

Community Themes & Strengths Assessment



2011-2015
Monterey County
Health Department

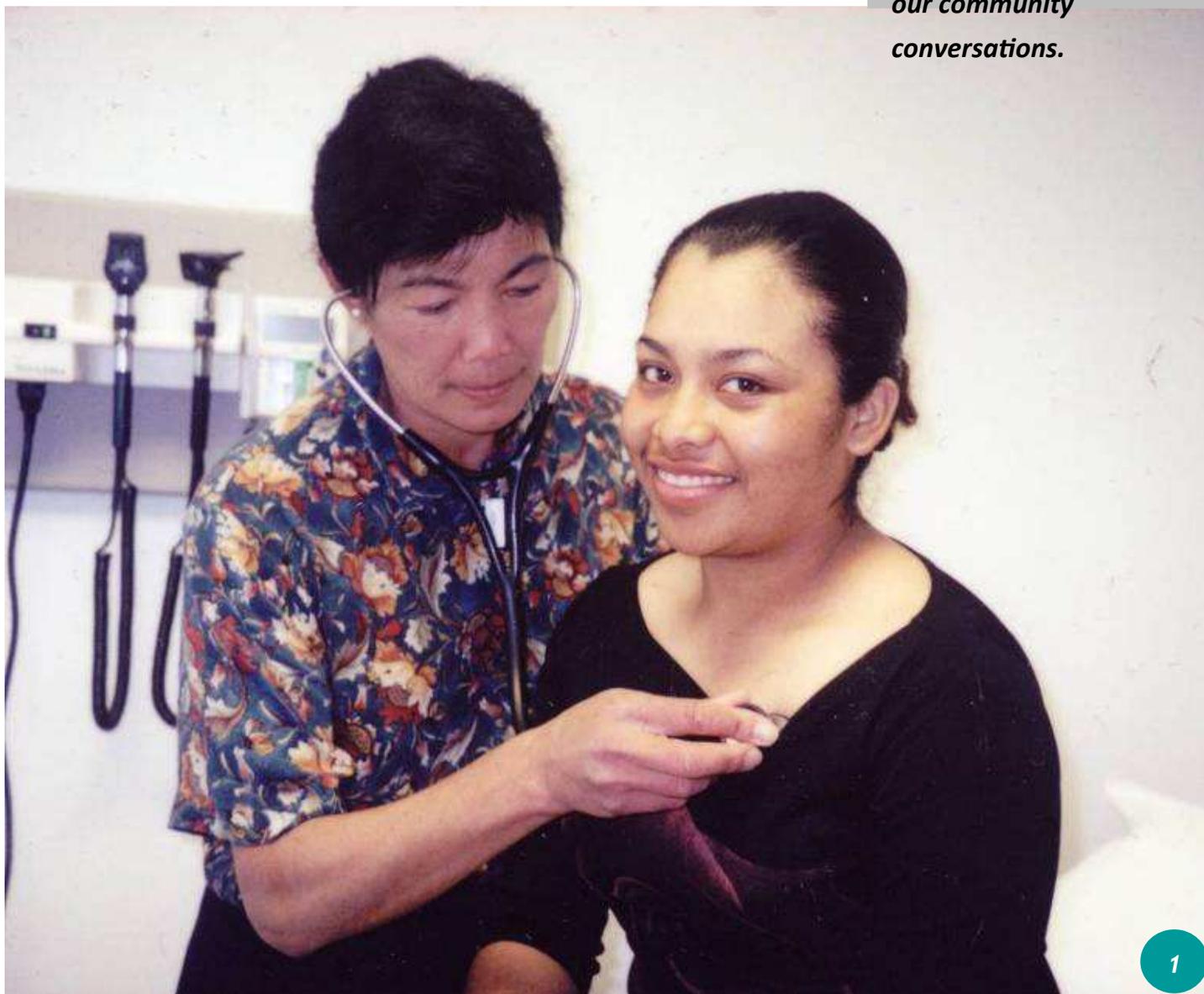


Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Regional Community Meetings were held for 6 months throughout Monterey County to present residents with the strategic planning process, current community health assessment data, and the evident health disparities found among the four Monterey County regions.

