

REACH U.S.

Boston Public Health Commission

Boston, Massachusetts

A REACH Center of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities (CEED)

Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health Across the U.S. (REACH U.S.) is a national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) program aimed at eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities. It utilizes community-based approaches to reduce the burden of chronic illness in specific at-risk populations. There are 18 REACH **Centers of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities**. They serve as national expert centers implementing, coordinating, refining, and disseminating programmatic activities designed to eliminate health disparities.

ISSUE

The Center for Health Equity and Social Justice works to support the Boston Public Health Commission's (BPHC) vision to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities and build health equity through community, policy, and systems change. The Center provides funding, training, and technical assistance to 18 communities and organizations in Boston and Southern New England. The Commission focuses on the relationship between social factors and health outcomes, with an analysis of the unique and the independent role structural racism plays in these social factors. Addressing the social determinants of health as they impact communities of color (e.g., access to quality education, employment, and housing) is an important aspect of its work. BPHC expects to see improved health outcomes in the long term across various indicators, including food access, housing, employment, and education.

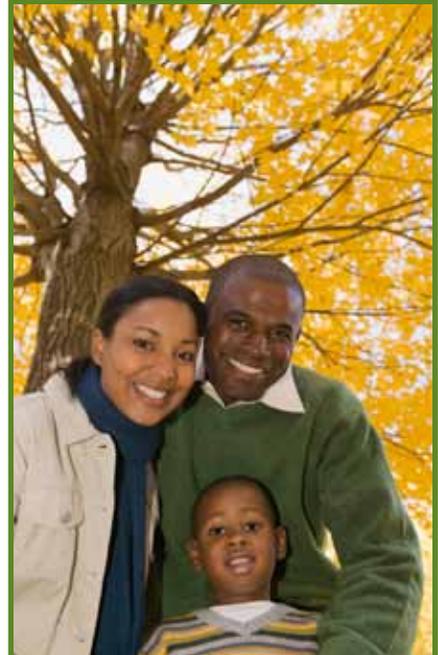
ACTIVITIES

- Supports coalitions and organizations in Boston and across New England; over three years, the Center for Health Equity and Social Justice (including REACH US and the Office of Health Equity) has invested more than \$1.2 million in community-based efforts to address racism and social determinants of health.
- Provides training and targeted technical assistance to help community coalitions and organizations develop and implement community-based policy initiatives.
- Supports Boston REACH Coalition's efforts to support policy and systems change by focusing on food access, housing, employment, and education. Sustainable changes in the social determinants of health will yield improved health outcomes for African American residents.
- Managed the collection and analysis of standardized race, ethnicity, language, and education data by acute care hospitals in Boston.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Designed and implemented a professional development series for all health department staff that included workshops, tools, coaching, and dialogues focusing on racism, social determinants of health, health inequities, and strategies to advance health equity.
- Supported a successful effort to decrease the environmental availability of sugar sweetened beverages on city property.
- Collaborated with small retail markets to make healthier food and beverage options available to children, youth, and adults in Boston.

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