

Risk Stratification: Update

September 4, 2024



Principles

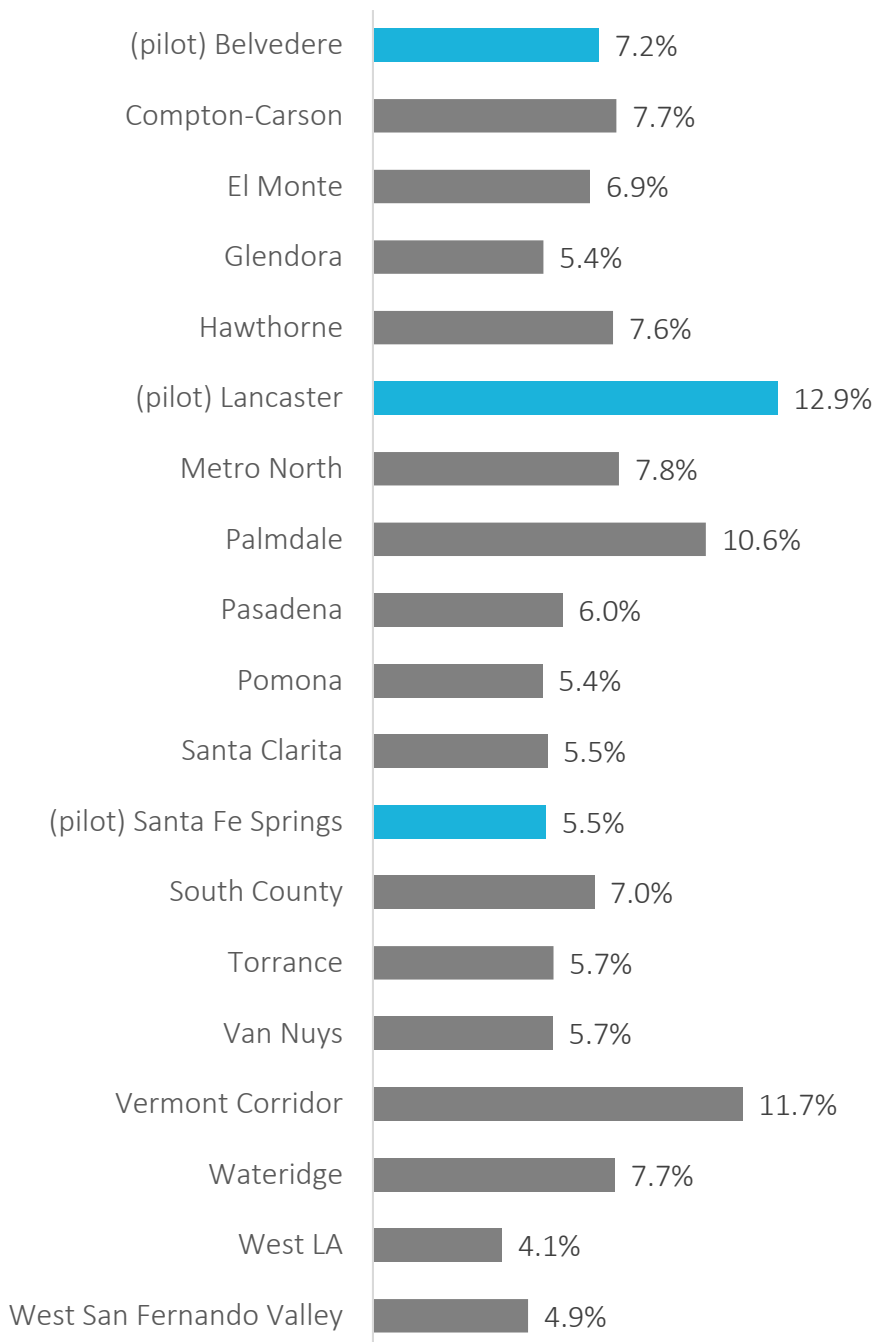
- Child safety is always #1
- Supervisors are incredible assets.
- Do no harm. Be transparent.
- Risk Stratification (RS) must align with other Dept. of Children & Family Services (DCFS) efforts.
- Learn, listen, and improve.





