

ANNUAL REPORT



2016-2017

**IMPROVING HEALTH OF PROVIDENCE RESIDENTS THROUGH
POLICY | PROMOTION | PREVENTION | ADVOCACY**



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OFFICE

Mayor Jorge O. Elorza | City of Providence

PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING HEALTH IN PROVIDENCE NEIGHBORHOODS



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Mayor Jorge Elorza, Providence City Council Members, Providence Residents, and Providence Partners,

On behalf of the City of Providence's Healthy Communities Office, it is my pleasure to present our Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2017. The Healthy Communities Office serves as the coordinating body in the City of Providence for healthy living policies, activities, and systems and environmental changes to improve public health outcomes for all residents. The Executive Order establishing the office requires that at the end of each fiscal year we issue an annual report on the previous year's work; this report represents a summary of our recent activities and highlights our accomplishments and partnerships.

2017 marks the fifth year since the Healthy Communities Office was established. The past five years have been a growing opportunity as we've build off of the successes of the longstanding Mayor's Substance Abuse Prevention Council. This expansion has allowed us to position the City of Providence as a leader in public health policy, systems, and environmental changes. Providence is recognized locally, regionally, and nationally for our chronic-disease prevention efforts, particularly around tobacco, nutrition, agriculture, and physical activity. We look forward to continuing this work in years to come.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report. Please do not hesitate to contact me at ecynar@providenceri.gov or 401-680-5733 with questions regarding our work or suggestions as to how we can work together for a healthier city.

Regards,

Ellen Cynar, MS, MPH
Director, Healthy Communities Office



TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	MEET THE TEAM
5	HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES
6	SUBSTANCE ABUSE + MENTAL HEALTH
10	HEALTHY EATING + ACTIVE LIVING
13	HEALTH EQUITY
14	HEALTHCARE + SCHOOL WELLNESS
15	HEALTH COMMUNICATIONS + COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

JOIN US AT ONE OF TWO ADVISORY BOARDS:

MAYOR'S SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION COUNCIL (MSAPC)
EST. 1987 | Lead drug and alcohol prevention voice and policy making body for the City of Providence.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ADVISORY COUNCIL
EST. 2013 | Support healthy eating, active living and other public health initiatives for the City of Providence.

By the Numbers

7

GRANTS
4 public + 3 private

8

DONATIONS

1

CITY ACCOUNT

\$1.3

**MILLION Revenue in
FY 2017**



@HEALTHYCOMMUNITIESPVD
@MSAPC.PROVIDENCE



@HEALTHYPVD

MEET THE TEAM!



ELLEN CYNAR, MS, MPH

Director

Since 2013 | ecynar@providenceri.gov | 401-680-5733

Office Leadership, Partnership Development, Fund Development and Staff Coordination • Public Health interests include the translation of health policy at the community level, especially working on food systems and nutrition policy. • Favorite way to be physically active used to be bike touring around the country but now enjoys running after her toddler.

RACHEL NEWMAN GREENE, MA

Deputy Director

Since 2016 | rnewmangreene@providenceri.gov | 401-680-5493

Health Equity Zone, Cities Connecting Children to Nature, Fresh Lo/Sowing Place, Local Agriculture and Seafood Act, and Invest Health • Public Health interests include food access, urban agriculture, health and the built environment. • Favorite ways to be physically active are biking, walking in parks, and gardening.



OBED PAPP, MPA, CPSS

Drug Free Communities Program Director

Since 2011 | opapp@providenceri.gov | 401-680-5505

Mayor's Substance Abuse Prevention Council, RI Substance Abuse Prevention Act, Regional Prevention Task Force, Partnership for Success, and Tobacco Free Parks • Public Health interests include tobacco, alcohol, and substance abuse prevention. • Favorite way to be physically active is running.

AZADE PERIN, MPA, GWS, APS

Program Manager

Since 2013 | aperin@providenceri.gov | 401-680-5490

Tobacco Point of Sales, Health Equity Zone, Partnership for Success, Healthcare, National Recreation and Parks Out of School Time • Public Health interests include food access, healthy lifestyles, and access to opportunity, equality and social justice. • Favorite ways to be physically active are dancing, playing on the playground, swimming and walking.



