

# 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.

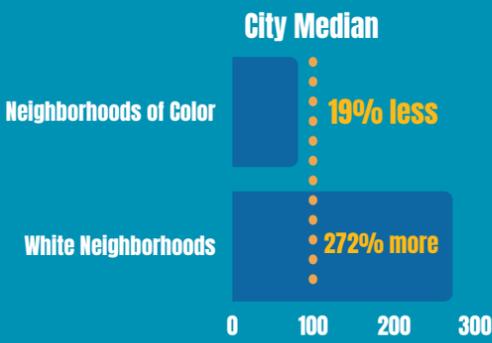


However, city-wide, Oakland only provides just **a little over 1 acre of local-serving parks per 1,000 residents**.

= 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?



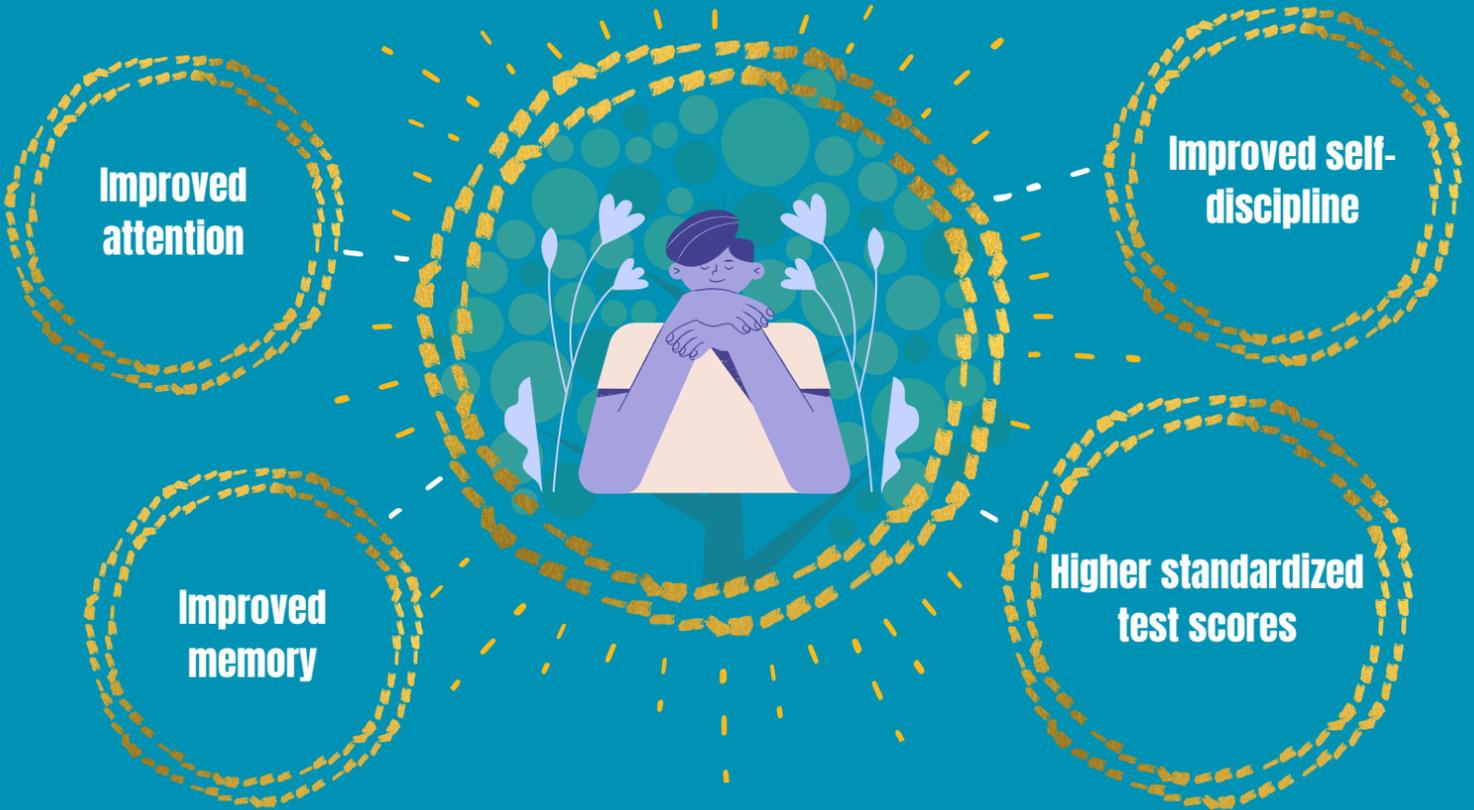
## Why This Matters

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:

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