Residents of each region were asked to name their most urgent health concerns and talk about the improvements they would like to see. In all, from November 2010 to April 2011, **more than 500 people attended meetings in 21 locations and/or responded to an online survey.**

Community input was used to develop this 2011-2015 Strategic Plan, which is a living document that will be discussed and refined over the years to reflect our community conversations.



North County Region Community Input Results

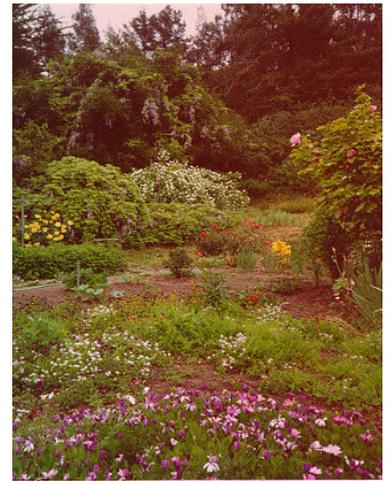
Top Concerns:

Perinatal mortality **Access to health care**
Limited recreation programs **Limited health services**

Strengths: Local Programs... Castroville Com. Center, Migrant parent program
Basic healthcare... Local clinic, Natividad Medical Center
Healthy food... free lunch at Castroville Community Center

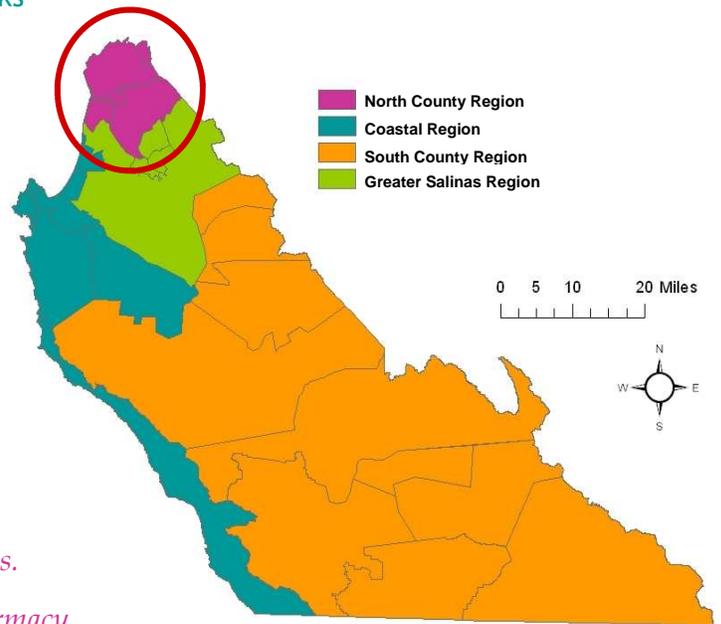
Challenges: Availability of healthcare services... need more appointment times
Access to healthcare... distance to hospital, no local pharmacy
Cost of healthcare... not qualified for Healthy Families
Healthy food... need better school lunches

Solutions: Affordable Healthcare... low cost clinics for pregnant women
Outdoor Activities... more bike paths & parks
Health Education... after school programs



Examples of Comments from Community Meeting Participants:

- *Castroville Senior Center provides food (breakfast and lunch) and has activities.*
- *We are a walking town, so many people can get walking exercise; Can we create walking groups?*
- *We need more after school activities like sports, cooking, art, dancing, drill teams, field days.*
- *We also need a farmers market and cooking healthy classes.*
- *There is no pharmacy in Castroville; We need a local pharmacy.*
- *Dental services (for care and prevention) are inadequate.*
- *Lighting and sidewalk conditions are poor in Castroville; I don't feel safe walking at night.*
- *There are not enough fields, parks, bike trails, and other locations that are free and accessible for sports and recreation.*
- *What are causes of premature death due to perinatal conditions?*
- *I think we need more prevention services because it's too late when they get sick.*
- *Many people here don't qualify for Healthy Families insurance and other programs but they still need services.*
- *Castroville has no WIC center – we have to go to Salinas.*
- *Our library, community center, and Migrant Parent Program are our strengths.*



