

2021 GRYD SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS

The City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction & Youth Development (GRYD) in Partnership with the GRYD Foundation

SUMMARY REPORT | NOVEMBER 2021

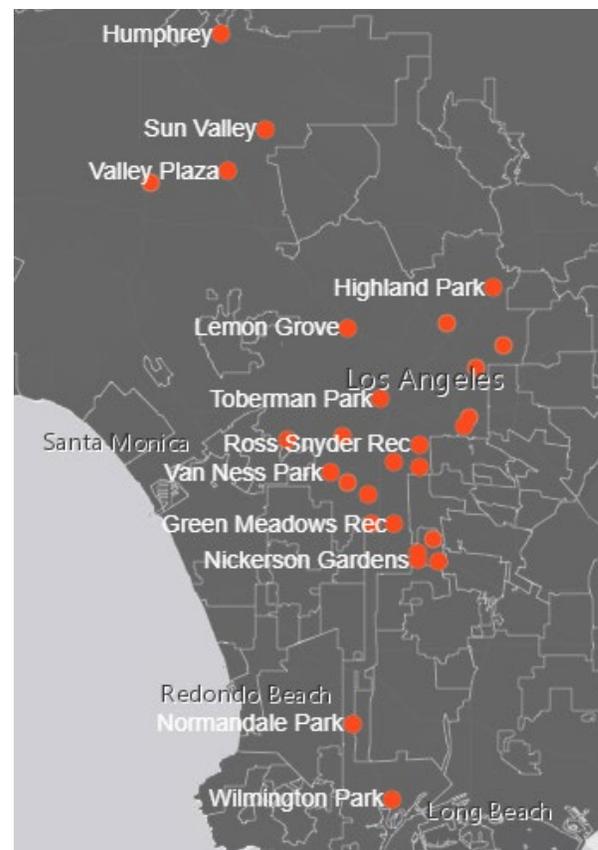
Prepared by *Harder+Company Community Research*

BACKGROUND

In 2008, the City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) created the Summer Night lights (SNL) program as a comprehensive response to recurring increases in crime during the summer months. SNL is a key component of the [GRYD Comprehensive Strategy](#), which includes gang prevention, gang intervention, violence interruption, and community engagement programs. SNL provides safe, family-friendly programming like free meals, sports leagues and fitness activities, to 32 parks in communities at highest risk for gang violence in a time during the summer when spikes of violence usually occur.

In 2021, SNL was adapted to provide safe alternatives to the traditional SNL activities during the COVID pandemic. This year, SNL offered Grab-n-Go food distribution, pick up sports activities, fitness activities, COVID testing and vaccination, and community resource information and referrals at 34 sites in the City of Los Angeles.

GRYD SNL SITES



GRYD FOUNDATION MISSION

The GRYD Foundation believes that every youth, regardless of race, gender, or geography, should have the resources, opportunities, and systems to grow up and to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

MAYOR'S GRYD OFFICE MISSION

GRYD's mission is to improve the overall health and well-being of families and communities through engagement and by preventing violence and promoting prosocial decisions and behaviors among young people and emerging adults. GRYD is also committed to supporting the overall health and well-being of GRYD provider staff and their capacity to deliver effective services.



A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Delivery of SNL programming is supported by a public-private partnership between the GRYD Office, the GRYD Foundation (a 501c3 non-profit formed in 2012 as an SNL funding and implementation partner), and several other City agencies and philanthropic supporters. Nearly 40% of the program’s cost is funded through the generous support of foundation and corporate donors. The GRYD Office and GRYD Foundation collaborate on the use of these private funds to enhance current programming and allow for future innovations. These private funds afford SNL greater flexibility in spending and support the delivery of creative, robust programming such as gang intervention lead activities, community art nights, job skills and other training workshops, homelessness outreach efforts, health programming, as well as sports clinics, uniforms, and the purchase of supplies from neighborhood businesses.

