

REACH U.S.

The Institute for Urban Family

New York, New York

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 Institute for Urban Family Health, located in New York City, is committed to the elimination of racial disparities in health outcomes, focusing on diabetes in African American and Hispanic/Latino populations. The Institute leads the Bronx Health REACH, a coalition of 70 community-based, faith-based, and social service organizations, schools, after-school programs, grocery stores, and restaurants. The program takes a comprehensive approach to the prevention and control of diabetes through advocacy and policy change, as well as nutrition, fitness, and wellness interventions.

ACTIVITIES

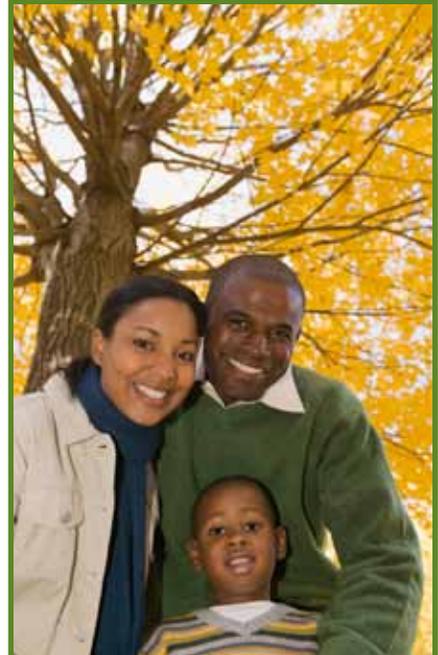
- Through education and coalition-building efforts, strengthens citywide policy efforts towards healthier nutrition in schools.
- Promotes access to healthier foods in low income neighborhoods through programs such as NYC Green Cart, restaurant and grocery initiatives, and faith-based culinary programs.
- Provides data and legal and regulatory information to state policy makers about ways to eliminate systemic disparities in the health care delivery system.
- Provides community-based training to help community members and local organizations identify and address the causes of disparities in health.
- Implements nutrition, fitness, and health education programs in schools, community and faith-based organizations.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- As a result of coalition-building and educational efforts, a citywide low-fat/skim milk only policy was put in place in NYC public schools, affecting 1.1 million students, and school wellness councils were put in place across the city.
- Through the school wellness program, helped develop the Department of Education's Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition. Worked with 12 schools serving 8,000 students, and assisted eight schools to implement a healthy snack policy. Encouraged nearby groceries to make low fat milk available to customers.
- Through the *Fine, Fit and Fabulous* program, 400 individuals from 18 churches participated in a 12-week faith-based diabetes prevention nutrition and fitness program, resulting in an average weight loss of 4.6 pounds per participant.
- Forty-five churches participate in a faith-based diabetes prevention initiative.
- Helped an after-school program revamp its meal program. As a result, healthy meals are now prepared on site and SPARK classroom fitness activities are conducted.

Bronx Health REACH/
New York CEED
Institute for Family Health
16 East 16th Street
New York, NY 10003
(212) 633-0800 ext. 1232

<http://www.institute2000.org/>



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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
1600 Clifton Road, NE, Atlanta, GA 30333
Tel: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1 (888) 232-6354
Email: CDICINFO@cdc.gov
Web: www.cdc.gov

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Division of Community Health