Coastal Region Community Input Results

Top Concerns:

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|-------------------|-------------------|
| Healthcare access | Childhood asthma |
| Mental health | Childhood obesity |
| Teen births | School bullying |



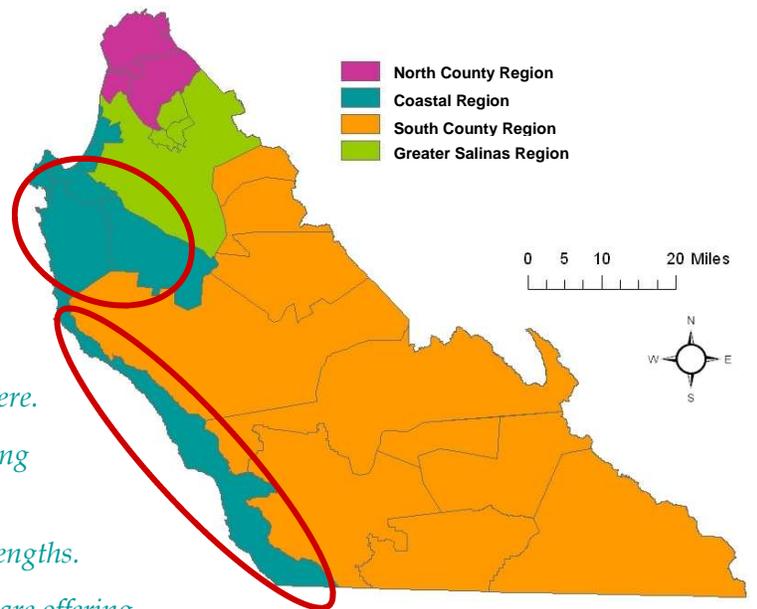
Strengths: Local Programs... YMCA, Grief Busters, Sticks & Stones, school nurses
Outdoor Activities... Sports Center, bike trails, parks

Challenges: Cost of healthcare... insurance programs for middle-income folks
Community safety... unsafe parks, dangerous roads, school zones
Physical Activity... funds for child/teen programs, affordable gyms

Solutions: Safety programs... Neighborhood Watch, after school programs
Empowerment programs... health & nutrition workshops for parents
Healthcare access... elder assistance, school counseling, bus vouchers, incentives for maintaining good health

Examples of Comments from Community Meeting Participants:

- *Our neighborhoods are pretty safe; people in Monterey know their neighbors; We have good police presence and the schools and parks are safe.*
- *We need more parks and recreation activities in Seaside; The parks we have are not safe and there's graffiti everywhere.*
- *Seniors need more access to health care and all types of living assistance.*
- *Libraries, churches, and lots of youth programs are our strengths.*
- *Fewer doctors accept Medi-Cal and Medi-Care, employers are offering less insurance coverage, and many people don't qualify for health services.*
- *Mental health services are lacking, especially for teens & parents, retired people and those who need substance abuse programs; Parents and families need more education for anger management and depression.*
- *More nutrition, and exercise, and healthy living programs are needed in schools and for the public – especially for non-English speaking residents.*
- *More health education and safety programs are needed in the schools, especially about depression, alcohol & drug use, smoking, and safe driving.*
- *Teen pregnancy and access to birth control are important issues.*
- *Free or affordable after school activities of all types are needed for children & youth to keep them safe and healthy.*



South County Region Community Input Results

Top Concerns:

- Teen births
- Diabetes
- Healthcare access
- Obesity
- Injuries
- Drug & alcohol use



