

NATIONAL HEALTH
FOUNDATION

Community Leadership Group Report

blue 
california
Promise Health Plan


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HEALTH
FOUNDATION

2021-2023

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Purpose

L.A. Care Health Plan and Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan's Community Resource Centers (CRC) were created to provide health and wellness resources in a hyper-local setting, playing a pivotal role in supporting residents to achieve better health within their community.

From August 2021, National Health Foundation (NHF) partnered with the Community Resource Centers in El Monte and Wilmington to reduce health inequities through a multi-pronged approach.

First, NHF developed a research plan and analyzed results to create a Community Profile.

This analysis included three distinct community engagement and research components:

- Local stakeholder and decision-maker interviews and surveys,
- Community canvassing,
- Focus groups with local community members.

After community data collection and analysis were complete, the top three community health barriers were identified as well as local strengths and existing resources.

Using the Community Profiles, NHF recruited community members and developed Community Leader Groups (CLG) at each center.

Community engagement was essential to fill these leader groups with residents who were passionate about their community and wanted to advance their capacity building skills.

Recruitment and local engagement was done through various outlets:

- Community hubs such as libraries, senior centers, and schools;
- Community events and resource fairs;
- LA Care classes and events;
- Local Facebook groups and networking channels.

Through these interactions, residents were invited to the CRCs to receive health care support and participate in wellness classes that were accessible to them at no cost right in their community. A robust contact list of community members was collected while conducting community canvassing events and focus groups which would be used for recruitment as well.

The outcome was a group of engaged and mobilized residents who were ready and eager to tackle the top identified issues and barriers within their community.

Top 3 Health Concerns and Barriers:

El Monte

1. Lack of Community Services
2. Healthy Food Access
3. Housing and Homelessness

Wilmington

1. Environmental Health Issues
2. Lack of Community Services
3. Healthy Food Access



Process

Meetings

CLG members received capacity building training and material support to address inequities with the social determinants of health most relevant to them.

Bi-monthly meetings were held on and off CRC sites to focus on reviewing the Community Profiles and establish ways to take action on identified barriers.

Residents participated in various trainings including: how to use LA-Homeless Outreach Portal, how to make Public Comment, and Community Canvassing as a research and advocacy tool.

After receiving these trainings, CLG members planned and implemented events. CLG members made use of their networks, inviting friends and neighbors to take part in transforming their communities.

Events

The residents of El Monte focused on projects surrounding sustainability and beautification. Members organized a Coat Swap where they learned and practiced the importance of textile recycling. The group participated in a Water Tracker activity where they developed a sustainable way to track their intake using beads and a reusable bottle. Beautification Walks and Community Cleanups were held periodically to keep streets, parks, and canals clean and uplift any concerns to the city.

The residents of Wilmington chose to focus on Secondhand Smoke (SHS) advocacy. Members worked on a yearlong community-based participatory research (CBPR) project that included capacity building, a letter campaign, and a Photovoice Exhibition & Community Resource Fair.

PROJECTS	DETAILS	OUTCOMES
Sustainability	Develop awareness on conscious steps neighbors can take to reduce waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop innovative ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle. • Identify local resources to donate unwanted items to and shop secondhand. • Boost neighborhood swaps.
Beautification	Report and care for areas in need of improvement in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase use of My El Monte App to report graffiti, chronic dumping areas, inadequate street lighting etc. • Promote and host community cleanups in frequently used spaces.
Secondhand Smoke	Increase awareness of the effects of SHS to individual & community health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide businesses with “No Smoking within 20 Feet” signage. • Increase awareness of individual rights related to SHS exposure.

El Monte

Beautification

Residents of El Monte were recruited to join a larger conversation alongside other neighbors, community leaders and local organizations to engage in capacity building trainings and collaborate to address health inequities in their community.

After initial discussions, the El Monte CLG, later known as Community Conversations for Change (CCC) was formed and projects focused on community beautification were identified.

Members planned, organized, and executed five beautification walks around the neighborhood and hosted three community cleanups.