CHRISTINA HOM, MPH

Fiscal Coordinator

Since 2016 | chom@providenceri.gov | 401-680-5389

Fiscal Management, Health Communications, Invest Health, and Annual Report Development • Public Health interests include obesity in particular sleep as a risk factor, health and the built environment, and health communication of health policies to the community. • Favorite ways to be physically active are swimming, training for a triathlon, and exploring Providence on foot.

DAHIANNA LOPEZ, PhD, MPH, MSN

Mayoral Fellow 2017

Data and Evaluation Manager

Since 2017 | dslopez@providenceri.gov | 401-680-5236

Mayoral Fellow, Invest Health, Tobacco Point of Sales • Public health interests are unintentional injuries, such as those sustained from transportation collisions and poisonings. This includes bicycle/pedestrian injuries and opioid overdoses. • Favorite ways to be physically active are walking, dancing, and drumming.



HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES + SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL

Building Healthy Communities Using Health in All Policies

Health in All Policies is a collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by incorporating health considerations into decision-making across sectors and

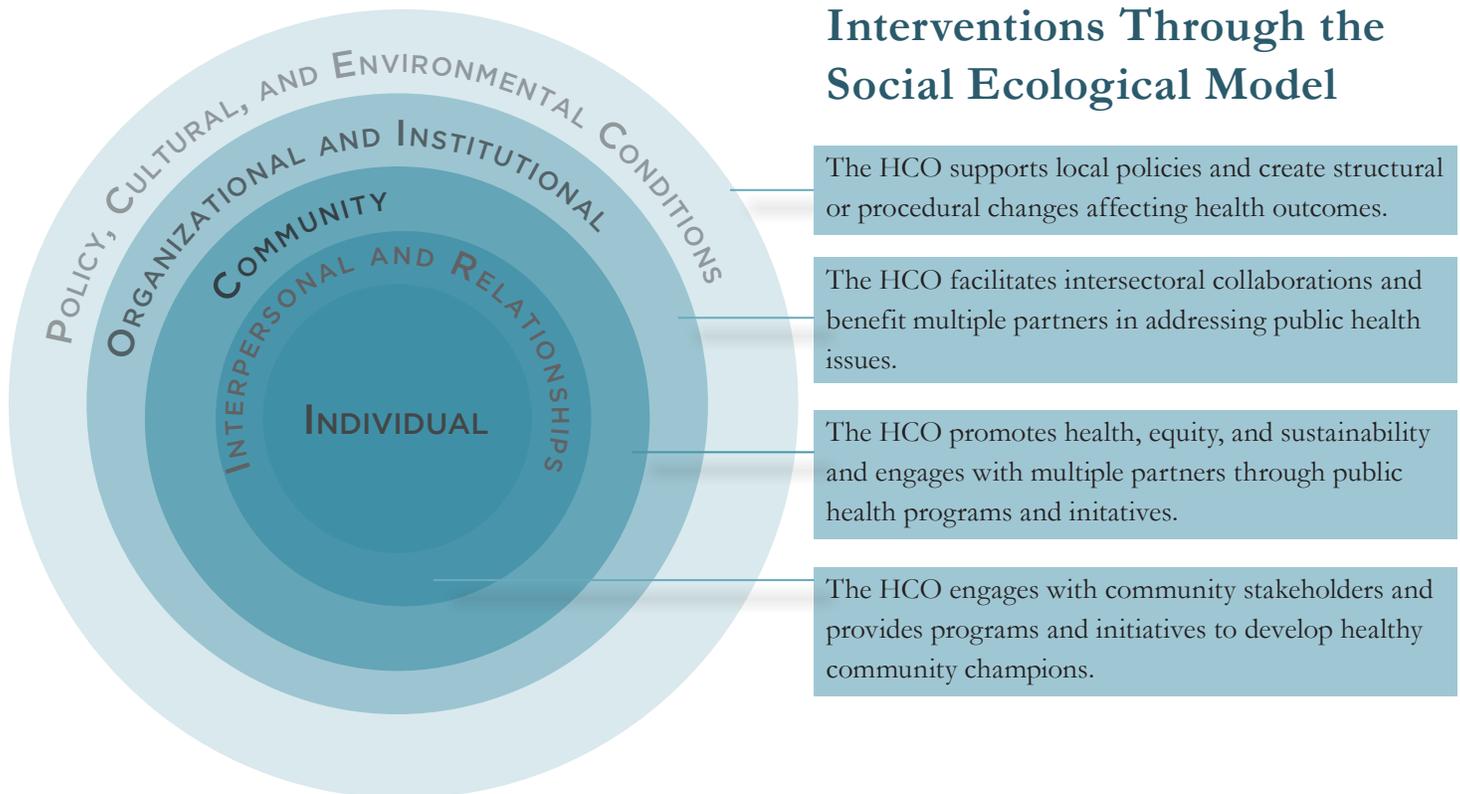
policy areas. The HCO uses this framework to address the social determinants of health, key drivers of health outcomes and health inequities. Through all stages of life, a Healthy Community provides for: quality and sustainability of environment, economic and social development, health and social equity, supportive and respectful social relationships and the basic needs of all.