Data & Outcomes








Investigations from August 2021 – November 2023

Investigations Designated for Enhanced Support (ES)

- We are no longer forecasting what “might” happen. The RS model was launched in August 2021; we now have up to 27 months of data to examine.
- The “treatment” (or intervention) was a simple notification to supervisors + data automatically pulled from the Child Welfare Services Case Management System. In the pilot offices, supervisors were told if an investigation was designated for ES. In the other offices, they were not.
- We followed each child in an ES investigation over time to look at child outcomes...

Enhanced Support Outcomes

1. We observed statistically significant improvements in child safety in the pilot offices as measured several different ways: mortality, near-fatalities, and immediate response (IR) re-reports.  **23% reduction in near-fatalities**
2. This protective effect was accompanied by slightly higher placement rates among ES investigations, as well as more delivered services. Overall placement rates in pilot vs. non-pilot offices were comparable - and there were no differences in placements by race.  **29% vs. 25% (pilot vs. non-pilot)**
3. Among children who remained at home, we observed significant reductions in future investigations after closure. These improvements appear to be driven by increased supervisory attention to 5-day referrals. Reductions in re-reports (both IR and overall) were greatest for Black children.  **29% reduction in re-reports**

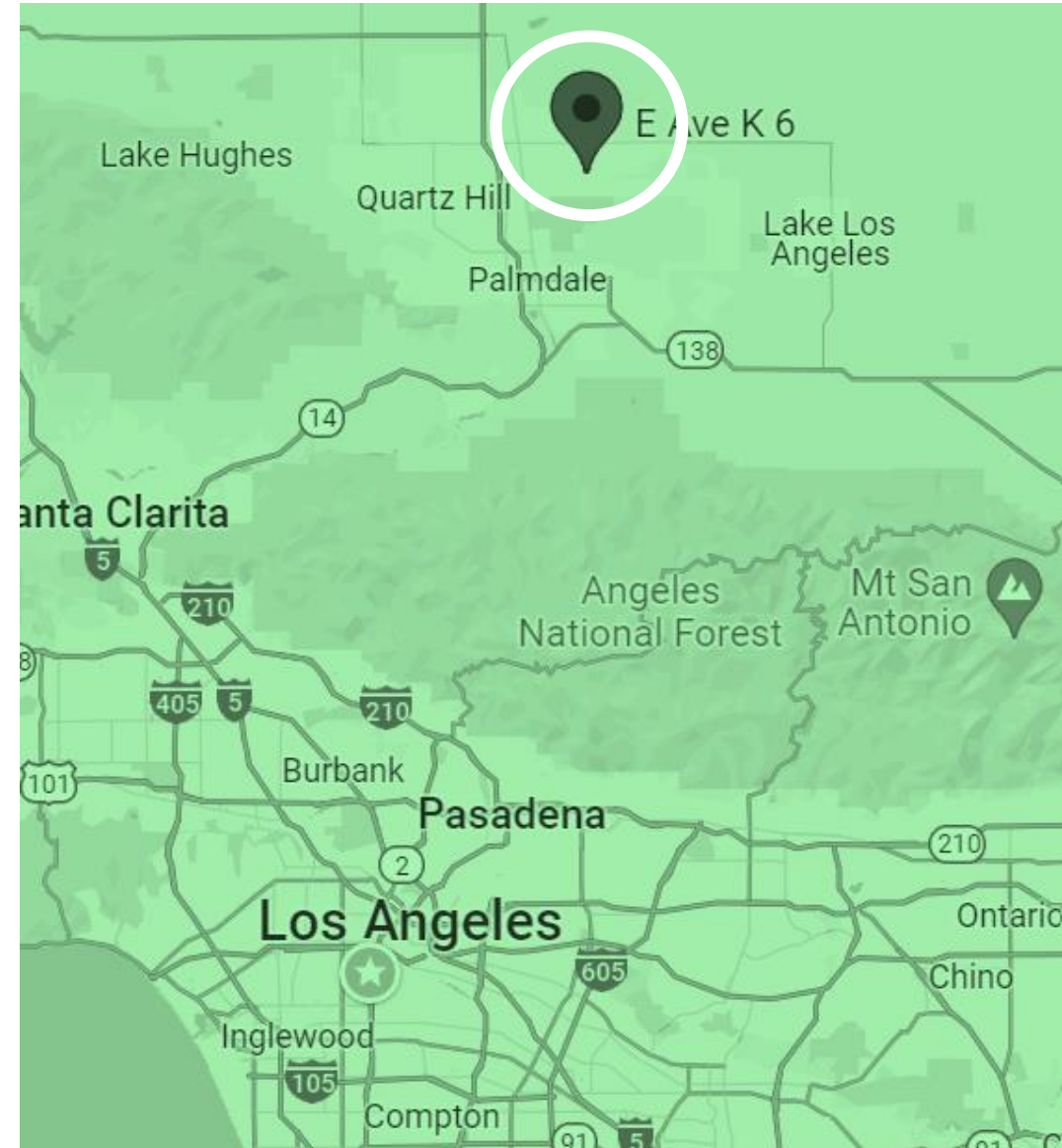


Office Experiences



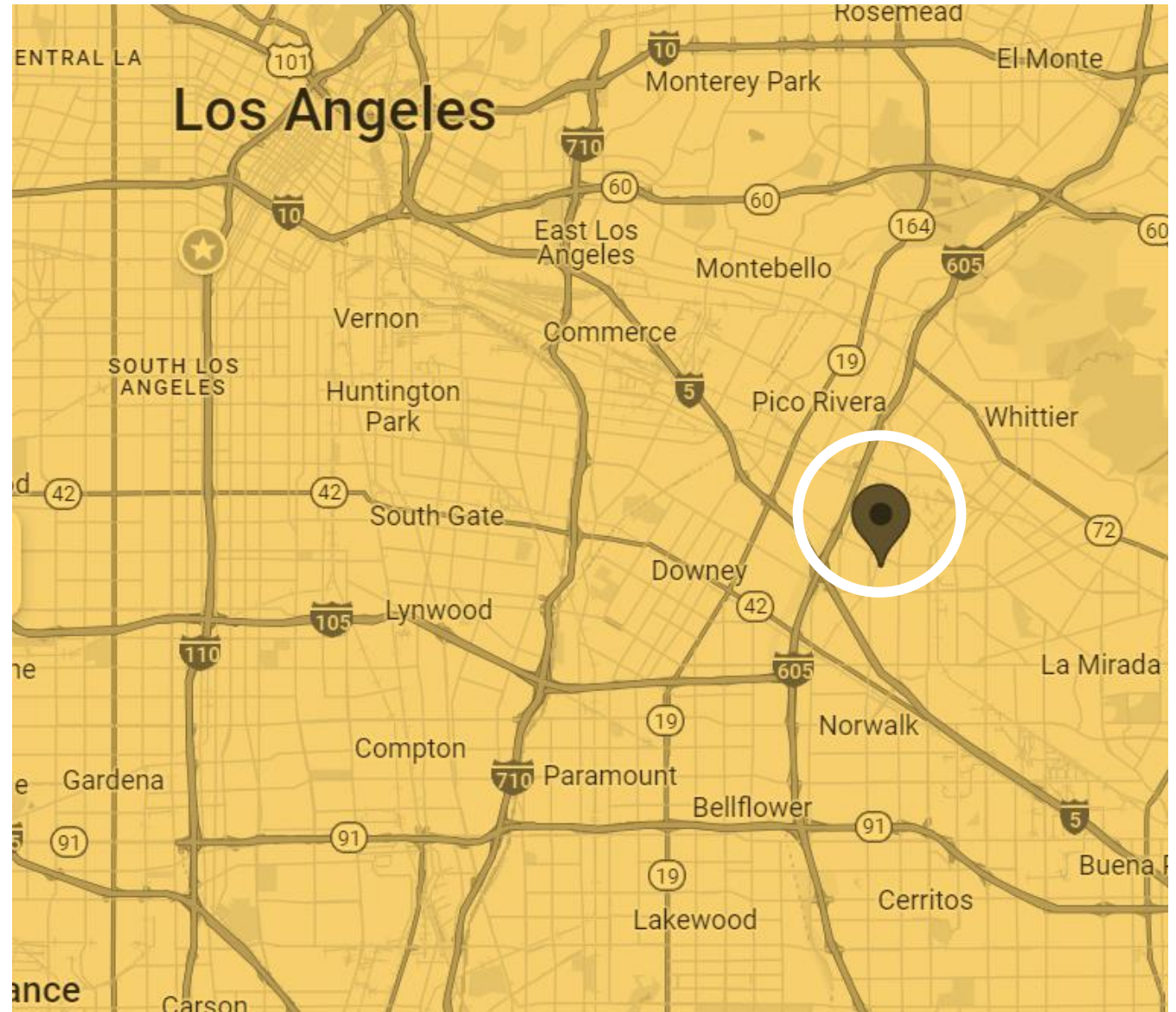
Lancaster

- Important source of information given larger volume of investigations in Lancaster with significant complexity
- Helped Emergency Response (ER) supervisors to be aware from day 1 so that they could prioritize.
- Complementary to Eliminating Racial Disproportionality and Disparity (ERDD) roundtables
- Supervisory coaching (ER + Continuing Service (CS) supervisors)
- Interest in identifying investigations that are one risk level down



