

ANNUAL REPORT

2014-2015



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Healthy Communities Office
Jorge O. Elorza Mayor | City of Providence

October 2015

Dear Mayor Jorge Elorza, Providence City Council members, Providence Residents and Community Partners,

It is my pleasure to present the Third Healthy Communities Office Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2015. Our office is determined to bring effective change in the places where people live, work, learn, and play, by partnering with many organizations within and outside of city government. We are driven by Mayor Elorza's conviction that Providence all residents and youth deserve opportunities for physical activity, access to nutritional food, smoke-free and drug free surroundings, and programs that support positive social norms.

The executive order establishing the Healthy Communities Office requires that at the end of each fiscal year the office issue an annual report on the previous year's work. As we look back on our work, we serving all Providence residents through policy, environmental, programmatic, and infrastructural change.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 401.680.5753 or pasen@providenceri.com with questions regarding our work or suggestions as to how we can work together for a healthier city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Asen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Asen, Director

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Lots of Hope Urban Agriculture Initiative



Lots of Hope Urban Agriculture Initiative

The Healthy Communities Office has continued in the past year to advance the Lots of Hope urban agriculture initiative, which transforms unused city property into productive urban farms for use by limited resource and socially disadvantaged urban farmers. Lots of Hope seeks to improve access to locally grown produce in Providence markets, expand the City's portfolio of green space, and contribute to improvements in air quality, public health, and local property values.

In 2014, the City of Providence was awarded \$110,000 from the RI Foundation and Partners for Places to build a Lots of Hope Urban Greenhouse at 433 Prairie Avenue. The greenhouse was designed to provide urban gardeners with season extension technology and offer nearby schools a space for farm-to-school activities. In 2015, the greenhouse property build-out was completed and includes a passive solar greenhouse with a multipurpose side shed to be used as a work station/farm stand; raised beds for use by market growers, and raised beds designated for use by students at Bailey and Fogarty Elementary schools. The greenhouse property will be used by Groundwork Providence youth green teams and African Alliance of RI market growers.





City of Providence- Health Equity Zone Grant

In April 2015, the Healthy Communities Office received a \$368,000 Health Equity Zone (HEZ) grant from the RI Department of Health to address changes to programming and the built environment in and around the City's nine recreation centers. We are now working to implement the grant in collaboration with various City departments and includes significant collaboration with community-based agencies through the City to support assessment, community engagement, and programming. The long-term goal of this proposal is to improve Providence residents' health behaviors and



overall health status and to reduce the rates of death and disability due to tobacco use, obesity, climate change, and chronic disease (diabetes, heart disease, stroke).



Providence PlayCorps

While Year One HEZ activities have focused predominately on assessments to inform subsequent work, some interventions are underway to advance the goals of the grant. For example, the HEZ grant has helped to expand the Providence PlayCorps program from five locations in 2014 to eight sites in 2015. PlayCorps is an innovative collaboration between the Healthy Communities Office, Partnership for Providence Parks, Parks and Recreation, and Providence Children's Museum with funding from the RI Department of Health and Blue Cross Blue Shield of RI. PlayCorps activates Providence parks with free play, art, creative exploration and a nutritious meal through the federal summer meal program. In 2014, PlayCorps parks increased summer meal participation by 104%. Providence PlayCorps has received national attention. It was recently highlighted in the National Recreation and Parks Association's 50th anniversary publication in an article about the importance of free play.

Substance Abuse Prevention



The Mayor's Substance Abuse Prevention Council (MSAPC) has a mission to protect youth and prevent harmful alcohol, tobacco and drug use by: implementing evidenced-based programs, building awareness, providing effective education, supporting comprehensive environmental strategies, promoting the health and wellness of individuals and communities. The Council is determined to bring drug awareness and prevention to all students and families in Providence.

OUTREACH

The Mayor's Substance Abuse Prevention Council (MSAPC) held substance abuse education sessions, provided information on alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, and other drugs at a number of local schools, parks, churches, and other community settings. We reached more than 1,500 residents through this work. Presentation sites in FY2015 included Providence Career and Technical Academy, Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School, Nowell Academy, Mary Fogarty Elementary School, Nathanael Greene Middle School, Gilbert Stewart Middle School, and Times 2 Academy.

