

Building Healthy, Thriving Communities for All



Amanda M. Navarro, DrPH, MPH
Associate Director
PolicyLink

Lifting Up What Works[®]

PolicyLink

PolicyLink: a national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity by lifting up what works.

Place and policy matter:

- PolicyLink Center for Health and Place
- PolicyLink Center for Infrastructure Equity
- Convergence Partnership
- Strategic partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity.

PolicyLink Center for Health and Place

- Research
- Capacity Building/ TA
- Convening
- Communications
- Advocacy/Action
- Thought Leadership

What Do We Know?

- Americans are suffering from chronic diseases at an unprecedented rate
- Too many are living in unhealthy environments
- Disparities in community environments leads to disparities in health

Health Disparities

- Differences in the incidence and prevalence of health conditions and health status between groups, based on:
 - Race/ethnicity
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender
 - Disability status
 - Geographic location
 - Combination of these

Reference: Braveman P. Health disparities and health equity: concepts and measurement. Annual Review of Public Health 2006;27:167-194.

Disparities and Inequity

- *DISPARITY* implies *differences* between individuals or population groups (UN=equal)
- *INEQUITY* refers to differences which are unnecessary and avoidable but, in addition, are also considered unfair and unjust

Health Inequities

- Systematic and unjust distribution of social, economic, and environmental conditions needed for health
 - Access to healthcare
 - Employment
 - Education
 - Access to resources (e.g., grocery stores, car seats)
 - Income
 - Housing
 - Transportation
 - Positive social status
 - Freedom from discrimination

Reference: Whitehead M, Dahlgren G. Levelling Up (Part 1): A Discussion Paper on Concepts and Principles for Tackling Social Inequities in Health. World Health Organization. Available at <http://www.euro.who.int/document/e89383.pdf>.

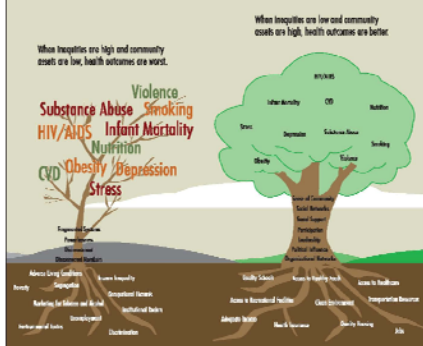
What is Equity?

Equity means just and fair inclusion and distribution of essential resources and conditions to live health, prosperous lives.

An equitable society is one in which all can participate and prosper. The goals of equity must be to create conditions that allow all to reach their full potential.

Growing Communities: Social Determinants, Behavior and Health

Our environments cultivate our communities and our communities nurture our health.



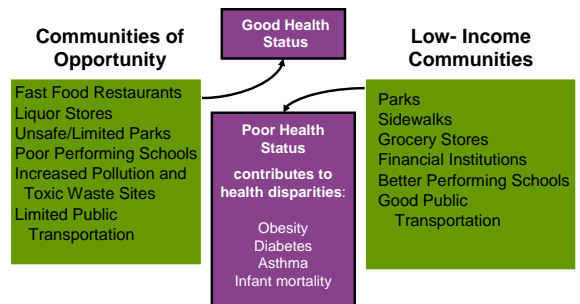
Tips for Staying Healthy : A Lifestyle Approach

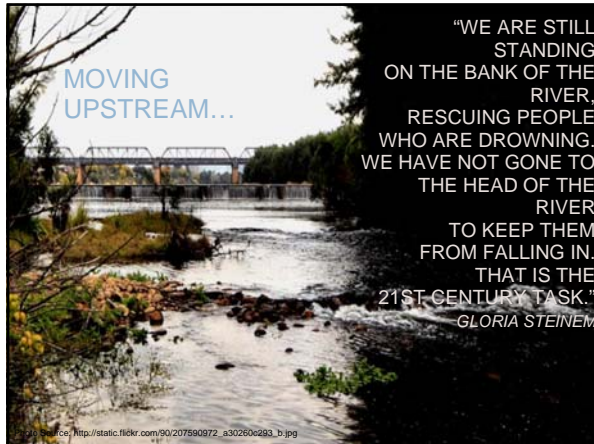
1. Don't smoke. If you do stop.
2. Eat a balanced diet, include fruits/vegetables.
3. Keep physically active.
4. If you drink, do so in moderation.
5. Cover up in the sun and protect your children.
6. Practice safe sex.
7. Participate in appropriate health screening.
8. Drive defensively; don't drink and drive.
9. Manage your stress.
10. Maintain social ties.