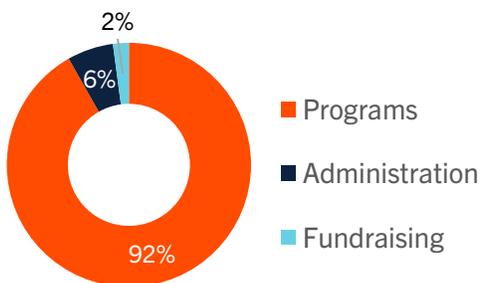


In 2021 **65%** of SNL’s cost was funded through the generous support of **Foundation and Corporate donors**



As a result of this collaborative public-private partnership, SNL has been able to pivot during the COVID-19 pandemic, with additional hiring efforts made by the GRYD Foundation to supplement the SNL workforce hired by the City. Further, with the capacity of the City and the GRYD Foundation staff, youth received enhanced workforce development and training during SNL. Finally, this public-private partnership has allowed for the expansion of year-round case management services with goal-setting and mentoring for Youth Squad members hired to work at SNL, plus a boxing, basketball and academic program at Nickerson Gardens Recreation Center, all of which are managed by the GRYD Foundation.

2021 DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDING



Over 90% of private funding for SNL 2021 went directly to programming.

In 2021, **\$2.1M** was invested in SNL

\$770K was provided via public funds through the GRYD Office.

\$1.4M was provided via the generous support of foundation and corporate donors through the GRYD Foundation.

GRAB-N-GO FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Grab-n-Go food bags were distributed at all SNL sites in 2021. Each Grab-n-Go bag could serve up to 4 individuals and included food such as canned and dry goods, fruit, hand sanitizer, and in some cases, baby food. Community members were able to take the number of bags they needed for their families and some even picked up food to deliver to elderly neighbors who could not make it to the events. Over 7,500 bags of food were distributed this year.

FOOD BAG DISTRIBUTION



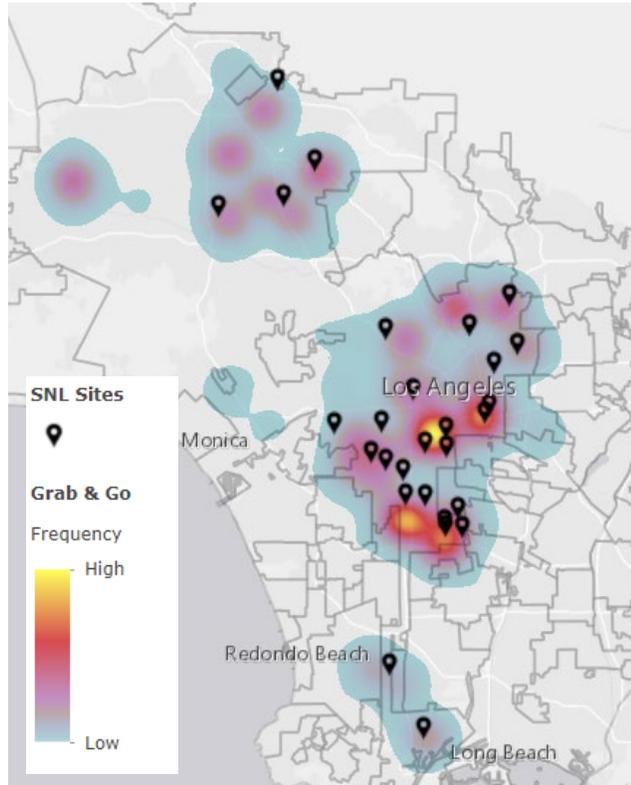
7,524 Grab-n-Go food bags were distributed during SNL 2021.



“I like SNL better than being at home. I get to eat food and have fun!”

