

Promoting
HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES

2011-2015
Impact Report



HEALTH
EDUCATION
COUNCIL



Dear Friends,

For the past twenty-five years, the Health Education Council has been committed to promoting health and prioritizing prevention within underserved communities. This period of time has been a dynamic one for the public health community. The sector as a whole has witnessed much change and benefited from a greater understanding of the true drivers of health as well as the complexities of both individual and social change.

We have always known that families wish to be healthy. What we have learned is that lower-income families face barriers to eating healthy, being active, quitting tobacco products and getting preventive health screenings. Intersecting issues such as violence, mental health, housing, and economic stability among other issues, impact the communities we serve and their ability to make healthy choices for themselves and their families.

Driven by these learnings, the Health Education Council has adapted our work and the approaches utilized to reach beyond healthy eating, active living and tobacco control. This report aims to reflect upon and recap the past five years of our work during which time our programming expanded to include safe neighborhoods and violence prevention.

On behalf of the communities we serve, I'd like to extend heart-felt thanks to all of our supporters and partners. Our work would not be possible without the many partners around the table who share our commitment to improving the health of low-income and diverse communities.

Sincerely,

Debra S. Oto-Kent, MPH
FOUNDER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



WHO WE ARE

The chronic diseases associated with tobacco use, poor nutrition and lack of physical activity are the most preventable leading causes of death in this country, yet they plague our low-income and diverse communities. Since 1991, the Health Education Council (HEC) has existed to address the significant gaps and burden of preventable disease among our region's most vulnerable communities.

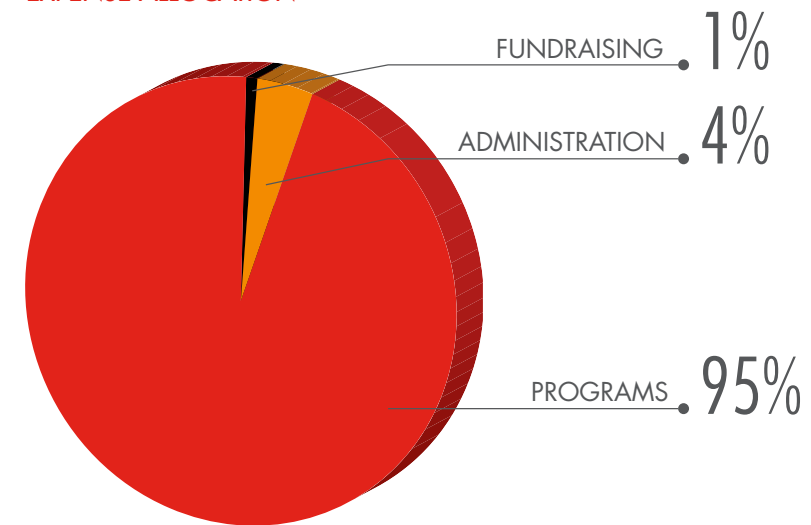
The Health Education Council is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to providing access, education, advocacy, and training to empower individuals towards a healthy life.

At HEC, we have long understood that the majority of health happens outside of the doctor's office and that social, economic and environmental factors shape our ability to make healthy choices for ourselves and our families.

We know that in order to address and ultimately prevent chronic disease, we must go beyond the traditional health paradigm to the foundational determinants of health.

THE NUMBERS 2011-2015

EXPENSE ALLOCATION



REACH



202,886 community members served

“The leadership and staff at the Health Education Council are innovators who are tackling complex, long standing public health issues in our communities. The Health Education Council exemplifies the principals of equity and brings a thoughtfulness to the work that has made meaningful and lasting changes for people living in the Valley Hi community, including increased access to safe walking and biking routes, safe parks, drinking water, and nutritious foods. Most impressively, they have worked to leverage their relationships and resources to holistically address the many components that are needed to sustain a healthy community, such as violence prevention. In the time that I have worked with them I've seen them continuously grow and evolve to deepen their impact and affect positive change for individuals as well as communities.”

— Kathryn Boyle,
Community Benefit Programs,
Northern California Region, Kaiser Permanente



Health Education Council | Promoting Health Where It Happens



WHAT WE DO

HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING

The primary factors in our ability to contribute to or mitigate the risk of obesity and the related chronic diseases are access to nutritious food and the ability to be physically active on a regular basis. With fewer grocery stores, a higher prevalence of junk and fast food outlets and neglected or unsafe public parks and spaces, it's no wonder that our low-income and diverse communities suffer disproportionately from these conditions.