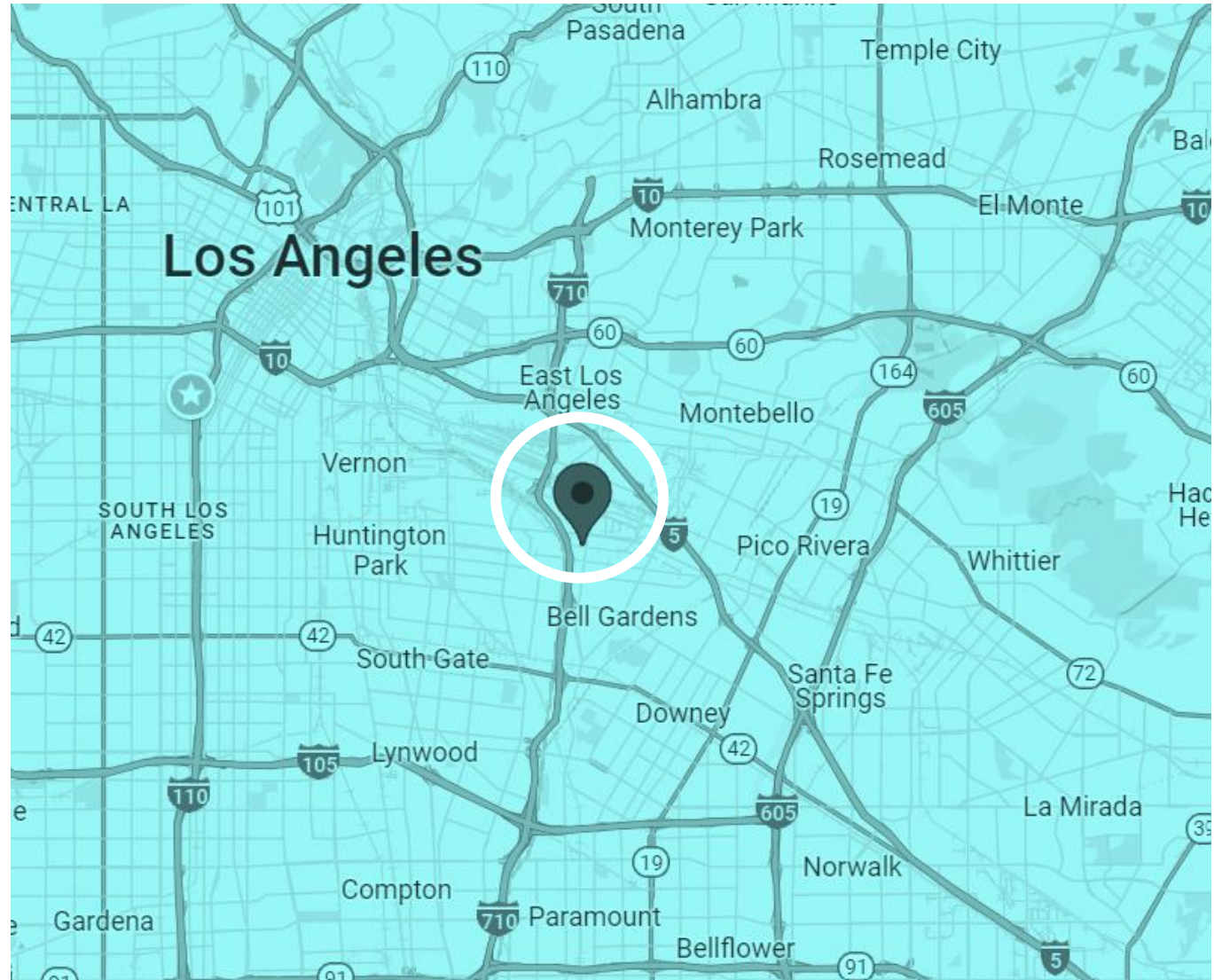
Santa Fe Springs

- Became a part of normal practice – including consultations with ARA on ES investigations.
- Like Belvedere, numbers were not huge, but helped ensure connections to services.
- Strengthened supervisory communication between ER and CS.
- *“Our caseworkers went out with more knowledge of history relevant to the current allegation”*



Belvedere

- Supported practices that are already strong in Belvedere – including community connections / service referrals
- Reinforced the introduction of consultation policies with ARAs
- Numbers of ES investigations were small, but for cases that were designated it helped ensure early communication with ARAs



Racial Equity & Engagement

- Racial Equity is providing children and families with individualized, culturally inclusive, and intentional support.
- The goal is to acknowledge the impact of biases on outcomes for Black/African-American families and create opportunities for shared decision-making with families and communities.
- Racial equity efforts support better outcomes for Black/African-American families by providing practitioners who look like them, fostering trust, increasing service acceptance, and motivating goal achievement.
- Effective engagement between DCFS, families, practitioners, and community partners enhances collaboration, builds stronger relationships, and leads to better outcomes.