The Five Key Elements of Health in All Policies



Rudolph, L., Caplan, J., Ben-Moshe, K., & Dillon, L. (2013). Health in All Policies: A Guide for State and Local Governments. Washington, DC and Oakland, CA: American Public Health Association and Public Health Institute.

Developing Public Health Interventions Through the Social Ecological Model



SUBSTANCE ABUSE + MENTAL HEALTH



Prescription Drug Take Back Day is nationally recognized twice a year; the last Saturday in April and October.

“PROVIDENCE WILL JOIN A VAST COALITION OF COMMUNITIES TO PROVIDE RESIDENTS A WAY TO SAFELY DISCARD THESE DRUGS. I ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO VISIT THEIR NEAREST TAKE-BACK SITE.”

**- MAYOR JORGE O. ELORZA
OCTOBER 2016**

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS + THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Identifying Providence’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Priorities

The Healthy Communities Office (HCO) serves as one of the State of Rhode Island’s seven regional substance abuse prevention coalitions. In FY17, the HCO was awarded funds from the RI Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) to conduct a citywide substance abuse and mental health needs assessment. The HCO completed a strategic planning process to:

- Identify priority risk and protective factors for the City’s residents
- Guide implementation of evidence-based policies, programs and practices, starting in 2018

Responding to the Overdose Epidemic

The HCO works to address the overdose epidemic by removing dangerous and often abused prescriptions from our community. The HCO held two of the most successful take-back events in September 2016 and August 2017, in partnership with the Drug Enforcement Agency and Providence Walgreens. The events included resource fairs supported by 30 community partners providing information about prescription drug abuse prevention. The HCO continues year-round promotion of the MedReturn Bin at the Providence Public Safety Complex, where Providence residents may anonymously drop off unused and expired medicines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.





SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Connecting with Parents about Alcohol and Drug Use

The HCO provides Mothers Against Drunk Driving’s Power of Parents program to parents and parent groups around the city. These one hour presentations, in English or Spanish, support and encourage parents to talk to their children about alcohol and drug use. The program is funded by the RI Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals. In FY18, the HCO:

- Presented Power of Parents to 372 Providence parents at 18 schools, libraries, faith organizations and community groups
- Reached 10,000 Spanish-speaking parents through a 30-minute Power of Parents radio curriculum aired on Latina 110.3 FM, Poder 1110 AM, and Radio Renacer.
- Created six alcohol abuse prevention public service announcements that aired on 3 Spanish-language radio stations between July and September 2016

Helping Youth Take Power over Social Influences

The HCO delivers Above the Influence (ATI), a national curriculum that teaches youth to recognize and face the influences around them, including the pressure to abuse drugs and alcohol. Current research shows that students exposed to ATI have stronger anti-drug beliefs and a predicted reduction in marijuana use. In FY18, the HCO reached 4,594 youth through ATI group presentations, posters and visuals, and by supporting school events, including Red Ribbon Week and Alcohol Awareness Month at Alvarez High School.