At the Health Education Council, our healthy eating and active living work spans a wide array of approaches from teaching families how to shop and cook on a budget, to supporting community gardens where residents learn to grow their own food, enabling farmers markets to accept CalFresh EBT (formerly known as food stamps), increasing the walkability of low-income neighborhoods, and developing and facilitating in-depth and culturally-relevant nutrition and physical activity education.

Engaging policy makers and key organizations, we have strengthened county development policies by limiting the amount of unhealthy food and increasing the amount and variety of more nutritious food available at retail locations.

We have also supported hundreds of community partners through training, strategic counsel and capacity-building – exponentially increasing our ability to deliver on our mission.

Between 2011 and 2015, HEC invested more than \$5.7 million in healthy eating and active living programs and services in underserved communities throughout Northern California.

HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL 2011-2015 HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING HIGHLIGHTS:

- Decreased consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages by as much as 48% in some communities through healthy beverage education and a grass-roots counter-marketing campaign
- Recruited, trained and empowered community walk leaders resulting in hundreds of residents joining neighborhood walking groups and increasing their weekly physical activity
- Engaged over 7,500 faith leaders and congregants in our suite of healthy food and beverage education classes and trainings which have led to more healthful food and beverage policies at places of worship
- Connected 54,419 residents with culturally-relevant medical, financial, legal and mental health services through our Latino immigrant community outreach

SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

For many low-income families, the concern over safety far outweighs their concern for healthy eating and active living. Mothers keep their children inside away from the nearby parks because they worry about gun violence, gangs and drug-use. Residents fear walking in their communities in the afternoon - a known violent time of day.

In order to truly move the dial toward better health in the communities we serve, the basic needs of safety and security have to be met. In response to the needs of the communities we serve, violence prevention has become a programmatic priority area so that we may fully address healthy eating, active living and tobacco prevention within our communities.

Our safe neighborhood programs provide skills, training and education to youth, families and providers. Our passionate and skilled staff and volunteers teach youth how to navigate and negotiate conflict and handle stressful situations empowering them with skills that will be useful to them both now in an argument at school and later in life on the jobsite.

Our youth-police dialogue efforts bring law enforcement together with youth to have meaningful conversations about preconceived impressions, helping them to build understanding. These interactions help to forge long-lasting, mutually-beneficial and positive relationships. In addition, we are proud to be the convener and facilitator for one of the first and most comprehensive collaborations between law enforcement, public health, schools, city officials and healthcare to make traction on our region's collective safe



MEET PHYLLIS LUSAN

When doctors diagnosed retired teacher, Phyllis Lusan with type-2 diabetes, she was prepared. The condition had plagued her family members for years and Phyllis had already decided that she wasn't interested in committing herself to a life of medication. Almost immediately, she responded to her doctors with the question: "What can I do that is natural?" Their response was to improve her diet and increase her level of physical activity and Phyllis didn't need to hear anything further. A resident of the South Sacramento neighborhood of Valley Hi, Phyllis began walking daily around Valley Hi Park and taking measures to improve her diet. And to this day, Ms. Lusan is medication-free.

"Once I got healthy, I wanted to encourage the community to do the same," said Phyllis.

Phyllis connected with the Health Education Council while on one of her walks around Valley Hi Park. Since 2014, Phyllis has helped to lead HEC's weekly Walk with Friends events at Valley Hi Park. Every Saturday, residents of all ages and ethnicities gather to walk, participate in group exercise and benefit from a free produce distribution.

Since the Walk with Friends program began, there has been a 274% increase in residents' park usage which has led to an increase in neighborhood cohesion, safety and community pride – all of which improve the health of the community and its residents. The Walk with Friends program was awarded a statewide innovation award by the California Health & Human Services Agency's Let's Get Healthy California initiative. HEC currently hosts Walk with Friends programs in five Sacramento-area neighborhoods.

Working with the Health Education Council is extremely rewarding. Their dedication to the mission of building healthy communities and supporting overall wellness stands out in many ways. Whether the project is large, such as implementing policy change or small such as a Jump Rope for Heart or a Smoothie Assembly at a school site, the Health Education Council is always right at your side offering support, logistics, materials and helping hands to change lives through health and wellness. Thank you HEC for all you have done at Twin Rivers.

