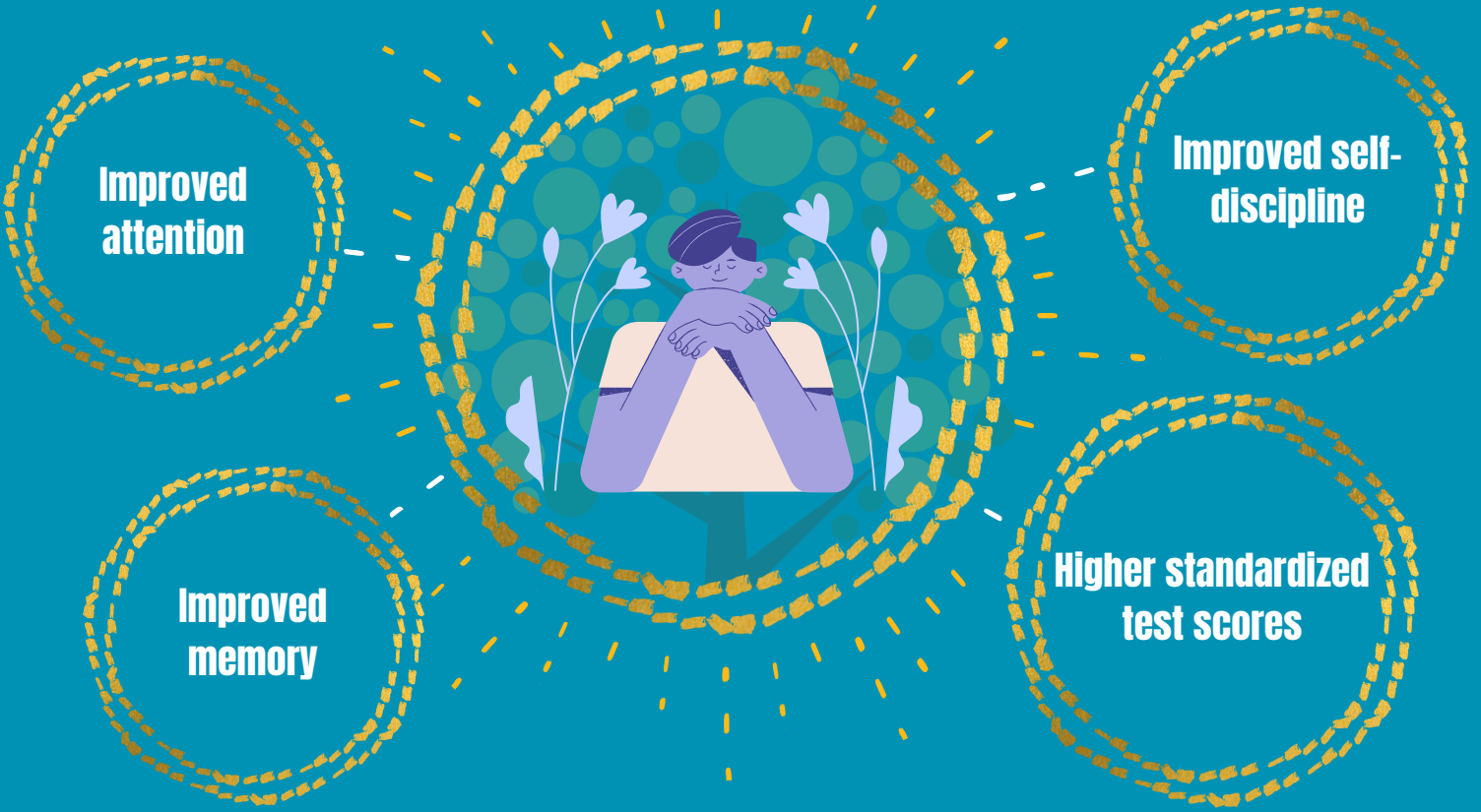
Why This Matters

Parks provide community benefits best when they are **activated, meaning well-maintained, safe, equitably accessible, fully utilized and beloved.**

The commitment to safe, inclusive and beloved parks for all is no less than a commitment to the **civil right to equal, fair, safe access to public space.**



Increased access to green space and community supports for children was associated with:



Access to safe and well-maintained parks with their green spaces and recreation amenities is a recognized path to **disrupting systemic health inequities and promoting wellness.**

“I would like to see more rec centers in these neighborhoods. When I was raised we had a school and two blocks down there was a rec center. I think throughout Oakland, period, but especially this neighborhood because **it's a large neighborhood with a lot of children.**”

“We love the parks but drive to go to certain ones instead of walking to the one that is a **block from us!** Because it is **not kid friendly** - even if there is a play set. It is not kept up, not enough trash cans, too many loitering of people smoking at times, old play equipment.”



I think **youth will be drawn to parks and rec centers if there is set programming.** Pick-up basketball games with community members, craft demonstrations, community planting and gardening, or youth circles for peer counseling or art (music, dance, other art forms)”

Get Involved!

Want to connect with the San Antonio Family Resource Center? Reach out to:

Dawn Edwards
dawn@lotusbloomfamily.org
510-735-9222

Isabel Navarro
isabel@oaklandtrybe.org
510-318-1580