Teaching Social/Emotional Skills

The HCO provided funding and other support to the Providence Children and Youth Cabinet to deliver the Positive Action program to 1,239 students in 81 classrooms across Providence four middle schools. This evidence-based program is proven to increase academic achievement and reduce violent behaviors by increasing students’ sense of self-worth by creating opportunities for positive reinforcement.

Educating School Communities About Substance Abuse Prevention

The HCO organized two school assemblies to engage students in creating a drug-free school community. The assemblies, supported by the Mayor's Substance Abuse Prevention Council, featured guest speakers including Davis Neil from the US Attorney's Office and Providence Police Department's law enforcement officers. More than 800 students participated in the assemblies at Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School and Nathan Greene Middle School.

Reaching Out to the Providence Community

The HCO connected more than 5,000 Providence residents with information

about preventing substance abuse among adults and youth through 30 health fairs and other community events. Events included: Rally 4 Recovery, Back to School Celebration, Smith Hill Block Party, PHA Hartford Park Wellness Fair, Healthy Neighborhood Celebrations, Clinica Esperanza Health Fair, PHA Coddling Court Health Fair, Southside Elementary Family Wellness Night, Binational Health Week, and Latino Conference: Temas Familiares.

Helping Seniors Live Healthy Lives

The HCO delivered the Senior Health and Wellness Program to more than 1,000 clients of senior high-rise housing and senior centers, including engaging fitness programming and discussions about tobacco use and prescription drug misuse. This program was implemented in partnership with the City's Senior Services

Department, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island and Walgreens.

Promoting Tobacco-Free Parks

The HCO conducted community education activities about the City ordinance prohibiting the sale or use of tobacco products in all City-owned parks, playgrounds, and Recreation Centers. Activities included:

- Engaging youth to educate more than 1,000 residents in more than 30 parks about the Tobacco Free Parks Ordinance
- Distributing 2,000 postcards about the ordinance and the dangers of secondhand smoke at community events
- Placing 100 information signs and 500 stickers in and around City parks

OUTREACH + COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Mayor Elorza at Rally4Recovery, September 2016



ALCOHOL + TOBACCO VENDOR EDUCATION + COMPLIANCE



City of Providence Healthy Communities Office and Providence Police Department enforcement officers lead discussion about the strategies presented in the Tobacco Point of Sale Toolkit

Connecting with Vendors about Alcohol and Tobacco Ordinances

In FY17, the HCO supported compliance with federal, state and local alcohol regulations by:

- Delivering multiple educational mailings and in-store education for vendors
- Coordinating compliance checks, including 163 times for tobacco and 46 times for alcohol
- Partnering with the Providence Police Department to implement the 2017 Alcohol Purchase Survey

Educating Partners about Tobacco Control

In FY17, the HCO developed the Tobacco Point of Sale Toolkit to educate community partners about City strategies and processes to limit tobacco sale, display and advertising in the retail environment. This Toolkit supports the City's progress in tobacco prevention policy implementation, including the municipal licensing requirement, bans on sale of flavored tobacco single/"loosie" cigarettes, and price reductions.

HEALTHY EATING + ACTIVE LIVING

Connecting Providence Public Schools with Healthy, Local Food

In June 2017, the HCO and representatives from Mount Pleasant High School, Spaziano Elementary School, Providence Parks Department and Farm Fresh Rhode Island were honored to be the first-ever Rhode Island representatives at the Northeast Farm to School Institute in Shelburne Vermont. Partners developed pilot strategies to increase school gardens, and food education and local foods in school meals and a draft values statement to guide the development of a district-wide Farm-to-School strategy in 2018.



Building Community Through Food, Art, Health and Economy

The HCO offers administrative and fiduciary support and local food systems knowledge to the Department of Art, Culture + Tourism's "Sowing Place" initiative, funded by the Kresge Foundation's FreshLo grant. This initiative is building community in Providence's South Side and West End through food, arts and economic development. Local artists Laura Brown-Lavoie and Vatic Kuumba facilitated the planning process through AC+T's commitment to train and employ local artists as arts facilitators. Partners include South Side Cultural Center of Rhode Island, West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation and African Alliance of Rhode Island.