— Lisa Vorce, R.D., SNS,
Nutritionist,
Twin Rivers USD Nutrition Services

I have found HEC to be instrumental in identifying and engaging local community based organizations, community leaders, law enforcement and school administrators, in a solution based effort to address the problems associated with violence... [HEC's staff members] work tirelessly to serve as liaisons and have demonstrated their willingness to meet, train and organize stakeholders in an effort to address trauma, mental health and violence, all of which challenge the success of our young people.

— Ray Lozada,
Supervising Probation Officer,
Sacramento County Probation Department

I have had the pleasure of working with and observing the Health Education Council for nearly a decade. Their work shows both dedication and passion to improving the health of those who can be considered the least, the last and the lost of society in a way that is both inclusive and thorough.

— Barry Sharp,
MSHP, MACM, MCHES,
Manager, Tobacco Prevention & Control Branch,
Texas Department of State Health Services

TOBACCO CONTROL

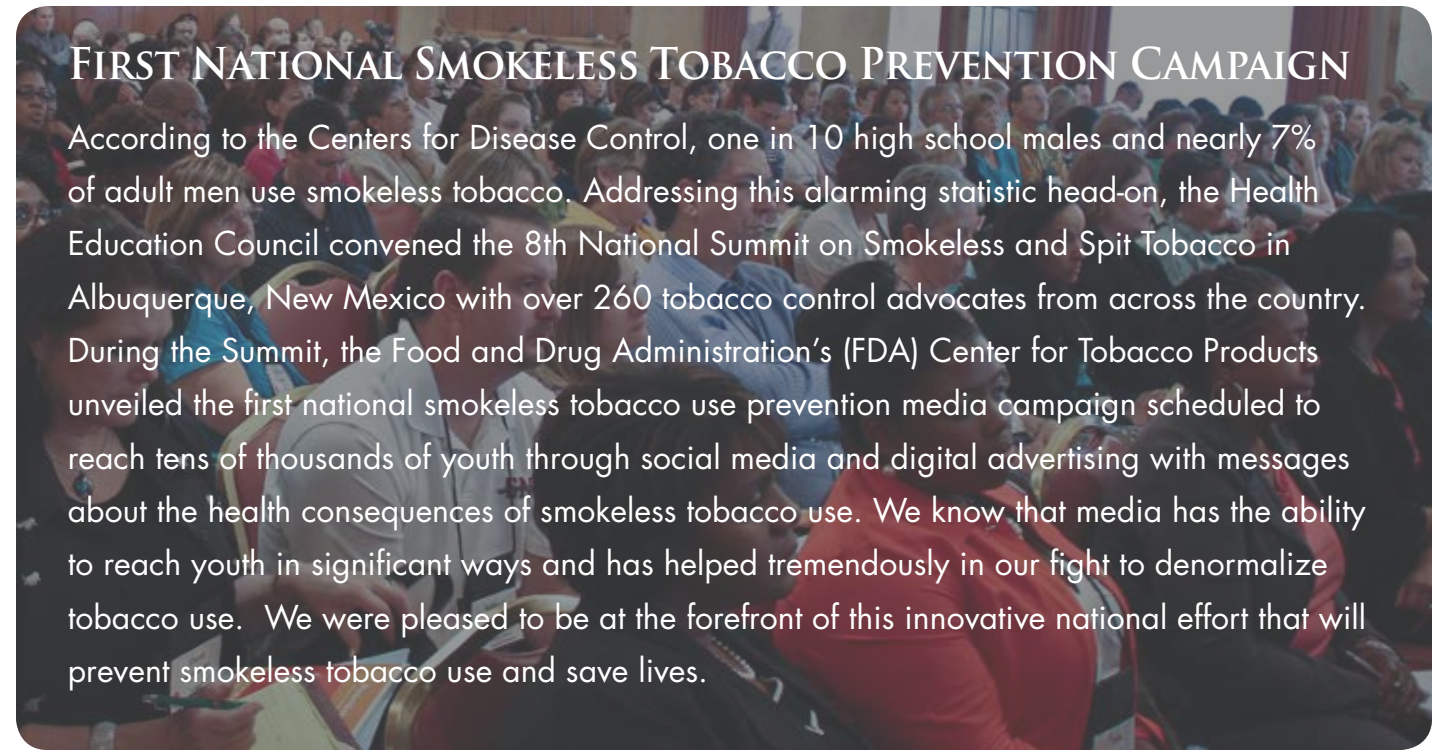
While significant progress has been made to reduce tobacco use during the past 50 years, it continues to be one of the leading causes of death within the United States. We also know that it continues to affect certain populations at disproportionate rates. Tobacco cessation for the homeless, incarcerated and parolees has been regarded by some as a hopeless cause and blue collar and low-income populations continue to have some of the highest tobacco-use rates. And while prevention and cessation programs exist in every state, a considerable amount of the dollars spent are dedicated to preventing and controlling smoking rates leaving smokeless tobacco prevention and control trailing far behind. This is especially evident in the alarming smokeless tobacco-use rates for rural teenage youth.

