



Public Health 101 For Park Agencies

Prescribing Parks & Nature for Communities with High-Rates of Chronic Disease March 2015

Public Health: Health and social disparities

1. High prevalence of physical inactivity, mental illness, and social isolation among the 7 million people in Bay Area. *Parks and nature can prevent important chronic diseases. Reaching a significant proportion of the population is critical for public health and public parks.*
2. Communities with poor health outcomes have low utilization of parks. *Health officials and park leaders share goals of improving the environment and reaching underrepresented communities to promote wellness.*

Healthcare System and Practices

3. **At-risk populations:** Many people with health issues visit their primary care provider; including adults with chronic disease, children and their parents, older adults, pregnant women. *Park agencies can reach people with chronic and acute health problems and those with low-income through selected health systems.*
4. **Key health organizations:** In most counties, low-income patients (e.g., insured by Medicaid) are cared for by only a few health organizations (e.g., Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)). *By working with the county health department and a few nonprofit health organizations, park agencies could reach most low-income patients, including those with chronic disease.*
5. **Primary care visits** are busy, particularly for complex patients: 12–20 minutes/visit (3-5 patients/hr) to address patient concerns, follow-up previous issues, screening questions, physical exam, tests, counseling, and prescriptions. *Parks and nature-related counseling must be brief with clear added value.*
6. **Prescribing a community resource.** “Fitness program” is the social need that the most (75%) physicians wish they could prescribe. Health education pamphlets and posters are not frequently changed in busy, under-resourced clinics serving low-income patients. *Parks-related pamphlets, posters, and programs should be created such that they remain impactful for a long time, and not become outdated.*

Public Health, Healthcare & Parks Co-Implementation

7. 6Cs: Collaboration and cross-sector contributions create commitment and change. *Health leaders appreciate the opportunity to develop health interventions with park agencies.*
8. Educate and empower communities (residents & patients) *about physical and mental health benefits.*
 - Physical– physical activity, obesity, cardiovascular, diabetes, Vitamin D, myopia, life expectancy
 - Mental – improve mood, stress, sense of wellness, depression, anxiety
9. Intervention through Parks and Health Collaboration:

Collaborations and Partnerships Health organizations	Interventions Clear, simple, and consistent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public health departments (county, state, federal) • Health insurance: County managed care health plans; privately insured • Healthcare systems and hospitals • Medical societies & non-profit organizations • Community-based organizations • Medical groups, group practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency & culturally-relevant park programs • Clinic poster and “prescription pamphlet” • Instructions for health organizations to distribute to health care providers • Instructions for clinics (copies, posting, updating materials) and healthcare providers (counseling)

10. Evaluation for short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes is critical for program improvement and expansion. *Parks prescriptions might improve: clinician practice (in screening/counseling for physical inactivity, mental illness, and social isolation), healthcare systems, park programs, patient behavior, and health outcomes.*



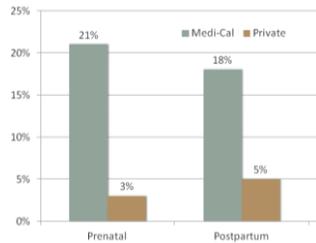
For more tools to build a Park Prescription program, visit ParkRx.org



6 Public Health Frameworks: References for Healthy Parks, Healthy People Proposals

Healthy People 2020

10-year U.S. objectives for improving specific health indicators. www.healthypeople.gov



State & Counties have similar indicators. :
Postpartum and prenatal depression is 3 - 7 times more likely in women insured with Medicaid.

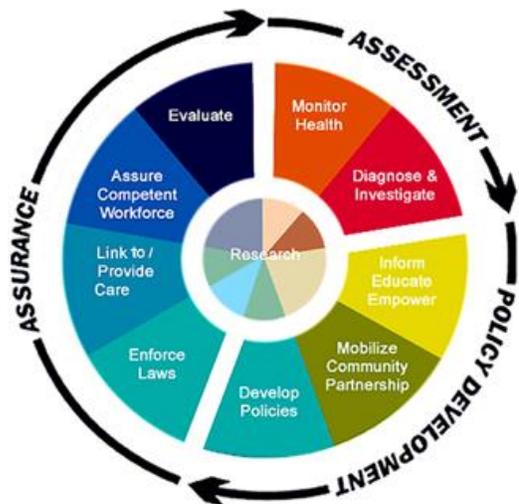
The Community Guide

www.thecommunityguide.org/pa

The Guide to Community Preventive Services is a free resource to help you choose programs and policies to improve health and prevent disease in your community.

10 Essential Public Health Services

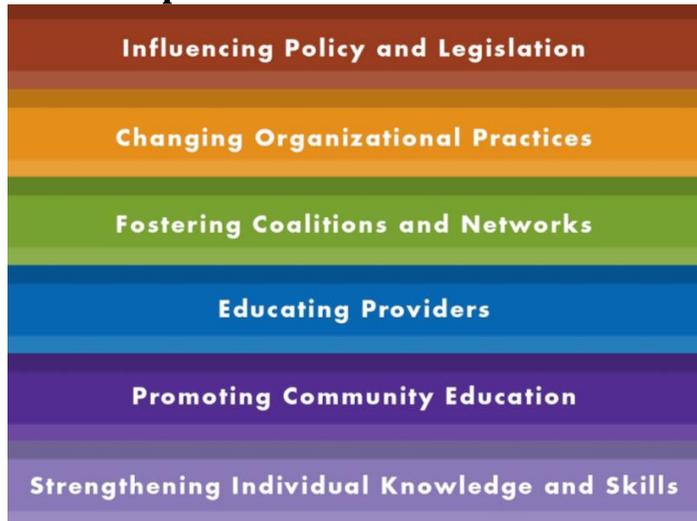
<http://www.cdc.gov/nphpsp/essentialServices.html>



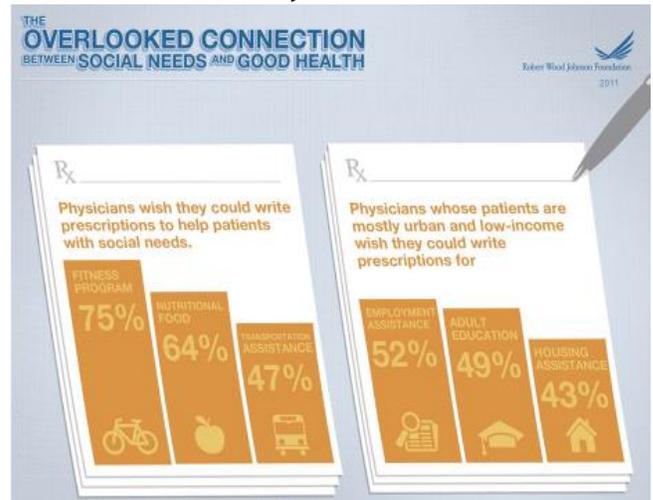
National Prevention Strategy



Spectrum of Prevention:



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



This tool is adapted from
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Healthy Parks Healthy People: Bay Area