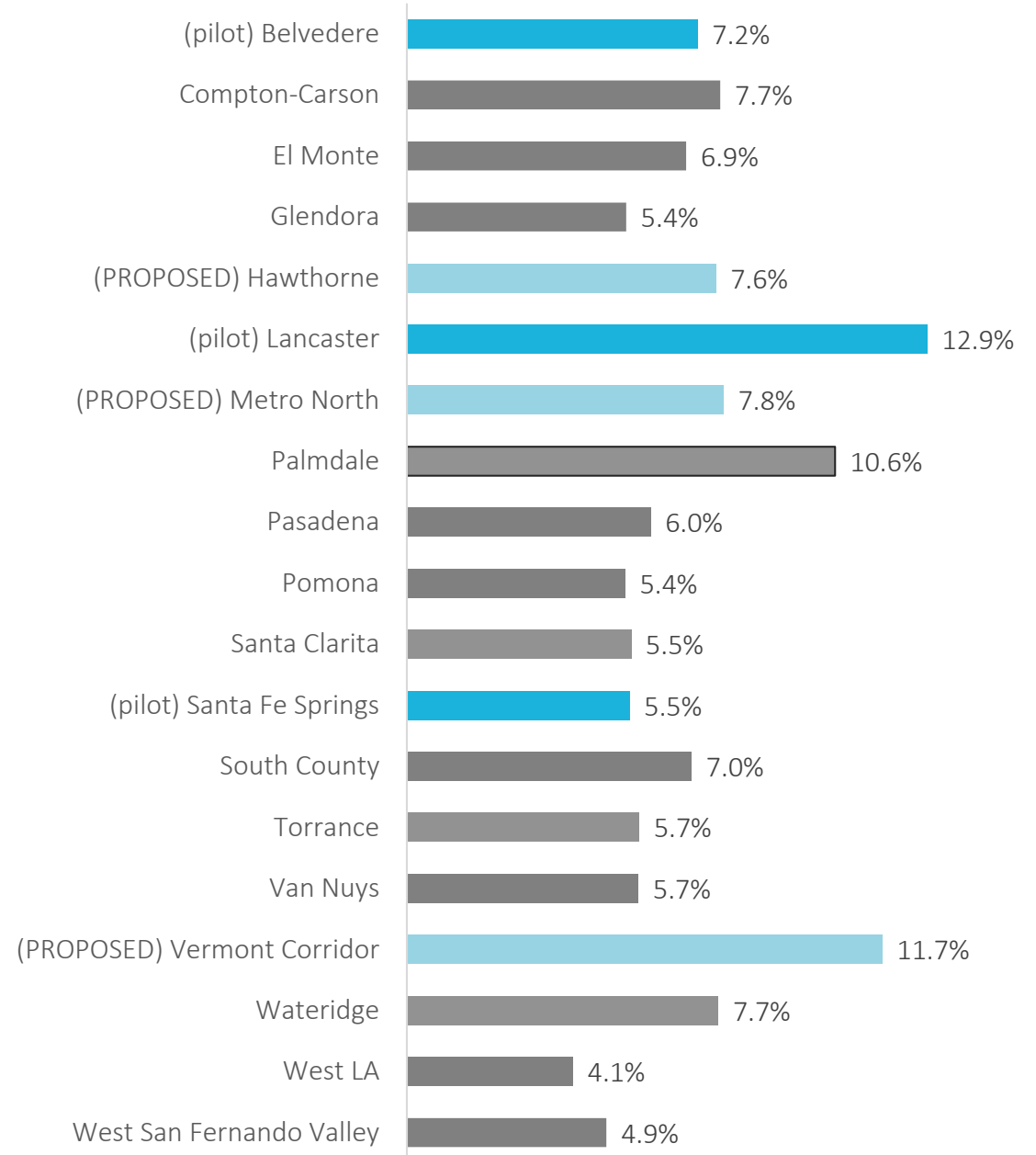


Moving forward...