In May, the Council held a community wide forum on the impact of marijuana on youth in our community. HCO staff coordinated the event with The Ocean State Prevention Alliance (OSPA), Praise Tabernacle Church, and the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals. In another event, MSAPC partnered with RICares and Unified Solutions to bring together community members and experts, including RI Department of Health Director Dr. Nicole Alexander-Scott to discuss the latest trends in overdose prevention, and what community members can do to reduce the scourge of drug overdose deaths.

The MSAPC held Prescription Drug Take Back Day in partnership with the DEA in Providence in September 2014, again having one of the most successful take back events throughout the state.





Tobacco Prevention

Tobacco Free Parks:

A new City Ordinance went into effect March 11, 2015 prohibiting the sale or use of tobacco products in all parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers owned by the City of Providence. This ordinance makes all Providence owned parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers completely tobacco-free. (Providence ordinance 18-22; Enacted December 11, 2014).

The City of Providence is a Leader in making Healthy Tobacco Free Communities by:

Enforcing underage tobacco sales laws and a ban on loose cigarette sales locally

Enforcing a ban on the redemption of coupons and two-for-one deals and other sales practices that make purchasing less expensive

Educating vendors on and enforcing the ban on the sale of flavored tobacco products which appeal most to young and beginning smokers

Establishing tobacco-free schools, public housing, parks, and other public environments and informing the public about these changes to create a social norm that supports tobacco free policies

Supporting tobacco cessation programs and access to nicotine replacement therapy for Providence residents



Total	Resources and Support
100	City Parks newly Tobacco Free this year
500	Signs and banners placed around City
2,000	Post cards distributed to park users
20	Smoking Cessation Classes coordinated

Food Access: Summer Food Service (SFSP)



Summer Meals and Afterschool Meals Programs

The Federal Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is an extension of the National School Lunch Program when school is out of session. It is managed by the Providence Parks Department and served Monday – Friday. There is no enrollment necessary; all youth 18 and under in Providence are eligible.

The Healthy Communities Office worked with Parks and Recreation and other partners to expand participation in the program across the city, including a collective marketing and education campaign, as well as recruiting new partner organizations to become enrolled summer meals sites. We also added new open meal sites, like a first of its kind partnership with the RI Department of Human Services to serve meals to kids

City of Providence 2013 and 2014 Site Specific Results

Summer Meals Year	2013	2014
Open site lunches served	31,896	54,606 (+71%)
Meals Served at Department of Human Services	N/A	2,352* *4 th highest open site
Total Meals Served	125,984	163,665 (+29%)



City of Providence– CACFP 2014-2015

Number of Children Served	1156
# Suppers Served	42,990
# Snacks Served	96,127
# of Operating Days	140

CACFP 2014-2015

Thanks to the support of PASA (Providence After School Alliance), and Sodexo, The City of Providence was able to expand CACFP to two local High Schools- Juanita Sanchez and Hope High School. Both high schools' programs reported that youth were more receptive and engaged in afterschool activities after the supper meal was served. Currently we have 8 CACFP Programs in Providence and have additional efforts to expand planned.



Access to Health Care

Cities Expanding Health Coverage for Children and Families Campaign

Since July 2014, the HCO has been working with support from the National League of Cities to implement a plan aimed at reducing the number of uninsured children by more than 1,000 by increasing enrollment in Rite Care, the state's Medicaid/CHIP program for children and families. (This followed a six month planning process for the initiative that began in late 2013).

Our four key strategies have included community outreach; connecting with families and staff through the Providence schools; educating youth directly through presentations and activities; and supporting statewide health coverage advocacy and collaboration of enrollment resources. Grassroots organizing and community outreach-gave us the opportunity to educate our stakeholders and establish trust with the community.

We built "Healthy Ambassadors" by creating

NUMBER OF RESIDENTS DIRECTLY ENROLLED IN COVERAGE in FY15

838

Supported efforts to help more than

40,000

residents complete a one-

Our Reach

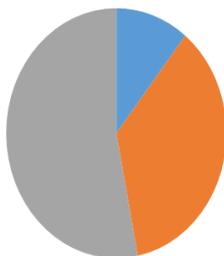
Disseminated 205,300 promotional & educational materials

Over 350,000 reached

80,000 E-news letters

15,000 Student reached and counting

HCO Direct Enrollment



- 90 Renewals 11%
- 302 New Adult RITE Care 36%
- 446 New Children/Youth RITe Care 53.23%

Our Strategies	Our Efforts
School Based Outreach	Organized 37 enrollment events
Community Outreach	Provided 22 Presentations
	Participated in 96 community outreach events
Youth Outreach	Conducted 30 youth outreach presentations
Advocacy	Partnered in 9 Advocacy round tables and initiatives

Fitness Programs



Summer 2015 marks the third annual Fitness in the Parks (FITP) program.