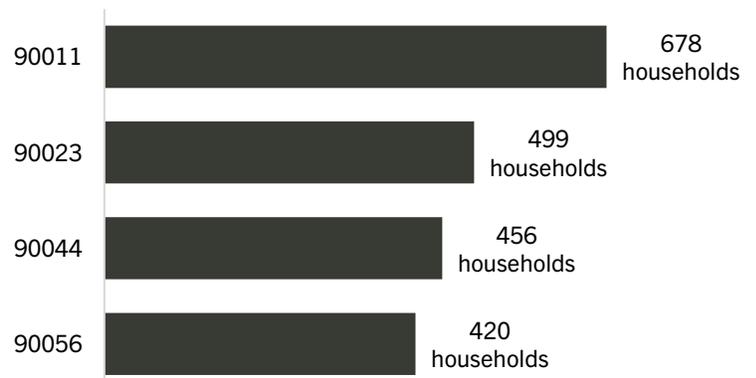
—Jim Gilliam Rec Ctr Participant

HOME ZIP CODES OF RECIPIENTS



In general, as shown in the map above, recipients of Grab-n-Go food bags live near SNL sites, however the food reached into areas of the city/county that aren't near SNL sites.

The most frequent home zip codes of Grab-n-Go recipients were:



GRAB-N-GO FOOD DISTRIBUTION (CONT'D)

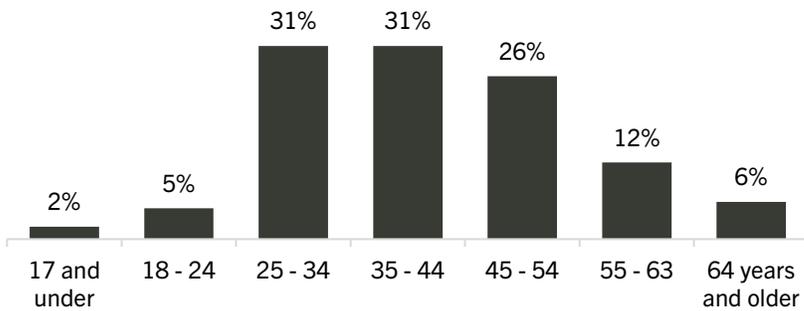
GENDER

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of Grab-n-Go recipients identified as female, while 37% identified as male.



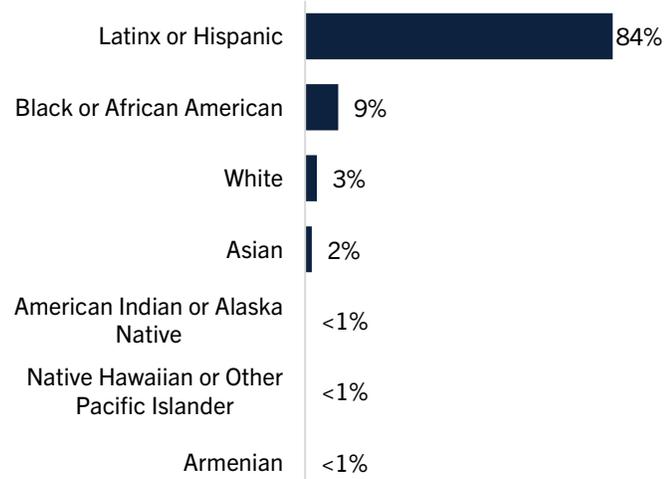
AGE

Grab-n-Go recipients spanned a range of ages, from under 17 years old to over 64 years old. Most recipients (62%) were between the ages of 25 and 44.



RACE/ETHNICITY

Grab-n-Go recipients largely identified as Latinx or Hispanic (84%) while a smaller percentage of recipients identified as Black or African American (9%).



*Muslim and Middle Eastern were listed as race/ethnicity options, however no recipients selected these options.

COVID-19 TESTING AND VACCINATIONS

During SNL 2021, the GRYD Office partnered with the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) and Community Organized Relief Effort (CORE) to provide onsite, walk-up COVID testing and vaccinations to community members.

GRYD canvassed neighborhoods with flyers ahead of the events to advertise and shared the information via social media outlets.

Through these efforts, thousands of COVID tests and vaccines were administered in SNL communities.



7,645
COVID-19 tests were administered at SNL sites



1,077
Vaccinations were administered at SNL sites



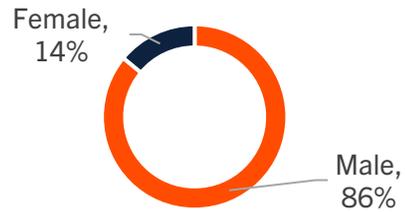
SNL hosted 448 sports events at 34 sites during SNL 2021. **2,507 adults and youth participated in at least one SNL sports event over the summer.** Participants were largely male (86%), 18 years or older (87%), and identified as Latino (66%) or African American (21%). Most commonly, participants engaged in basketball, soccer, or softball sports activities.

