



THE HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS PARTNERSHIP (HEP)

HEP Steering Committee

Partners include:

- ◆ Brightmoor Community Center
- ◆ Community Partner at Large
- ◆ Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion
- ◆ Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation
- ◆ Friends of Parkside
- ◆ Henry Ford Health System
- ◆ Warren Conner Development Coalition
- ◆ University of Michigan School of Public Health



The Healthy Environments Partnership

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www.hepdetroit.org

HEP OVERVIEW:

The Healthy Environment Partnership (HEP) is a community-based participatory research partnership (see list of partners on left) with a focus on understanding and promoting heart health in Detroit neighborhoods. Established in 2000, HEP examines and develops interventions in Eastside, Northwest and Southwest Detroit to address aspects of the social and physical environment that contribute to racial and socioeconomic disparities in cardiovascular disease.

HEP APPROACH:

HEP uses a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach in which all partners, representatives from community-based organizations, public health and health service organizations, community residents, and academic institutions, are involved in all phases of our work. HEP's work includes defining research questions, design and implementation of studies, interpretation and dissemination of research results, and deciding how the results will be applied to interventions and policies aimed at improving heart health in the city of Detroit.

The Healthy Environments Partnership is an affiliated project of the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center (www.detroiturc.org).

Last Updated August 2012

HEP Projects:

Social & Physical Environments and Cardiovascular Health Disparities

2000-2005



HEP surveyed residents within three Detroit neighborhoods (Northwest, Southwest and Eastside) to identify and understand cardiovascular risk factors among residents and examine the relationship of those risk factors to various social and environmental factors including: race, ethnicity; socioeconomic status; neighborhood environment (air quality, food access); and psycho-social stressors. HEP also examined potential protective factors that may reduce the effects of certain neighborhood characteristics on cardiovascular risk.

Between 2000-2006 academic and community Steering Committee members participated in over 40 co-presentations and/or sponsored community events to disseminate what was learned from the survey. This initial study ultimately led HEP to its next project, Lean and Green in Motown.

Supported by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences R01 ES10936.

Lean & Green in Motown Project

2005-2010

Using focus groups, community surveys and neighborhood observation tools HEP set out to understand the relationship between the built environment and physical activity practices in selected Detroit neighborhoods. HEP also assessed the food environment in these neighborhoods by auditing restaurant type and assessing availability, selection and price of select food items in area stores.

HEP created walking maps, conducted pedestrian observations, developed a healthy living newsletter, and trained instructors to lead physical activity classes in partnership with the REACH Detroit Partnership. HEP then assessed the impact of changes in the built environment, in conjunction with the above mentioned social and behavioral interventions, on cardiovascular health. Findings were disseminated broadly throughout Detroit and elsewhere. *Supported by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences 5R01ES14234-3.*



Community Approaches to Cardiovascular Health (CATCH)

2005-2013

During the initial stages of this project HEP conducted a Community Assessment to examine challenges, opportunities, and strategies to reduce and eventually eliminate disparities in cardiovascular disease. HEP then designed, implemented and evaluated a multilevel CBPR intervention to increase physical activity in Detroit.

The multilevel intervention includes:



- **Walking groups** lead by community members trained as Community Health Promoters (2009-2012);
- **Capacity building and technical assistance** to community members and organization representatives who wish to develop and support walking groups (2010-2013);
- **Mini-grant funds** for community groups working to enhance neighborhood environments and promote active living (2010-2013); and
- **Information development and dissemination** to policy and decision makers about ways to support environments that promote physical activity.

This project also supports maintenance and evaluation of HEP itself, engaging members of the partnership in providing scientific and community oversight for all aspects of the project. Research findings will be shared broadly to assure translation of results into programmatic and policy efforts to improve heart health in Detroit.

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