Changing Community Nutrition and Physical Activity Environments: Evaluations That Work

CCLHO Semi-annual Meeting

October 8, 2010

Samuels & Associates

NO TRESPASSING
PROPERTY OF
SANTA ANA UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT
C.P.C. 602 SAPD 834-4217

NO TRESPASSING
ANDERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL
MAINTAINS A CLOSED CAMPUS
BETWEEN 7:30a.m. AND 4:00p.m.
ALL VISITORS MUST REGISTER
WITH THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE.
FACILITIES MAY BE RESTRICTED
TO SCHOOL USE AT ANY TIME.

TACO BELL
COOKING
GREAT
SINCE
1968
Grinder
Breakfast Lunch & Dinner
McDonald's
BILLION
PLAYPLACE

AS ADVERTISED
LARGE AVACADOS
.87 EA
SPECIAL PRODUCE
RUSSET POTATOES 5-LB.
$2.47
.27 LB
.57 LB
.27 LB
.27 LB

Burn Calories,
Not Electricity
Take the Stairs!

Why an environmental approach?

- Individuals make decisions within the context of their surrounding environments – schools, after school, workplaces, neighborhoods
- Environmental interventions are particularly important for communities where risk is concentrated
- More sustainable, larger reach, less costly in the long run

Reframing

the nutrition & physical activity debate

from simply a matter of individual choice...

...to corporate & government responsibility

Addressing Nutrition and Physical Activity Environments

- Strategic Alliance
- California Convergence
- Healthy Eating Active Communities (HEAC)
- Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP)
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Childhood Obesity)
- National Convergence Partnership
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation (AHG)
- First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move campaign

BANCROFT

Federal Legislation Addressing Nutrition and Physical Activity

- Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010
- Transportation Reauthorization
- Farm Bill, 2012
- National Healthy Food Financing Initiative
- Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW)
- Health Care Reform Prevention Resources

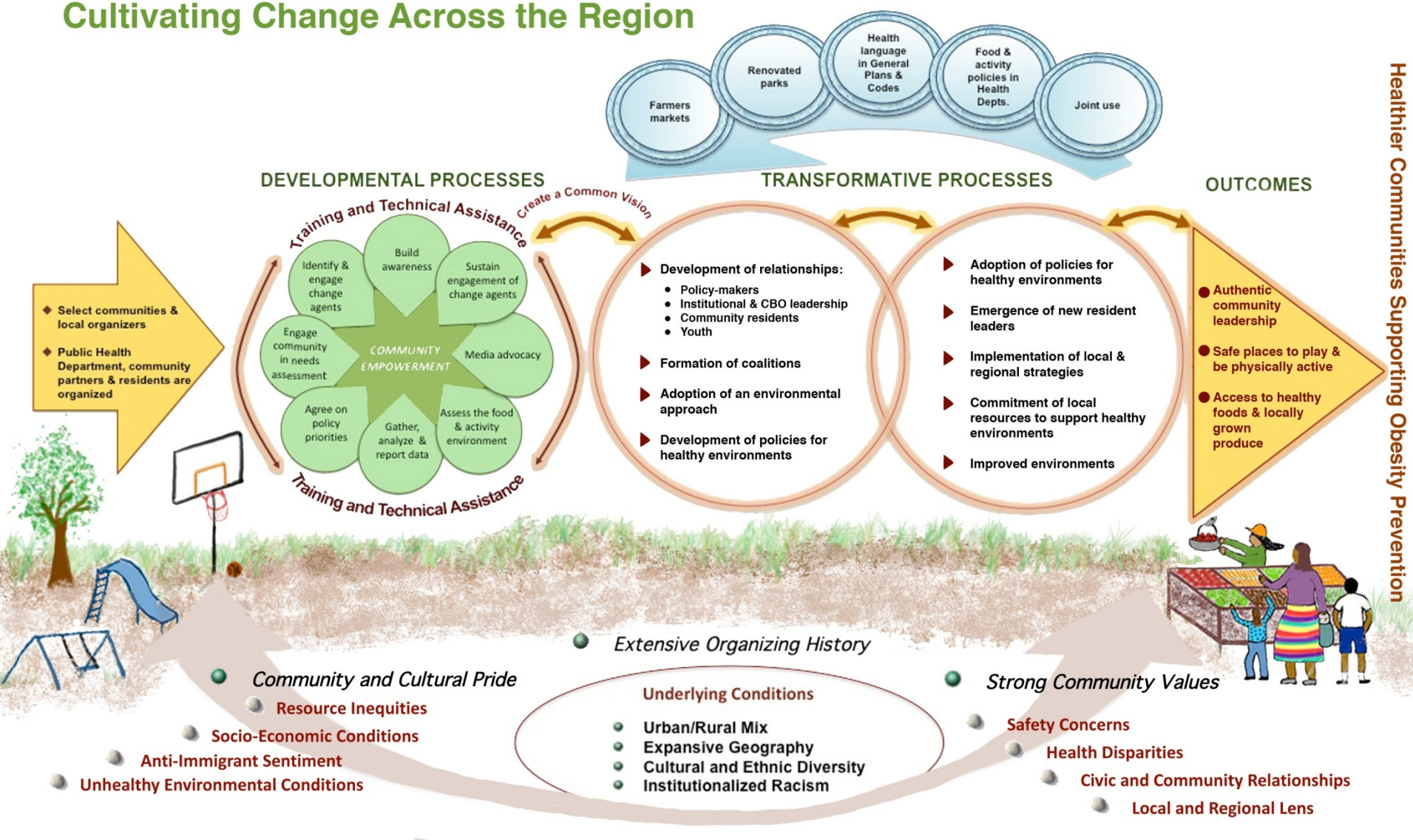
HEALTHY EATING, ACTIVE COMMUNITIES : A New Prevention Approach

