

REACH U.S.

YMCA of Silicon Valley, DBA YMCA of Santa Clara Valley

San Jose, California

A REACH Action Community (AC)

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 22 **REACH Action Communities** using practice-based and evidence-based programs. These programs look at cultural and environmental influences related to health disparities and their underlying causes. They develop, evaluate, and share their culturally specific and relevant strategies and best practices.

ISSUE

The YMCA -Silicon Valley REACH U.S. *Proyecto Movimiento (PM)* Action Community is a community-based partnership that strives to reduce the prevalence of diabetes among Latinos in the Greater Gilroy, California area by delivering a prevention outreach and education campaign across generations. PM addresses linguistic, cultural, and economic barriers to physical fitness opportunities and education on healthy eating and diabetes prevention. Promotoras, Youth Health Advocates, and PM outreach coordinators work directly with residents in small group settings, after school programs, and at other community settings.

ACTIVITIES

- Educates high school Youth Health Advocates on health, nutrition, diabetes, basic leadership skills, and digital storytelling methods, and deploys them to educate their peers.
- Trains promotoras to educate community residents on healthy eating and diabetes prevention using small-group "house meetings" and larger group outreach activities.

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- Increases physical activity opportunities for local youth and adults at after school program sites, community centers, and public parks.
- Increases nutrition education and access to healthy foods for local youth by incorporating nutrition curricula into after school programming and at school-based community gardens.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- YHA worked with after school staff and PM program staff to provide education on health eating behaviors and diabetes risk factors to more than 750 youth.
- Promotoras shared important information on diabetes prevention with over 500 Hispanic community residents, primarily in private group gatherings in individuals' homes.
- PM increased the overall number of free physical fitness classes in the community. More than 1,500 community residents (predominately Latino) have attended these events as information was shared within extended families and neighborhoods.
- Three community gardens were established at school sites and three more are in planning phases.
- The proportion of Gilroy's 5th, 7th, and 9th grade Hispanic/Latino students with a healthy body composition has increased by 14% since 2007-08.

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