Expanding Child Nutrition Programs

The HCO continued to support the City's summer meals program. Over summer 2016, the City of Providence Parks Department administered free meal service for Providence children at 83 sites. These sites served 145,124 meals including 41,776 breakfasts and 103,348 lunches. An average of 2,845 meals were served each day for 51 days.



In 2016-2017, the HCO oversaw the expansion of the CACFP Afterschool Meals Program to all 10 City of Providence Recreation Centers, in addition to after-school meal service throughout the City at numerous Providence After School (PASA) sites. These sites served 89,575 free after school meals to Providence youth during the school year.

Increasing Equity in Access to Nature

In 2016-17, the HCO and partners created the Providence Cities Connecting Children to Nature Implementation Plan, funded by the National League of Cities and the Children & Nature Network, to more equitably connect Providence children with opportunities for interaction with the natural world. Implementation of the Plan began in October. The Plan includes:

- Seeding outdoor leadership programs in high schools throughout the city (Youth in Action)
- Developing new models for youth stewardship of City parks (The Partnership for Providence Parks)

- Training Providence Public Schools teachers to accessing nearby nature with their students (Providence Parks Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership)
- Improving natural play spaces in the City's parks (Providence Parks Department)
- Providing resources to help local youth leaders bring young people outside (Appalachian Mountain Club Youth Opportunity Program).

These programs will continue into 2017-18. In the coming year, the HCO is partnering with Providence Public Schools to develop a district-wide Green Schoolyards strategy that brings opportunities for outdoor learning, recreation, exploration, gardening and other nature interactions to school grounds.



Jewish Community Center, Valley Senior Center and St. Martin De Porres Center

These classes were made possible by Rhode Island Department of Health through the City of Providence Health Equity Zone.

delivery of summer meals, ensuring that thousands of children had access to healthy foods, physical activity and creative play throughout the summer. PlayCorps was funded in part by Rhode Island Department of Health through the City of Providence Health Equity Zone.

Summer 2016 Sites:

- Bucklin Park (West End)
- Cabral Park (Fox Point)
- Father Lennon Park (Smith Hill)
- General Street Park (Wanskuck)
- Harriet and Sayles Park (Lower South Providence)
- Joslin Park (Olneyville)
- Wallace Park (Silver Lake)

Improving Adult Fitness

In Fall 2016 through Spring 2017, the HCO provided free adult fitness classes to more than 100 City residents. Classes included:

- Aerobic Exercise at John Rollins Recreation Center
- Zumba at Joslin Recreation Center
- Senior Fitness classes at the

Bringing Free Play to Providence Parks

The HCO supported the third year of PlayCorps, the City's innovative free play program for children in seven parks throughout the city. In July and August, PlayCorps served more than three hundred children a day, engaging nearly 3,000 children in July alone. PlayCorps supported the



Supporting Urban Agriculture

In Summer and Fall 2016, the HCO facilitated the creation of the Charles Street Farm, ½ acre dedicated to food production in the Charles neighborhood. This is one of the three largest urban farms in Providence, and is managed by Southside Community Land Trust. The 20 lots are targeted for use by neighbors and educators from the nearby Esek Hopkins Middle School.

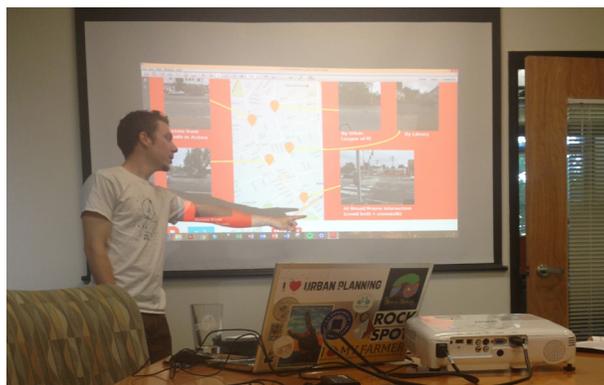
The HCO completed and distributed “Starting a Farmstand: A Guide for Providence Growers” to assist Providence growers in selling their products on-site. This tri-fold brochure clearly lays out the steps, regulations and state and local agencies growers need to know to operate a farmstand in the city. The Guide, available in English, French, Spanish and Hmong, is hosted on the HCO web page.

