



Applied Survey Research

Who is Applied Survey Research?

Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a nonprofit social research firm dedicated to conducting and using research to help our clients build better communities. For the past 25 years, ASR has worked with organizations of all sizes and types, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Agriculture, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Office of Violence Against Women, the California Endowment, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, individual counties, cities, community-wide initiatives, and non-profit organizations. ASR has pioneered the use of results-based accountability as a tool to help county agencies and foundations chart a course toward meaningful results.

ASR was founded in Santa Cruz County by Susan Brutschy and is headquartered in Watsonville, Ca. In order to meet increasing demand for our services in the greater Bay Area, ASR now has a second office in San Jose.

Our team, including experienced staff and a network of expert consultants, draws from their diverse backgrounds in research and media to design just the right type of research project to fulfill our clients’ information needs. More than 80% of ASR’s business is obtained through referrals or repeat clients – a testament to our strong ability to ensure high quality, usable research AND our clients’ satisfaction.

What are our areas of specialty?

Our studies have been focused on issues related to at-risk populations, such as:

- Early education, child-care and school readiness;
- Family support;
- Domestic violence and child welfare;
- Alcohol and drug use;
- Housing and homelessness;
- Health care; and
- Community quality of life.

What types of research do we do?

During the past 25 years, ASR has used best practices in research methodology, and we have developed new methods to meet the diverse needs of our clients, including: **needs assessment and strategic planning, results-based accountability, program design and development, evaluation planning, and evaluation.** ASR conducts research on interventions at various levels, including programs, collaboratives, systems, and communities.

Our values and commitments to you:

- Commitment to smart community programming** to help you better serve vulnerable populations
- Useful results** that become ingredients for you to make positive change
- Theory-based research and evaluation approaches** to assess root causes of issues and your theory of change about what it will take to make improvements
- Research and community-based**, drawing down evidence-based practices as well as *creating new best practices* with you and your stakeholders
- Highest level of rigor** will be used, given your research purposes and your available resources
- Protection of human subjects in research** in accordance with federal regulations and our own ethics
- Participant-centeredness** to ensure the needs and perspectives of those you serve will help guide development of the methodology and findings
- Collaborative** approach to the study process that brings in your input when its most needed
- Capacity-building** of your staff to continue measuring and collecting data on your own where its appropriate
- Responsiveness** to you during and

What are examples of ASR's work?

Over the past two and half decades, ASR has completed hundreds of research projects spanning a wide range of content areas, methodologies and clients. Examples include the following:

- ❑ **Santa Cruz County Community Assessment Project (CAP)**, 1995 - present: Funded by United Way of Santa Cruz County, ASR has tracked over 120 **quality of life indicators** for the past 11 years. As a great example of **results-based accountability** in action, these data have been used to mobilize collaborative projects to reduce teen alcohol and substance use, binge drinking and obesity as well as to increase health care coverage for all county children regardless of immigration status.
- ❑ **School Readiness Assessment**, 2001 to present: San Mateo County's Peninsula Partnership for Children, Youth and Families worked with ASR to develop a brief observation tool for kindergarten teachers to assess children's readiness for school. Since 2001, this tool has been updated to include a parent information form, a teacher survey, and predictor variables from the US Department of Education's Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS). The **assessment** provides comprehensive data regarding readiness skills, the student and family factors that enhance those skills, the impact of English Learner status and early education, and ECE and kindergarten teacher perceptions of readiness for nearly 4000 kindergarten students across San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.
- ❑ **Evaluation of the Green Book Initiative in Santa Clara County**, 2001- present: Funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Institute of Justice, the goal of the project is to improve the lives of families who suffer from domestic violence and child maltreatment by changing the systems that serve them. Systems include law enforcement, Child Protective Services, local Domestic Violence Advocacy organizations, and Juvenile Dependency Courts. ASR has been conducting a **process and systems evaluation** to document systems change - and barriers to change - throughout the county.
- ❑ **Santa Cruz County First 5**, 2001-present: *First 5* programs provide services to low-income families to promote healthy families and children who are ready for school. ASR designed a **program evaluation** and has been collecting data from over 30 programs. The data have been used to make program improvements and redefine commission-wide funding and programmatic strategies.
- ❑ **San Mateo County Community College District's Early Childhood Education/Child Development Department**, 2004-2005: ASR completed a **strategic plan** for the community college district to help its early childhood development departments better prepare the child care workforce within a ever-changing, diverse climate of demands, including the Preschool for All Initiative (PFA).

ASR is passionate about the power of sound, usable research to help our clients promote practical and lasting change in the lives of those they serve.

Please call us at either of our offices to talk about your community-change efforts and your research needs. We are also happy to give you copies of our reports and information about our innovative research tools; visit our website (www.appliedsurveyresearch.org) as well for great resources!

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