The FITP program provides free or low-cost fitness classes across the City of Providence during the summer. Classes range from Yoga to Hybrid Strength and Conditioning and are provided by fitness studios and community organizations. Fitness in the Parks is a collaborative effort between the City of Providence's Healthy Communities Office and Department of Parks & Recreation, the Partnership for Providence Parks, and the YMCA of Greater Providence to bring relevant fitness and nutrition activities into Providence's community parks. The Summer



Zumba Classes/In the Park

There were 9 different Zumba classes in throughout 2014-2015 year at various locations in the community. More than 800 people participated in Zumba at the



Mayor Jorge O. Elorza Run, Jog, or Walk

The Mayor of Providence invites the community to join him every Sunday for a Run, Jog, or Walk at the Roger Williams Park and Museum of Natural History. We have worked with the Mayor and prominent local runners and fitness organizations



Healthy Communities

In the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the Healthy Communities Office had the opportunity to join a special pilot project to collect and analyze data regarding social determinants of health and disparities in these social determinants across the city's 25 neighborhoods.

The **Healthy Communities Assessment Tool (HCAT)** provides a cumulative ranking of each neighborhood in Providence based on the **Healthy Community Index (HCI)** core indicators of 37 social, economic, and physical factors important to community health. By examining these factors, we can learn how specific neighborhoods perform compared to other neighborhoods. This allows the City to understand what, geographical disparities exist in Providence on any number of specific demographic or contextual factors, or in any of the primary domains: Economic Health; Educational Opportunities; Employment Opportunities; Environmental Hazards; Health Systems and Public Safety; Housing; Natural Areas; Neighborhood Characteristics; Social Cohesion; and Transportation.

The tool is still in development phase and is being piloted in Providence along with Albuquerque, NM; Minneapolis, MN; and San Diego, CA, through a contract led by Healthy Housing Solutions and funded by HUD's office of Healthy Housing and Lead Hazard Control. Currently, Providence has collected values for 31 of the 37 indicators.

The overall picture of how each neighborhood fares in terms of social determinants of health is incomplete, but within those indicators we have collected, data shows very clear disparities that future investments and strategies for the city can address.

might strengthen the index to get a better picture of city determinants of health that can be continually updated to monitor our progress over time.



Healthy Communities Supporters

Healthy Communities Office Staff

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- Azade Perin, MPA, GWS— Program Manager (aperin@providenceri.com, 401.680.5490)

2014-2015 Consultants, Part-time staff, and Interns

- Chantel Brown
- James Day
- Eugenio Fernandez
- Miriam Garcia de Navarro
- Nancy Perez
- Fay Strongin

Thank you to our Funders and Sponsors:

- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of RI
- Healthy Housing Solutions
- National League of Cities
- National Recreation and Parks Association
- Neighborhood Health Plan of RI
- New England Dairy Council
- Partners for Places
- RI Department of Environmental Management
- RI Department of Health
- RI Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals
- Rhode Island Foundation
- Sodexo

Community and Professional Engagements

Community and Professional Engagements

- Brown School of Public Health Community Advisory Board
- Brown University & YMCA's Providence Childhood Obesity Community Planning Board
- Clinica Esperanza Community Advisory Board
- Commission on Health Equity and Advocacy
- Community Action Partnership of Providence
- Drug Overdose Prevention and Rescue Coalition
- Evidence2Success Leadership Committee
- Family Service of RI- South Providence Community Action Team
- First Responder Workgroup
- Food on the Move Community Advisory Board
- Ocean State Prevention Alliance
- Providence Schools Wellness Committee
- Providence Food Sustainability group
- Rally for Recovery
- Rhode Island Blood Center
- RI Community Food Bank- Women Ending Hunger
- RI Public Health Association
- Sankofa Committee - West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation
- Tamas Familiares
- US Conference of Mayors- Food Policy Advisors Group



PETER ASEN, Director

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