“I like sports a lot, so the sports like basketball and football bring me back.”

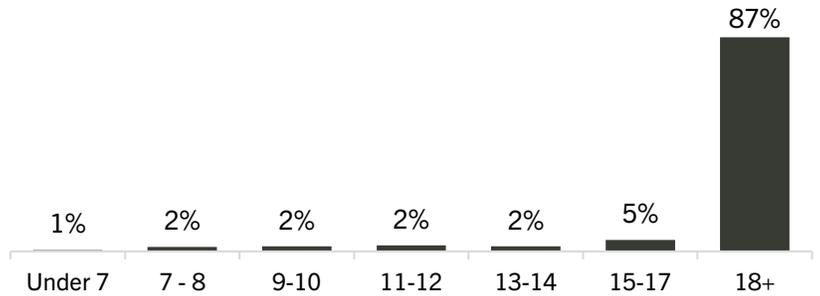
—Green Meadows Rec Center Participant



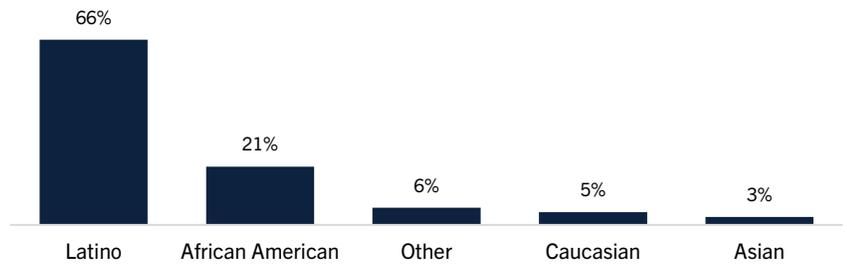
GENDER



AGE



RACE/ETHNICITY



SNL SPORTS PARTICIPATION



1,037 participated in basketball



871 participated in soccer



442 participated in softball



65 participated in cricket



55 participated in volleyball



44 participated in free play



32 participated in badminton

SNL YOUTH SQUAD

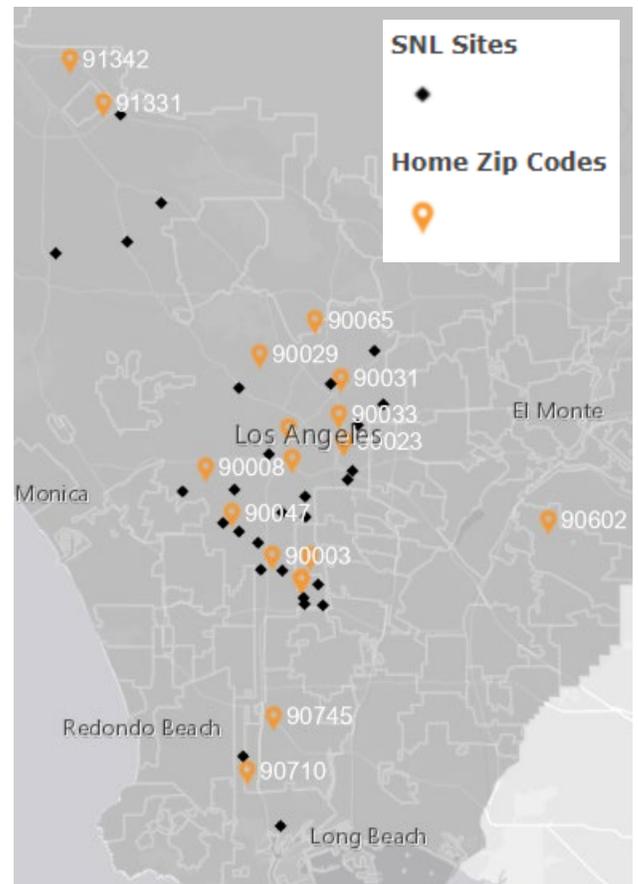
SNL reinvests in the community by hiring youth and adults from the neighborhoods it serves. Each summer hundreds of youth, called SNL Youth Squad members, are hired to work at SNL sites. Youth Squad members support outreach, service delivery and community engagement at each site, while earning money and receiving work readiness and financial literacy trainings.