- Objective: Reduce disparities in obesity/diabetes by improving food and physical activity environments for school-age children
- Approach: Change environments, policies and organizational practices that influence eating/physical activity
- Focus: 5 sectors - school, after school, neighborhood, health care/public health, marketing/advertising environments
- Funded Partners: Schools, community organizations, and local public health departments
- Location: 6 low-income communities in California
- Duration: 4 years, $26 million, extended to 2010

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA REGIONAL OBESITY PREVENTION PROGRAM (CCROPP)

- Objective: Address obesity through place-based policy changes that support access to physical activity and healthy foods
- Approach: Change environments, policies and organizational practices that influence eating/physical activity locally and regionally
- Funded Partners: Public health departments and community-based organizations
- Location: Eight contiguous counties in CA's Central Valley
- Duration: $2.6 million; 3-year regional initiative, extended to 2010

Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP)
Cultivating Change Across the Region



HEAC and CCROPP EVALUATION APPROACH

- Measure changes in nutrition and physical activity environments, the built environment, organizational and legislative policies, and health disparities
- Capture community resident and youth engagement
- Inform programs and policies to create healthy environments
- Ongoing evaluation feedback to refine the implementation of community- level strategies
- Capture accomplishments, challenges, lessons learned and best practices
- Participation of grantees and community residents in the evaluation
- Focus on learning rather than on monitoring

HEAC and CCROPP EVALUATION METHODS

- Environmental Assessments (multiple sectors)
  - Foods & beverages
  - Physical activity levels and environments
- Stakeholder surveys (multiple sectors)
- Youth & parent focus groups
- Student survey
- Fitnessgram data analysis
- Financial impact study
- Health care provider survey
- Public health department survey
- In-store food & beverage assessment
- Community resident survey
- Policymaker Survey

HEAC & CCROPP Accomplishments

- Created innovative and cohesive framework for policy/environmental change at local, state and regional levels
- Confirmed feasibility and necessity of multi-sector approach: synergy between sectors facilitated progress
- Increased access to healthy food and physical activity
- Strong community and institutional leadership strengthened reach and sustainability
- Youth, community residents and health care professionals successfully engaged and mobilized to improve access to healthy food and physical activity
- Statewide leadership and legislation has given legitimacy to local policy strategies; local policy successes have given momentum to statewide efforts

HEAC/CCROPP: Food and Nutrition Policies Implemented

POLICY STRATEGY	FEDERAL/STATE/ LOCAL POLICY
California state nutrition standards in schools	State
School Wellness policies	Federal
Eliminate sales of foods with trans fat at schools	State
After school program nutrition standards	State
Regulating/Restricting vending trucks	Local
County/City healthy vending machine policies	Local
Moratorium on fast food/zoning regulations for fast food	Local
Farmers' market ordinances	Local

HEAC/CCROPP
Physical Activity Policies Implemented

POLICY STRATEGY	FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL POLICY
Health language in general plans	Local
Making neighborhoods more walkable •Safe routes to school •Complete streets	Local
Making neighborhoods more bikable •Bike Master Plans •Bike Lanes •Bike Routes	Local
Joint use	Local
Establishing open spaces for parks	Local

Key Ingredient to Success: Youth Engagement

- HEAC and CCROPP sites successfully engaged youth, built a cadre of youth leaders with capacity to understand policy, conduct research, formulate solutions and present data to policy makers

- Youth leaders successfully advocated for environmental change to local decision makers and business leaders

It'll give me experience for the future – to change the community, which gives me pride & dignity.

- Youth focus group participant

Key Ingredient to Success: Community Engagement

- Education and training essential to supporting community engagement
- Connected local organizing to regional and state policy change to sustain work over time
- Raised community voices led to changes in institutional practices
- Community ownership of neighborhoods, parks and infrastructure improvements led to less crime/perception of less crime

How have neighborhood food environments changed?

- Increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income residents
  - 13 farmers markets/produce stands established through HEAC and CCROPP
  - In 4 CCROPP farmers markets and 3 produce stands, 75% of products sold were vegetables/fruits.
  - WIC vouchers & EBT redemption increased.
- Sites worked to change retail food environments.

How have physical activity environments changed?