Tips for Staying Healthy: An Equity Approach

1. Don't be poor. If you can, stop. If you can't, try not to be poor for too long.
2. Don't have poor parents.
3. Don't live in a poor neighborhood.
4. Own a car – but use only for weekend outings. Walk to work.
5. Practice not losing your job and don't become unemployed.
6. Don't be illiterate.
7. Avoid social isolation.
8. Try not to be part of a socially marginalized group.

Place Matters





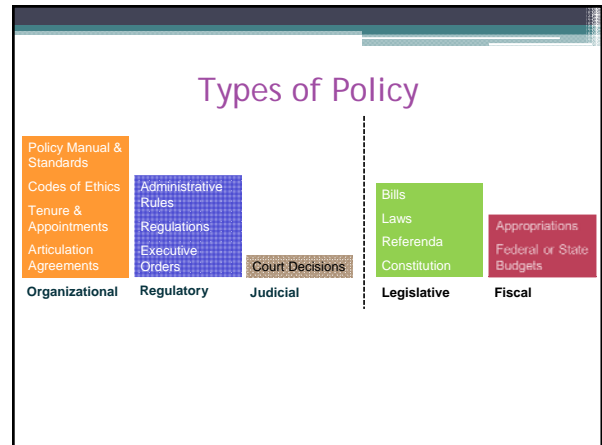
Policy Matters

- Policy impacts the economic, social, physical and service environments
- Health in All Policies: Policies not traditionally thought of as health policies (transportation, agriculture, land use, education, economics) impact health and obesity rates

What is Policy and Who Makes It?

- Policy = *The Rules*
- Policymakers
 - Elected officials,
 - Appointed officials,
 - Corporations,
 - Judges,
 - Members of Boards and Commission

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Federal Policies

- ARRA *Communities Putting Prevention to Work*
- Health Reform: Public Health and Prevention Fund
- Child Nutrition Act
- Transportation Reauthorization
- National Healthy Food Financing Initiative

Policy and Systems Change Efforts

- Safety/violence prevention
- School wellness policies
- Land use/zoning
 - Safe Routes to School
- Trails and safe parks
- Developing or updating neighborhood plans or comprehensive plans
- Healthy Food Financing Initiative
- EBT access at farmers' markets
- Farmers' markets & collaboratives with local farmers
- Corner store/bodega and restaurant initiatives

Intersection of Health, Place & Equity



Economic Environment

Considerations

- Revitalizing economy of divested communities
- Pathways to jobs and entrepreneurship
- Food retail important element of community economic development

Policy & Equity in Action

- Healthy Food Financing Initiative
- Market Creek Plaza
- Green workforce job and apprentice programs

Social Environment

Considerations

- Build strong social networks and neighborhood cohesion
- Connectivity leads to ability to organize, advocate and lead
- Mentoring and relationships key

Policy & Equity in Action

- Community Coalition
- Youth UpRising
- Photovoice
- Color of Words

Physical Environment

Considerations

- Good physical conditions are bedrocks of a healthy neighborhood
- LICC are often dilapidated and suffer from severe divestment
- Planning and design must be promote both health and equity

Policy & Equity in Action

- Health impact assessments
- Joint use
- The City Project
- Richmond General Plan