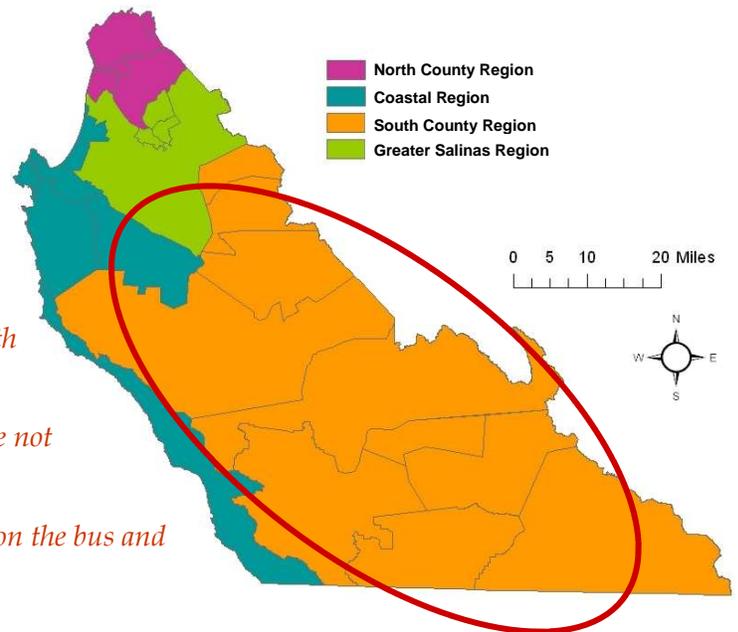
Strengths: Basic healthcare... clinics, hospitals
Outdoor Activities... Little League, parks, swimming pools
Safety Programs... crossing guards, gang task force, fire department

Challenges: Availability of healthcare services... more options are needed
Cost of healthcare... lack of insurance & eligibility
Community safety... poor lighting, dangerous streets

Solutions: Empowerment programs... youth serving programs and activities
Safety Programs... activities that prevent and address violence
Healthcare access... payment plans, free clinics, bus vouchers

Examples of Comments from Community Meeting Participants:

- Our strengths include schools, youth serving organizations, local clinics and hospital.
- Neighbors here watch out for each other.
- There are no services for our youth who are struggling with emotional issues such as depression and drugs.
- The community has grown in numbers, but resources have not grown to match the need.
- Getting to health care is a challenge – it takes a long time on the bus and walking is dangerous.
- We need more health care options in South County.
- Getting medications refilled is challenging. It takes a few weeks to get refills.
- Need translation services in clinics or for doctors.
- Not feeling safe outside because of gang members, don't go outside to play
- There is agricultural run-off into the town of Chualar; children play in those puddles.
- Families lack knowledge to help make healthy choices.
- Joining gangs, dropping out of school, and pregnancy are youth options. Concerned about increased teen birth rate. Need educational support for better jobs and more after-school options for youth.



Greater Salinas Region Community Input Results



Top Concerns:

- Mental health
- Dental care
- Obesity
- Access to health care
- Diabetes
- Violence
- Teen births

Strengths: Basic healthcare... clinics, hospitals
Local Programs... social supports, high school clubs
Outdoor Activities... soccer fields, parks

Challenges: Cost of healthcare... medical, dental, vision
Limited health knowledge... more chronic disease education
Violence and risk behaviors... gangs, shootings, alcohol, drugs

Solutions: Universal coverage, affordable prescriptions, free health screenings
Safety... crossing guards, sobriety checks, Neighborhood Watch
Health education... after school programs, gang prevention

Examples of Comments from Community Meeting Participants:

- We have many strengths, including hospitals, clinics, prevention programs, Healthy Families, parks, gyms, schools, no tolerance at schools for gangs, and 2-1-1.*
- There is great need for mental health services, especially for those without Medi-Cal or other insurance and services in the schools for children. The children are eligible for these services but they aren't offered. The parents have to insist, but many do not know, or do not want to cause problems.*
- There are long wait times for a doctor's appointment – this causes poorer health because you can't get an appointment and then the condition gets worse.*
- Promotores can develop trust with the people. Developing a low income clinic with only \$20 per visit (no matter what the visit for) would help because when Promotores send a person to a clinic and they end up being charged a lot for the visit, the person loses heart and that leads to less trust of the Promotores.*
- As parents we need provide the education of prevention. The schools need to share the information to the parents not only to the children /girls. Education for the parents is basic – the schools need to teach to parents to share the information.*