HEALTH IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Investing in Active Transportation in South Providence

Providence is one of 50 mid-sized cities chosen for Invest Health, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Reinvestment Fund - funded planning process to improve health by improving the built environment. Through this process, the HCO targets improving the active transportation environment in South Providence. In 2016-17, the HCO partnered with the Department of Planning and Development and Recycle-A-Bike to conduct a three-day pedestrian and bicyclist count on Broad Street and Prairie Avenue, to better understand how South Side residents get around by bike and foot. The HCO will conduct additional built environment assessments through the Bicycle and Pedestrian Environment Quality Index surveys. In 2018, the HCO will engage local youth in gathering resident perspectives. This input will inform the creation of City Walk, an improved walking, biking and cultural corridor through the South Side.

Partners include Lifespan Community Health Institute, Brown School of Public Health, Rhode Island Department of Health, and ONE Neighborhood Builders.



Greg Sankey of Recycle A Bike trains counters for a three-day pedestrian and bicyclists count on Broad Street and Prairie Avenue.



Two counters share a shift of counting of pedestrian and bicyclists on Prairie Avenue.

As the backbone agency of the City of Providence Health Equity Zone (HEZ), the HCO coordinates partners in delivering diverse programs to increase health equity throughout the city. In FY17, programs supported through the HEZ included:

- Engagement of a Resident Farmer to engage neighbors in growing and learning about healthy foods at City parks
- Bicycle education and safety programs delivered by Recycle-A-Bike at City schools and recreation centers
- Peer-led health education provided by Youth in Action at City recreation centers



- Youth employment and green infrastructure improvements through the Groundwork Providence Green Team
- Outreach and promotion of farmers' markets and of incentives for low-income shoppers, conducted by Farm Fresh Rhode Island
- Staff training, certification and delivery of the Diabetes Prevention Program at Lifespan Community Health Institute
- Training community members in nonviolence strategies, conducted by the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence
- The Partnership for Providence Parks' implementation of PlayCorps in seven City parks
- Development of designs for healthier school and park playspaces
- Increasing capacity of Parks and Recreation staff through trainings in CPR, Playground Safety, First Aid and other topics
- Providing free adult fitness classes in diverse locations
- Providing Providence residents with Community Health Worker trainings through Community Health Innovations of Rhode Island
- Developing a Healthy Eating Policy for the City's Recreation Centers

Celebrating Community Health

In FY17, the HCO coordinated 10 Healthy Neighborhood Celebrations to support the HEZ work and highlight City Recreation Centers as hubs of health and wellness. The HCO and 22 partners offered free resources including glucose tests, food preparation demonstrations, physical activity opportunities, safety information and more.



Nancy Perez, Azade Perin, Miriam Garcia, and Raisa Burgos table at a Providence Recreation Center.

HEALTHCARE

Connecting Hard-to-Reach Populations with Healthcare

The HCO expanded access to healthcare for Providence children and families through outreach, trainings and direct enrollment services. In FY17, the Office identified a gap in healthcare enrollment services to families identifying as Aboriginal Americans in Providence and across Rhode Island. The HCO worked diligently in partnership with the Department of Human Services to facilitate information, revise policy, and to establish a protocol to increase equity in access to these services. The HCO provided direct enrollment services to members of this community and trained communities across the state to enroll members and build community capacity. Thanks to these joint efforts, Rhode Island became one of the first states to address inequity in health care access enrollment among people identifying as Aboriginal Americans. In addition to providing support to the community in Rhode Island, we provided technical assistance to communities in Massachusetts and Connecticut, creating a model for inclusiveness and fostering communication among state and federal agencies.

This work was funded by a multi-year grant from the National League of Cities to expand healthcare access among families and children.



Chiefs of local tribes partner with local and state officials to revise policies to access services provided by Department of Human Services.



