

Creative Santa Fe Youth Survey

A Senior Project By Sadie Wiese

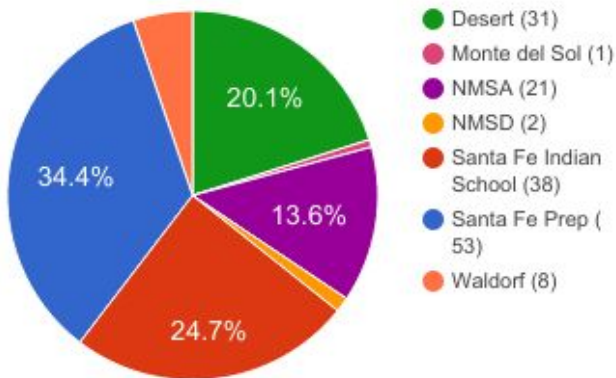
Introduction

My name is Sadie Wiese and I am a senior at Santa Fe Prep. During the final month of the year, Prep generously allows all the seniors to do an internship instead of going to classes, and I chose to do mine at Creative Santa Fe. During the 4 weeks, I worked on a variety of projects, but my main goal was to create, send, and analyze a survey to determine what local youth want in Santa Fe. Our call to actions questions were "What is the brightest future imaginable for Santa Fe and what steps can we take to achieve that goal?" and "What if you could help change the future of Santa Fe?" I sent the survey to several high schools that agreed to participate and received 154 responses from students who attend Santa Fe Prep, Santa Fe Indian School, Desert Academy, New Mexico School for the Arts, Waldorf, New Mexico School for the Deaf, and Monte del Sol.