Between 2011 and 2015, over 25,000 youth have been reached with tobacco-use prevention education.

The Health Education Council's tobacco programs have leveraged our unique ability to educate, organize, align and coalesce those we are serving and our many partners and stakeholders. Through our work, we have created a vast network of stakeholders who are on the front

lines of tobacco prevention for vulnerable populations and for issues often not addressed by mainstream tobacco prevention. We convene and support these stakeholders through conferences, expert panels, publications, training and technical assistance to increase shared knowledge and further prevent tobacco use among these populations.

A key outcome of our work over the past five years has been convening over 850 tobacco control leaders throughout the country at three national conferences. These conferences brought attention to neglected populations such as youth, the homeless, military personnel and the incarcerated and fostered progress and innovation in the field of tobacco control and prevention.



FIRST NATIONAL SMOKELESS TOBACCO PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

According to the Centers for Disease Control, one in 10 high school males and nearly 7% of adult men use smokeless tobacco. Addressing this alarming statistic head-on, the Health Education Council convened the 8th National Summit on Smokeless and Spit Tobacco in Albuquerque, New Mexico with over 260 tobacco control advocates from across the country. During the Summit, the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Center for Tobacco Products unveiled the first national smokeless tobacco use prevention media campaign scheduled to reach tens of thousands of youth through social media and digital advertising with messages about the health consequences of smokeless tobacco use. We know that media has the ability to reach youth in significant ways and has helped tremendously in our fight to denormalize tobacco use. We were pleased to be at the forefront of this innovative national effort that will prevent smokeless tobacco use and save lives.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Twenty-five years ago when the Health Education Council was founded, research told us that the primary driver of health was personal behavior. While we understood the role environment, genetics and adequate health care played in health outcomes, we focused heavily on changing personal behaviors through education and increasing access to resources through collaborative and coalition-based approaches.

What we have learned throughout the years is that our collaborative approach is effective, but that changing an individual's behavior is a matter of addressing the social, environmental and economic factors that shape that individual's daily life.

As we move into the next 25 years, we will focus even more on the intersections of health and the social determinants of health, working across sectors to create integrated approaches. Through the empowerment and support of engaged residents, we have initiated seamless connections between healthcare, education, faith, housing, retail and law enforcement. Moving forward, we will continue to nurture these connections while also expanding upon our family and community mental health efforts and economic vitality efforts.

Looking to the future, we see prevention becoming a priority unlike any other time in our organization's history and we are excited to see the impact we can make together with our partners over the next 25 years.



Passion and knowledge fuel the Health Education Council. When HEC came to Roseville, it got to work improving the health of our residents. By winning a significant grant to invest in the health of several Roseville neighborhoods, HEC has convened neighbors, city leaders, the healthcare sector, and community groups to address challenges and develop effective approaches. The best part is that HEC staff's unique ability to build friendships along with partnerships, makes them one of the most impactful organizations I've worked with.

— Carol Garcia,
Mayor, City of Roseville

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“Health Education Council’s track record of delivering high quality programs to promote healthy communities is unparalleled. As longtime partners, our programs have benefitted in countless ways thanks to the expertise of Health Education Council. Congratulations on 25 years of empowering individuals to live a healthy life!”

— Stephanie Bray

President & CEO, United Way California Capital Region



The Health Education Council is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to providing access, education, advocacy and training to empower individuals towards a healthy life. For more information, please visit www.healtheducouncil.org.

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