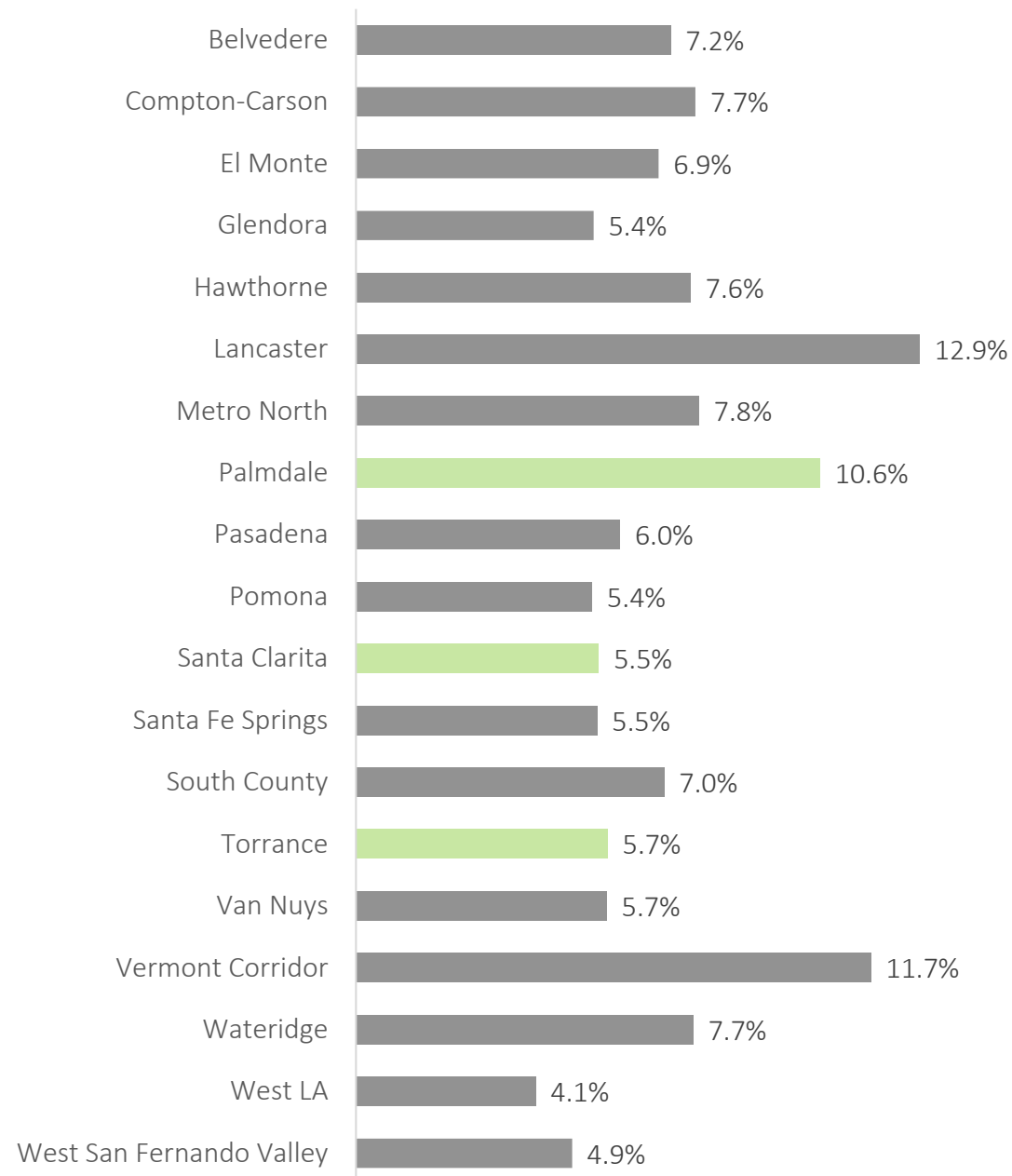
Expansion of ES ...

- We identified offices with the highest number of investigations meeting criteria for Enhanced Support: *Vermont Corridor, Palmdale, Metro North, Wateridge, and Hawthorne*
- We are currently seeking feedback from community partners, but have proposed three offices as expansion sites based on office readiness, the number of other initiatives, etc.



Trialing of Enhanced Referral Review...

- We are also planning to trial a new application of the RS model that would allow offices to develop an “Enhanced Referral Review” (ERR) protocol for diverting investigations meeting certain criteria to a community pathway...



Child
Protection
Concerns



Enhanced Support
Investigations

Community-Based
Service Needs

System-Supported
Services Needs



Enhanced Referral
Reviews

Parenting
Support Needs

**“Enhanced Referral
Reviews”** in
Palmdale, Santa
Clarita, and Torrance.

Enhanced Referral Review

5-DAY

Referral designated as 5-day vs. IR. Indicates no immediate safety concerns and provides opportunity for review.

COMPLEXITY

Risk stratification model assigns the investigation to the bottom 50% of the distribution based on future DCFS involvement.