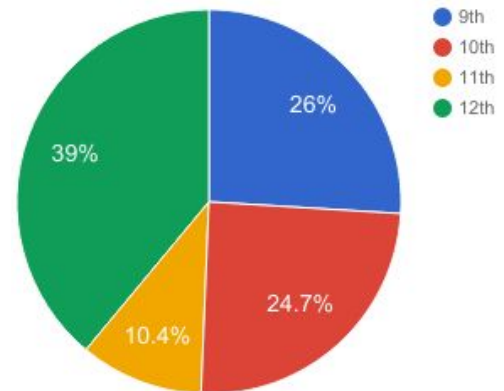
Results

Demographic Questions

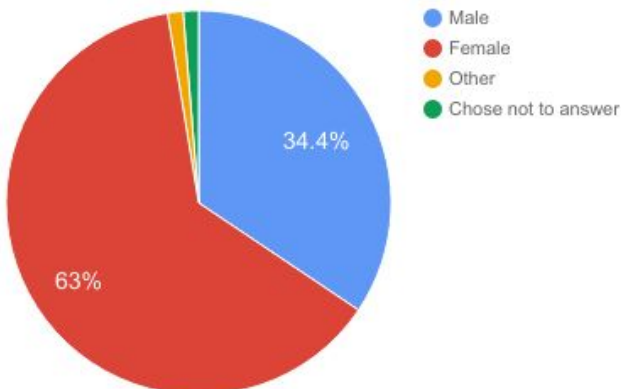
School/Program



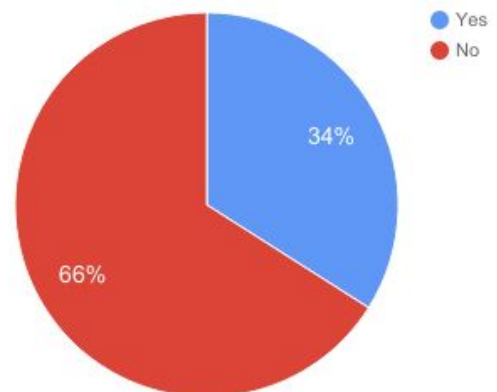
Grade



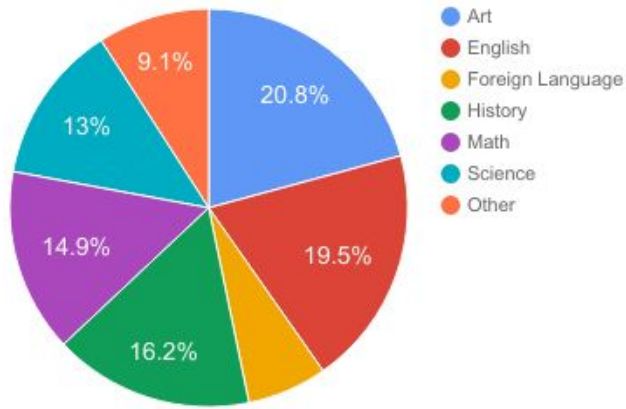
Gender



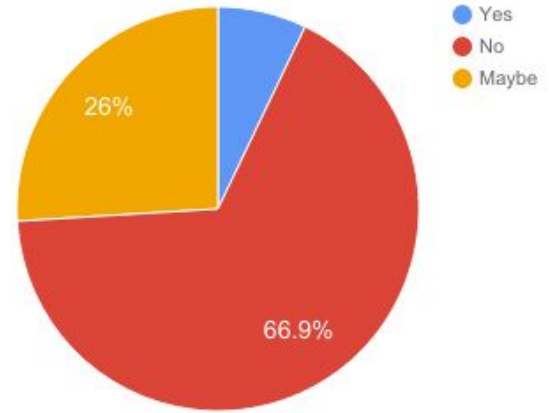
Job Outside of School



Favorite Subject



Will you be in SF in 5 years?



Patterns in the Data

“What are the weaknesses of Santa Fe/What is Santa Fe lacking?”

Rank	Freshmen	Seniors
1	Variety of Activities (73%)	Affordable Activities (73%)
2	Affordable Activities (63%)	Variety of Activities (65%)
3	Youth Political Involvement (48%)	Job Opportunities (45%)
4	Public Transportation (43%)	Youth Political Involvement (40%)
5	Safety (38%)	Parks and Public Transportation (tied at 32%)

“Do you feel like you have a voice in local issues?”

School (student #)	Yes	No	Neutral
Desert (31)	13%	62%	25%
Monte del Sol (1)	100%	0%	0%
NMSA (21)	5%	75%	20%
NMSD (2)	0%	100%	0%
SFIS (38)	10%	66%	24%
SFP (53)	20%	49%	30%
Waldorf (8)	0%	88%	12%

“Do you get involved in local issues?”

School (student #)	Yes	No	Neutral
Desert (31)	23%	54%	23%
Monte del Sol (1)	0%	0%	100%
NMSA (21)	9%	48%	43%
NMSD (2)	0%	50%	50%
SFIS (38)	11%	58%	31%
SFP (53)	15%	42%	43%
Waldorf (8)	0%	75%	25%

Words Students Commonly Used to Describe Santa Fe

(Larger words signify more responses with that word)



Moving Forward

For this section, I am analyzing the responses to the following questions in order to determine how Creative Santa Fe and other organizations can use this data moving forward to better serve teens.

- ❖ Do you see yourself in Santa Fe in 5 years? (multiple choice)
- ❖ Where is your favorite place in/part of Santa Fe? (open ended)
- ❖ What are the strengths of Santa Fe? (check boxes)
- ❖ What are the weaknesses? (open ended)
- ❖ What is Santa Fe lacking? (checkboxes)
- ❖ How connected do you feel to students in other schools? (scale of 1 to 5)
- ❖ Rate your overall satisfaction with the amount of things to do for teens in Santa Fe. (scale of 1 to 5)
- ❖ How often do you get involved with local issues? (scale of 1 to 5)
- ❖ Do you feel like you have a voice in local issues? (scale of 1 to 5)
- ❖ How can local organizations make it easier/more fun for you to engage in the community? (open)