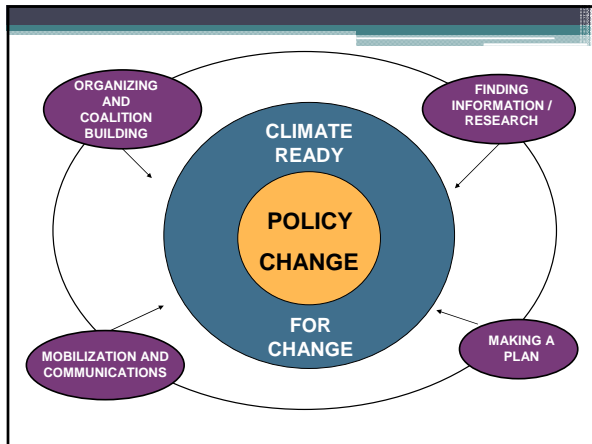
Service Environment

Considerations

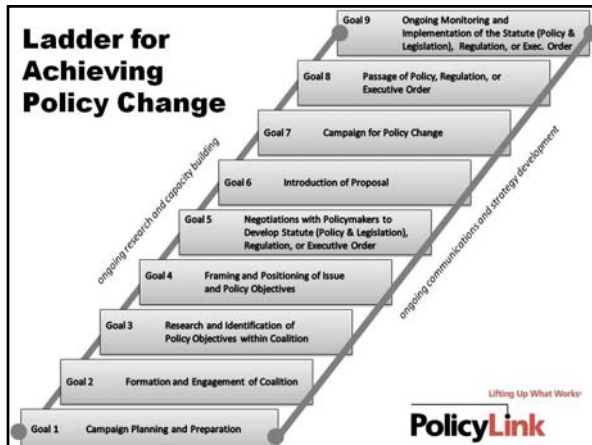
- Lack of public services erodes the well-being of communities
 - Healthcare, fire, police, emergency, transit, sanitation, childcare centers and prison re-entry programs
- Neighborhoods lacking services are overwhelmed with gangs, violence and illegal drugs
- Full range of quality and effective services that not only assist but empower all to reach full potential

Policy & Equity in Action

- Unincorporated communities fight for safe drinking water
- Public health departments' planning, implementation and institutionalization of undoing racism



Marathons & Sprints



Understanding The Policy Process

- Research
- Development of Policy
- Engage Partners, Allies, Constituents
- Climate Readiness
- Build Public Will
- Implement Campaign

Understand the Players

- Champions
- Allies
- Fence Sitters
- Mellow Opponents
- Strong Opponents

Constituent Engagement

Active and full engagement of constituents is central to the policy process and will create sustainable change by:

- Sharing power and honoring community residents knowledge, time, and experience
- Promoting community ownership of solutions
- Fostering the development of local leaders
- Improving community readiness
- Increasing capacity to adapt to changing local needs and political climate

Many pieces to the puzzle...



Policy Development & Implementation

- Developing an equitable health agenda or action plan is not just about the policies. It is about:
 - The process
 - The policies
 - The outcomes
- Developing your agenda/action plan can also be an opportunity to:
 - Promote health and equity
 - Build relationships
 - Build capacity
 - Educate
 - Create buy-in and support for the agenda

The Process

- Who is at the table?
- Build capacity, educate, build relationships
- Clearly identify equity as a priority and value
- Conduct and/or identify research
- Transparency and accountability

The Policies

- Equity is a criteria for inclusion and/or prioritization of policies
- Identify policies that are important to low-income communities, communities of color and other vulnerable populations specifically
- Target benefits to vulnerable populations
- Prioritize the provision of resources to areas that need it most

The Outcomes

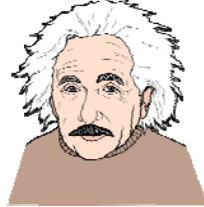
- Effective implementation of policies must be carefully thought of to ensure equitable outcomes
- Support the implementation process
- Monitor outcomes to ensure distribution of benefits are equitable and serve those most impacted by poor health
- Consider research needed from health department or other agency to monitor outcomes from policy
- Identify any necessary provisions to improve policy in order to ensure equitable, effective outcomes

Key Elements for Success

- Data to support your issue and make your case
- Document and disseminate success stories
- Build new alliances with diverse partners
- Encourage stronger grassroots-grassroots partnerships
- Maintain focus on communities in need and promote strong community engagement
- Use local efforts as platforms for regional and state policy change
- Help media to reframe stories

“The problems we face will not be solved by the same level of consciousness that created them”

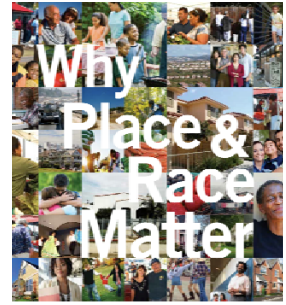
Albert Einstein



Thank you!

Amanda M. Navarro
amanda@policylink.org

PolicyLink
www.policylink.org



“Healthcare inequality”
Supporting healthy practices in healthier places and places