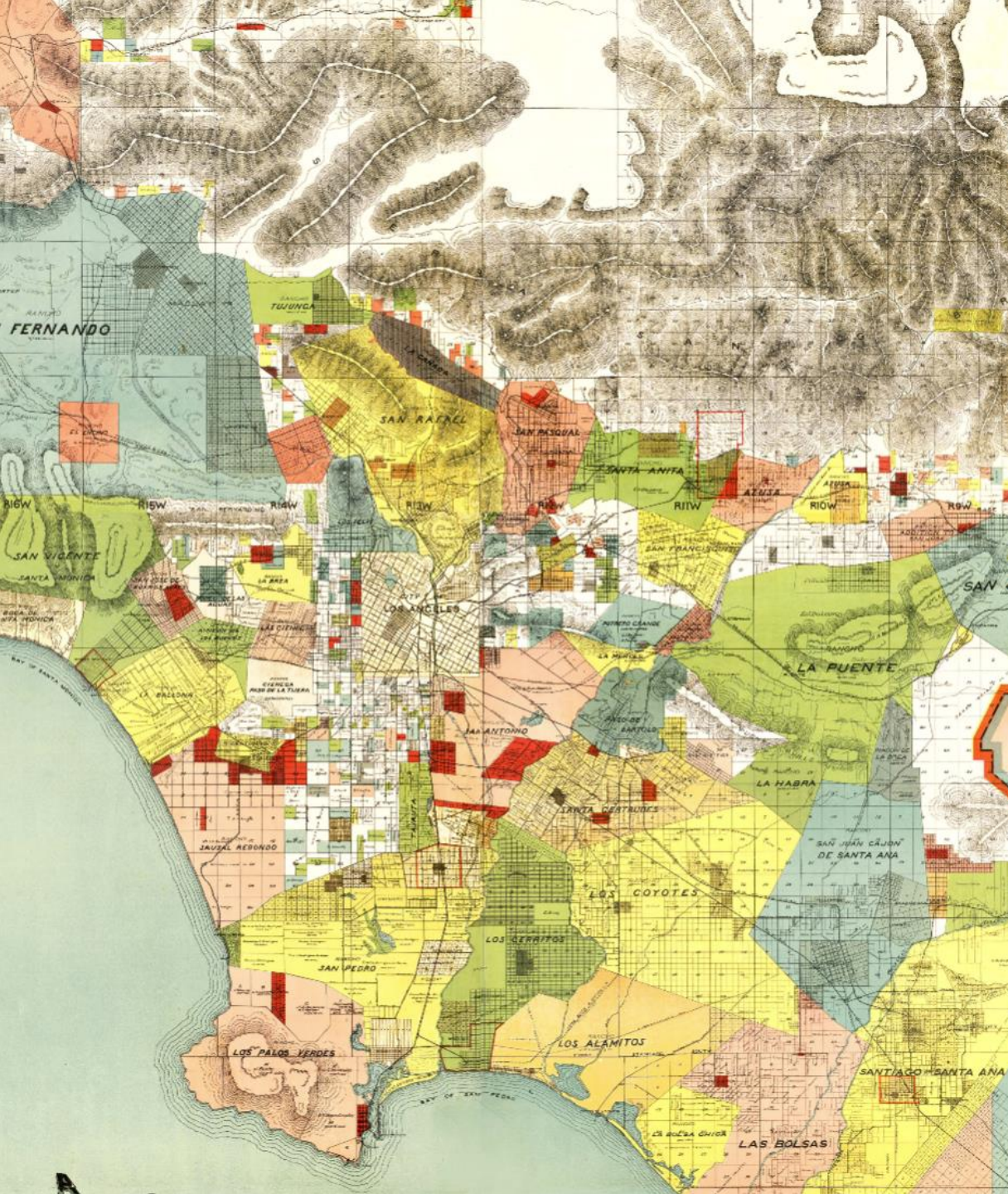
GENERAL NEGLECT + OTHER

No child on the referral has current allegations of severe neglect, sexual abuse, or physical abuse.

ADULT HISTORY

No adult named as an alleged perpetrator with a history of substantiated abuse / neglect involving children.

Selected for review and possible engagement by community partner



Discussion & Questions
(+ thank you!)

Questions?

Community members may contact:

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News media members may contact:

publicaffairs@dcfs.lacounty.gov