Let's start with the last question. The responses to this question fall into three umbrella suggestions: **creating more events, advertising, and being more welcoming to teens.**

67% of teens said they would like to see a **larger variety of accessible and affordable activities** and 72% said they were not satisfied with the current amount of activities for teens. Specifically, teens would like to see a greater number of **concerts, teen days and festivals, shows, parties, outdoor activities, and art exhibits**, but they are also open to new types of events that are unique and interesting. Ideally, students want events **year round either at night or during after school hours**, that are affordable and can **provide either food or transportation** or be held in an **accessible location**.

These locations should not only be accessible but places where teen enjoy hanging out. The favorite places of teens in Santa Fe are **Downtown, the Railyard, Meow Wolf, the Plaza, Warehouse 21, and Violet Crown**. A few students expressed their wish to have more activities **closer to the South Side of town**, since those students often feel excluded from the downtown events. Several respondents also said that their favorite parts of Santa

Fe are the **mountains** and the easy access to the outdoors. Many would prefer events to be outside and/or in nature than inside, because they appreciate the beauty of Santa Fe.

Nearly half said organizations should **advertise more at the schools**, either by speaking or with flyers, since it is often difficult for teens to find out what is going on in and around town. One student even said that they often do not participate because it is “an hour-long task to find things on program or host websites.”

The advertisement needs to be distributed equally among all high schools, because as one student said, “Going to the Indian School, we are very separated from the rest of Santa Fe and often times do not hear of gatherings until after it is over or with not enough time to plan on going.” Several students also suggested organizations have a **larger social media presence**, so that they reach a wider demographic. A few students said that one of the main things they want to see at local events is more **diversity** in the participants. This would be a chance for teens across schools to meet and interact since 57% of the students said they did not feel connected to students at other schools/programs.

Some students also said they would rather organizations **give local teens the funds and resources to put on events**, because teen events created and put on by adults are often viewed as patronizing or do not cater to what teens actually want. One student said that youth participation would increase if organizations provided “more opportunities for collaboration with teens, and actually took teens more seriously with their ideas and made the events sophisticated, not something that looks immature.” Another student said that “a lot of events cater more to the older, often white upper class citizens. Having more events geared towards a younger audience, but not in a demeaning way, would be great.”

The students also said they would like to see more events centered around politics, the environment, social justice, cultural integration, and inclusion (regarding race, gender, sexuality, culture, etc.) **Teens want to be involved in local/global issues**, but often do not as **61% of students feel like they do not have a voice**. Only 14% of teens actively participate in local issues. It would be beneficial to both students and older generations for there to be an increase in opportunities for youth political involvement and for older generations to **create a more welcoming environment and actually listen to what teens have to say**. Not only would this create more trust between youth and local leaders, but it would also attract more young people to come to/stay in Santa Fe, which is especially important since **67% of students do not see themselves in Santa Fe in 5 years**. One student said “the city has done a poor job of combining funky, authentic Santa Fe traditions with new Millennial ideas that have succeeded in other communities.” If we can change this common sentiment, Santa Fe has the potential to be a thriving place for teens and young people.

This has been a very interesting and rewarding project for me. Personally, I found the high percentage of students who feel they do not have a voice to be most striking. I also believe it is the most important issue to address, for solving this problem will jump start creative solutions for several other issues. I have been honored to be able to record the opinions of my peers and hope that their voices will be heard by organizations in and around the city. I am very grateful to the team at Creative Santa Fe - Cyndi Conn, Yuki Murata, Lauren Henriksen, Mayo King, and Sabrina Pratt- for giving me the opportunity to intern and do this project for the past four weeks and for being fantastic mentors.

The survey and my internship may be over, but our work has just started. Now that we know how our local teens feel about their city, what do we do next? How can we come together as a community to make Santa Fe a better place for teens? There are several solutions and possible paths to take and we would love to have your input!