In collaboration with the City of El Monte, and with support from the My El Monte App, the group went on brief 1-mile walks around the neighborhood reporting bulky items, graffiti, sidewalk repairs and many other service requests. More than 40 reports were submitted and addressed by City service providers.

A pivotal component to community empowerment is capacity-building. Extensive training on the My El Monte App was provided to group members and a step-by-step document was created to disseminate among neighbors during the beautification walks.

Providing members with training on the My El Monte App increases accessibility and leaves residents with the tools needed to take action in their community. CCC members also stated intentions to continue and expand beautification efforts.

Outcomes

8

Beautification Walk +
Community Cleanup

15

Partnerships

14

Attendance

1,429

Reach

Gibson Mariposa Park Community Cleanup

Oct. 2022



Wilmington

Secondhand Smoke

Similar to the El Monte group, residents of Wilmington were invited into a broader conversation regarding community organizing and the vital role they play in shaping their environments.

After initial discussions, Wilmington Coalition Council (WCC) was formed. Members then developed a mission and vision statement and assisted in developing a project plan.

Using Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) methods, secondhand smoke (SHS) was identified as a topic of interest that affects the overall wellbeing and health of Wilmington residents.

This group also received trainings to enhance their capacity building skills and community organizing knowledge. NHF partnered with Koreatown Youth and Community Center to provide trainings on how to make public comment, tenant's rights, and addressing SHS in multi-unit housing.

This research project was composed of various phases. WCC developed and launched an outreach campaign to visit local cannabis businesses. Members provided a letter expressing the community's concern with SHS and informing businesses how they could support by displaying a "No Smoking" sticker in their facility. Extensive Photovoice trainings was administered, encouraging the use of photography for positive social change. Details of the Photovoice project can be found on the next pages (page 5-6).

Outcomes

7

Trainings

14

Partnerships

11

Attendance

2,214

Reach

Photovoice Exhibition & Resource Fair

June 2023



Photovoice

How has SHS or the presence of cannabis dispensaries in your neighborhood influenced your health/wellbeing?

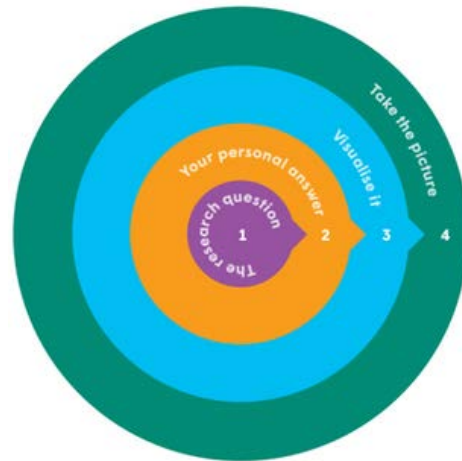
1

Through my lens...

Using the Mind Map as a guide (right), the Photovoice project began with the creation of the research question stated above (1). Individuals then shared their personal answer(s) (2). Once they were able to visualize their answer (3), they went out into the community of Wilmington, CA to capture images (4).

2

Mind Map



3

Picture This!

With the consent of those being photographed, WCC members took photos to showcase the reality of the daily encounters people have with SHS. Exposure to SHS has lasting effects on individual health and there is no safe level of exposure.