YOUTH SQUAD MEMBERS

SNL 2021 had :



HOME ZIP CODES OF YOUTH SQUAD MEMBERS



74% reported having previous SNL experience.

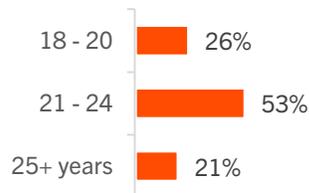
GENDER

A slight majority of Youth Squad members identified as female.



AGE

2021 SNL Youth Squad members ranged from 18 years old to 25 and over, however the majority were between the ages of 21 and 24 years old.

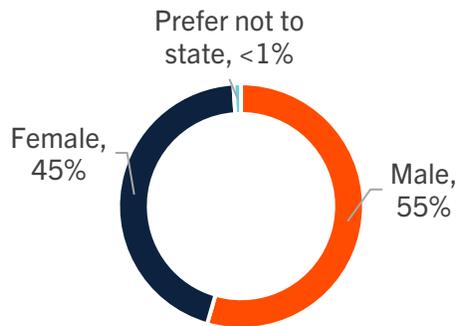


Most Youth Squad Members reside within the community they serve.

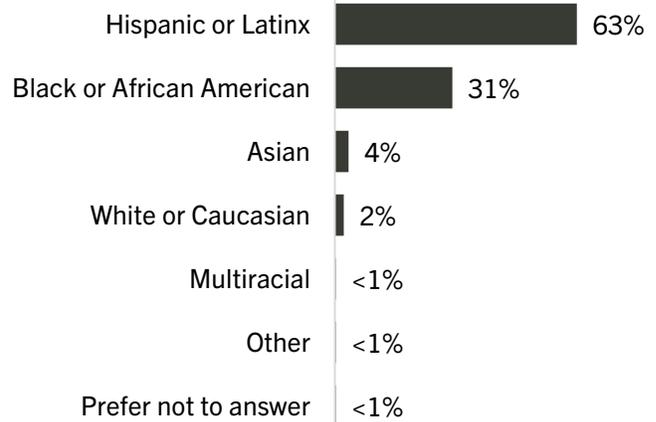
2021 SNL COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

During SNL 2021, Community Engagement Surveys were conducted at **28 of 34** SNL sites from people participating in a variety of SNL activities. A total of **387** survey responses were collected. Respondents were typically male (55%), identified as Hispanic or Latinx (63%) and were 17 years or younger (30%).

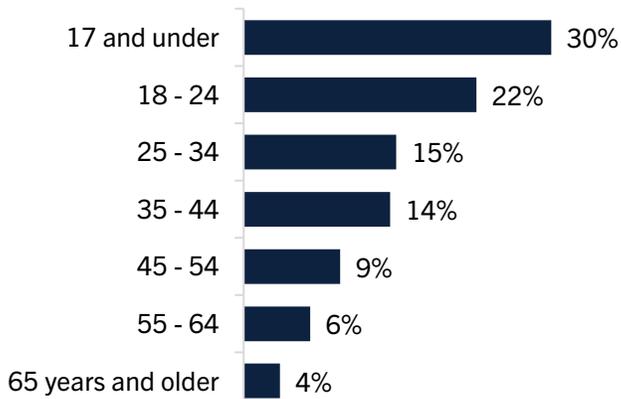
GENDER



RACE/ETHNICITY



AGE



SNL ACTIVITIES

SNL participants participated in a variety of activities over the summer. The most popular SNL activities were the Grab-n-Go food distribution, fitness workshops, and art workshops.