- Inclusion of health language in general plans
- Land use/parks planning or zoning ordinance reform to increase access to physical activity opportunities and healthy foods

- Improved parks and access to open space through interventions such as infrastructure enhancements, equipment upgrades, walking groups, & joint use agreements

- Addressing crime and safety concerns as major deterrents to physical activity and contributing factors to obesity

How have school and after school environments changed?

- The 6 HEAC school districts adopted wellness policies.
- In schools, adherence to California's competitive food standards (SB 12) increased from 23% in 2005 to 67% in 2008.
- PE class time spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) remained constant between Spring 2005 & Fall 2009
- Adherence to SB 965 beverage standards in after school increased from 77% to 100% from 2005 to 2008.
- After school programs provided 42 minutes average daily total play.

Policymakers in HEAC and CCROPP Areas: Support for Government Action

- Despite differences in party, ideology and attitudes, there is overwhelming support for government action to make it easier for people to eat well and be active:
  - 88% in the HEAC areas and 73% in the CCROPP areas.
- 57% of HEAC policymakers *strongly* favor government action and 39% of CCROPP policymakers do so.

Healthy Beverage and Food Access

There is very broad support among HEAC and CCROPP policymakers for providing access to free and safe drinking water in schools (94%, CCROPP; 97%, HEAC).

- There is very broad support among HEAC and CCROPP policymakers for the setting of nutrition standards for government run programs (79%, CCROPP; 88%, HEAC).
- Opinions are mixed on a tax or fee on sugar-sweetened beverages (41% support, CCROPP; 58%, HEAC).

Physical Activity Opportunities

- The establishment of joint use policies is very broadly supported (98% in HEAC and CCROPP).
- There is very broad support among CCROPP and HEAC policymakers for enforcing PE laws and fully funding programs (88% CCROPP, 95% HEAC).

How have policies and policymakers changed?

Focus shifted from treatment to prevention

Policies developed, adopted and implemented

Policymakers engaged

Strong link between local and state strategies

How has health care and public health practice changed?

Public health practice embraced environmental approach

Health care providers engaged as advocates

Health care practice incorporates BMI screening & prevention messages

Adoption and promotion of worksite wellness policies

Changing practice in HEAC public health departments

- The Alameda County Public Health Department has a representative on the City of Oakland Planning Commission
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health created a Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention
- San Diego County Public Health Services is training students & *promotoras* to be advocates and led the effort to expand HEAC's work from the local to the county level

CCROPP
Public Health Departments

Public Health Departments in the Central Valley have achieved important goals:

- Engaged staff around healthy eating and physical activity
- Adopted or are pursuing wellness policies (including breast feeding policies)
- New partnerships & relationships
- Engagement in updating general plans

Tulare County public health department's worksite wellness policy has been adopted county-wide by the Department of Health & Human Services

Changing practice in public health departments

- CA Public Health Departments: Obesity and Chronic Disease Prevention Survey (95 respondents to date)
  - Engagement in Changing Nutrition and Physical Activity Environments
    - Health department participates in school or community obesity prevention/nutrition and physical activity collaboratives (86%)
    - Health department engaged in improving beverage and/or food environments in public schools (87%)

Changing practice in public health departments

- How has your public health department changed internally since 2008 to address obesity and chronic disease prevention? (n=89)
  - 43% report reorganization within the health department to support work on obesity and chronic disease prevention
- What do you attribute these changes to? (n=77)
  - Regional and/or state chronic disease prevention efforts (48%)
  - Momentum in the field to change nutrition and physical activity environments(53%)

HEAC PROGRAM: Challenges

- Policy implementation
- Funding alone is not enough to mobilize communities
- Changing physical activity environments in schools and communities
- Engaging students in moderate to vigorous physical activity during PE
- Time required to achieve measurable outcomes
- Gaining long term support within institutions and government for environmental and policy change

CCROPP PROGRAM: Challenges

- Widespread perception that individual behaviors primarily responsible for obesity
- Region's geographic distance from other parts of state
- Communities lacking in resources and infrastructure
- Community residents reluctant to approach decision makers due to language barriers and lack of confidence or experience
- Anti-immigrant sentiment and racism thwart community resident advocacy

HEAC & CCROPP: Building the Evidence

- HEAC and CCROPP demonstrated ability to improve access to fruits/ vegetables & physical activity spaces in disadvantaged & under-resourced communities
- Uncovered limitations of weak policies that do not make significant environmental change to impact health behaviors/outcomes
- Authentic community engagement necessary for making and sustaining change
- Evaluation captured impacts through quantitative and qualitative methodologies; documented measurable outcomes, processes and context for making changes

DISCUSSION

- How is your public health department engaged in changing nutrition & physical activity environments?
- How are you evaluating these changes?
- What is the role of public health departments in policy change?
- How does your public health department need to change internally to address obesity and chronic disease prevention? In its relationships with communities and other partners?
- How can local public health departments provide leadership for increasing access to healthy eating and physical activity opportunities?

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