SCHOOL WELLNESS

Supporting Wellness Policy and Implementation

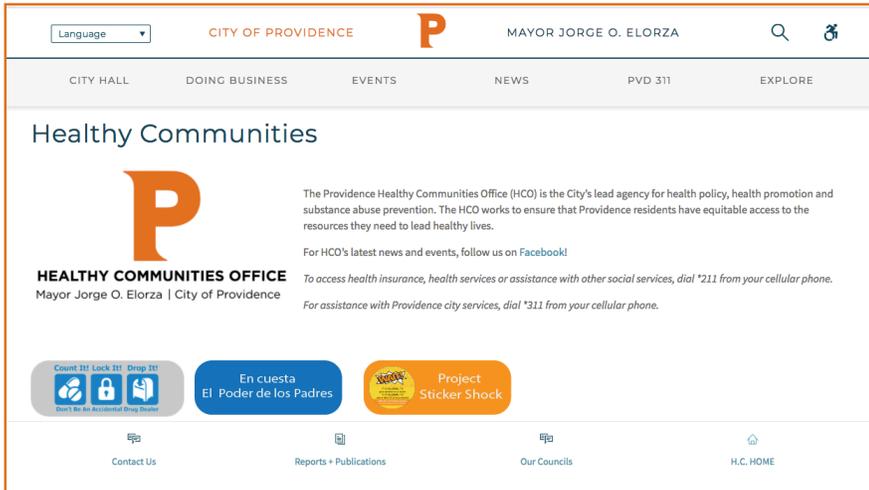
The HCO supports Providence Public Schools in developing and implementing the PPSD School Wellness Policy. This federally- and state-mandated policy helps ensure an equitable and healthy school environment for all students. In FY17, the HCO:

- Assisted the School Wellness Coordinator in aligning Providence's policy with new federal regulations. The amended Policy was approved in August 2017
- Contributed public health and City government perspectives to physical health, social/emotional health and healthy relationship subcommittees

Creating Opportunities for Healthy, Positive Behaviors

The HCO provides funding to Providence Public Schools to deliver expanded middle school sports programming. 1,515 middle school athletes participated in out of school time intramural sports, an increase of about 200 participants from FY16. Offerings included basketball, indoor track, soccer, cross country and for the first time, wrestling. Seven middle schools and 49 coaches organized 52 teams to provide 651 hours of intramural sports. Healthy activities such as this support substance abuse prevention efforts by creating opportunities for healthy afterschool opportunities.

HEALTH COMMUNICATION



Facebook

FY 2017 ended with 547 followers. HCO gained 138 new followers. Total reach (the number of people who were served any activity from your Page including your posts, posts to your Page by other people, Page like ads, mentions and checkins) was 68K.

Twitter

The HCO's Twitter account was reactivated in January 2017. In six months, there have been 192 tweets, 85.1K tweet impressions, 3.1K profile visits, and 87 new followers.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS + ENGAGEMENTS

In addition to the strong relationships with other City of Providence departments, in FY17 the Healthy Communities Office staff partnered, engaged, and/or participated with a variety of community-based organizations, groups, and individuals including:

- Acontecer Latino
- Blue Cross Blue Shields of Rhode Island
- Brown University School of Public Health
- Codac Behavioral Healthcare
- Community Action Partnership for Providence
- Community Health Innovations of Rhode Island
- Diocese of Providence
- Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island
- Economic Progress Institute
- El Guatemalteco
- Family Services of Rhode Island
- Farm Fresh Rhode Island
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Genesis Center
- Groundwork Rhode Island
- Guatemala Consulate
- Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence
- Kids Count Rhode Island
- Latina 100.3
- Lifespan Community Health Institute
- The Miriam Hospital
- National League of Cities
- National Recreation and Parks Association
- Neighborhood Health Plan of RI
- Partnership for Providence Parks
- Power Support Network
- Poder 1110 AM
- Preventing Overdose Naloxone Intervention (PONI) at The Miriam Hospital
- Providence Communities Health Centers
- Providence Community Libraries
- Providence Schools Wellness Committee
- Rally 4 Recovery
- Recycle A Bike
- Refugee Dream Center
- Rhode Island Attorney's Office
- Rhode Island College
- Rhode Island Community Food Bank
- Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals
- Rhode Island Department of Health
- Rhode Island Department of Human Services
- Rhode Island Health Care Association
- Rhode Island Parent Information Network
- Sodexo
- Tobacco Free Rhode Island
- University of RI SNAP Education
- Walgreens
- West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation
- Youth in Action
- *And more!*



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