Grab-n-Go Food Distribution
72%



Fitness Workshop
70%



Art Workshop
62%



Sports Pick-up Game
52%



Mobile COVID-19 Vaccine
50%



RAP Activity
57%

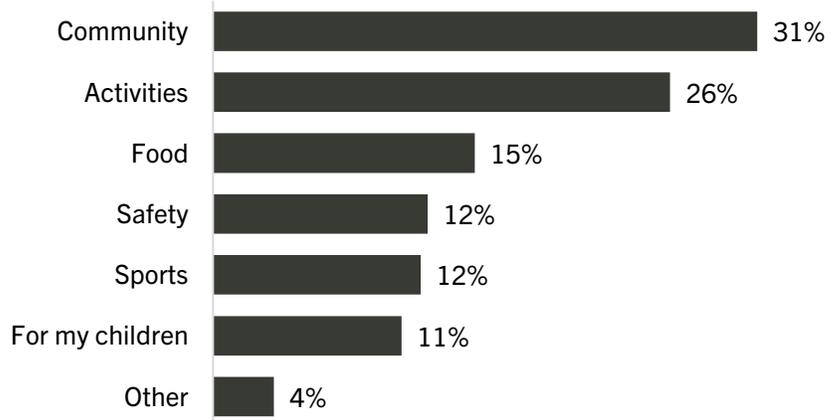


Other
5%

69% heard about SNL events through **word of mouth**

REASONS FOR RETURNING TO SNL EVENTS

Most participants return to SNL events because of the sense of community and safe atmosphere. Participants also enjoy the activities offered at the events such as arts and craft, loteria, live music, and Zumba. Free food was also an appealing factor for participants.



“The sports and the delicious food keeps everyone coming back. Basketball , kickball, softball on Friday’s.

– Slauson Rec Ctr. participant

“I bring my kids back to SNL, so they can enjoy the activities and sports SNL provides.”

–Delano Park Participant



What is your favorite memory of SNL?

“Seeing my community happy”

– MLK Rec Center participant

“Coming to the park to walk and play with the kids”

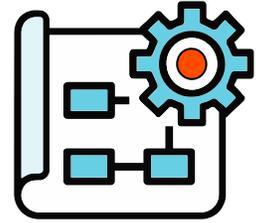
– Ross Snyder Rec Center participant

“My favorite part of SNL is seeing the kids play and have fun which happens every time they come here”

– Green Meadows Rec Center participant

SUMMARY & OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE INVESTMENT

SNL is a unique annual program that offers safe, free, family-friendly programming throughout parks and recreation spaces in the City of Los Angeles. SNL also hires, trains, and deploys youth workers and artists from SNL neighborhoods and engages them in hosting these events for their communities. The sense of belonging and safety created during SNL draws youth and families to access free food and participate in art classes, sports and fitness activities. While feeling safe and having fun, youth and families at SNL 2021 also received free COVID testing, vaccinations and mental health information and resources. Testimonies from SNL 2021 participants highlight that families look forward to returning to SNL year after year.



SNL takes both public and private dollars to work. The private funding received for SNL in 2021, in particular, allowed the GRYD Foundation and the GRYD Office to be nimble in modifying SNL during the COVID-19 pandemic, shifting from the typical onsite food grilling to Grab-N-Go food bundles, offering safer, more contained sports activities instead of full sports leagues, and navigating COVID-related hiring freezes and changing public safety guidelines in the City and County of Los Angeles. These private dollars were critical to the success of SNL 2021 and consequently, the well-being of SNL communities.

Moving forward, private, multi-year funding for SNL would allow the GRYD Foundation and the GRYD Office to focus less on fundraising from year-to-year and focus more on program enhancements and planning. Multi-year support would also position the GRYD Foundation to:



Continue to hire SNL youth workers to supplement to City hiring, and provide training and mentoring to help youth workers be successful in their SNL roles and beyond



Purchase and provide vital food for the families of SNL communities



Purchase arts and crafts supplies, sports equipment, and apparel for SNL communities and families

Investment in SNL helps lay a foundation for youth and families to feel a sense of community, enjoy their neighborhood parks and outdoor spaces, and connect with gang prevention and intervention service providers and mental health resources.