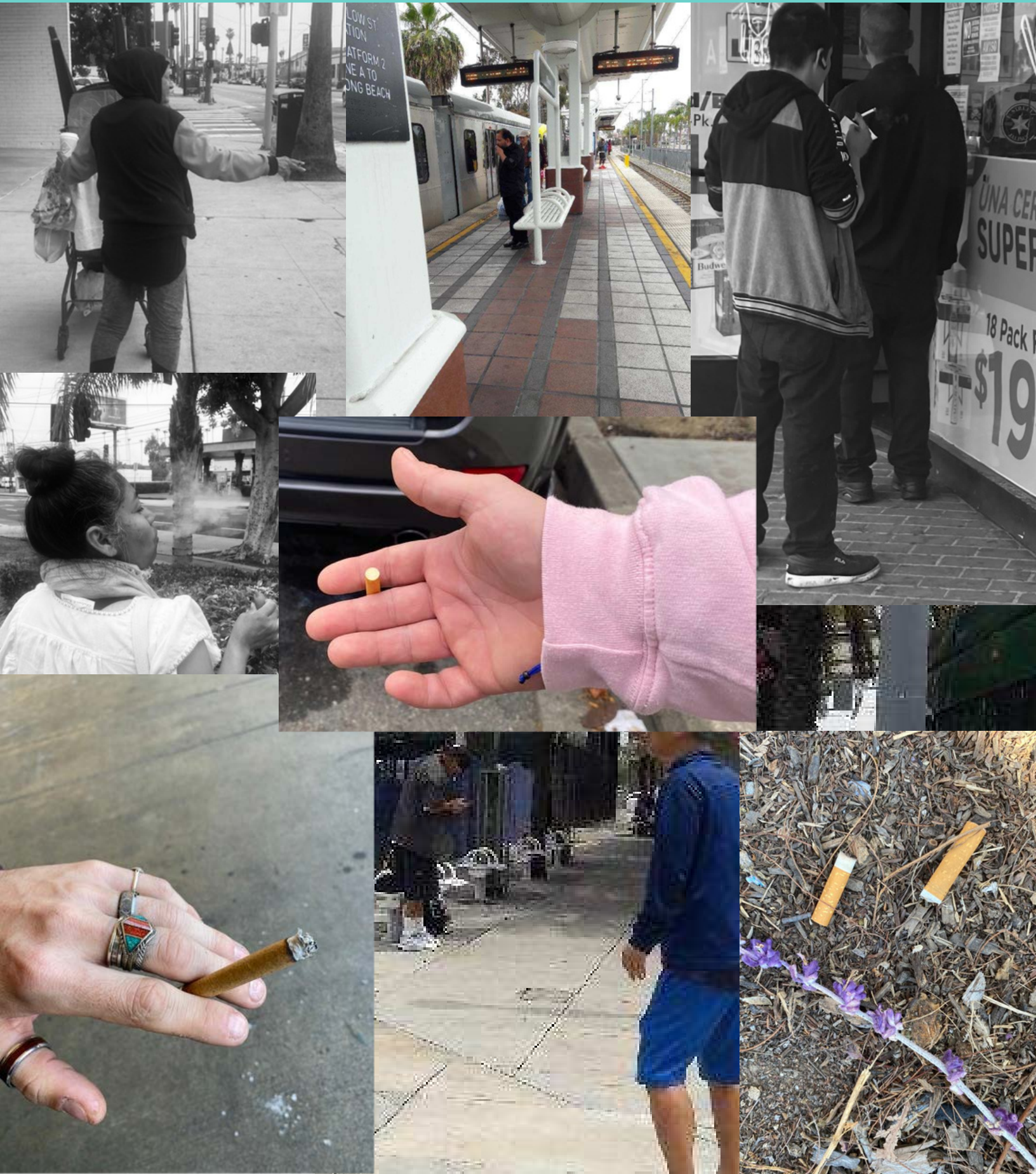
4

Takeaway

The overarching theme that emerged was that the contamination of secondhand smoke is a pervasive issue and negatively impacts individual and community health. Overall, SHS is something that affects anyone and everyone.

Photovoice Exhibition

(Monroy, Carrillo, Andrade, 2023)



Conclusion

Both leadership groups accomplished significant milestones during their time with NHF, including:

- Developing projects that aligned with their vision and mission.
- Connecting and networking with local resources in their community.
- Improving and implementing changes based on observations of their surroundings.
- Cultivating a culture of learning among neighbors and other community organizations.
- Celebrating the achievements of members both within and outside the organization.

El Monte and Wilmington rely on strong leaders who serve their community. Our recommendations are:

Residents: NHF recommends that residents become involved with local community organizations or create their own. Community members are the experts of their community and are best positioned to identify solutions that they need.

Community Based Organizations: NHF recommends that CBOs continue to follow best practices of having community member's voices centered in every phase of project development from outset, implementation, and conclusion.



3,668

Total Outreach Impact

“There is unity in caring for one another's health.”
-WCC Vision Statement



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