



REACH
CHULA VISTA

A PROJECT OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY
CHILDHOOD OBESITY INITIATIVE

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**Community Health Improvement Partners Awarded over \$2 Million to Drive Down
Chronic Diseases in Western Chula Vista**

REACH Chula Vista aims to improve health and reduce health disparities

June 1, 2015 (Chula Vista, CA) - Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP), a San Diego non-profit organization, was awarded a grant of more than \$2 million over three years to increase access to healthy food and physical activity environments in the community of Western Chula Vista.

The Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) award is part of a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) initiative to support public health efforts to reduce chronic diseases, promote healthier lifestyles, reduce health disparities, and control healthcare spending. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will administer the grants, which will run for 3 years, subject to availability of funds.

Overall, HHS awarded \$35 million in new grant awards to 49 local health agencies nationwide. REACH, a CDC program that began in 1999, focuses on racial and ethnic communities experiencing health disparities. Awardees include local governmental agencies, community-based nongovernmental organizations, tribes and tribal organizations, Urban Indian Health Programs, and tribal and intertribal consortia. Awarded organizations will use public health strategies to reduce tobacco use and exposure, improve nutrition, increase physical activity, and improve access to chronic disease prevention, risk reduction, and management opportunities.

“REACH Chula Vista will work with childcare providers and community partners to improve the health of Latinos living in the 91910 and 91911 zip codes,” said Kristin Garrett Montgomery, president and CEO of CHIP. “We are starting at the earliest ages possible to impact health behaviors and outcomes for this population at high risk for chronic disease.”

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Community partners on the project include the Chula Vista Elementary School District, Sweetwater Union High School District, the YMCA Childcare Resource Service, the City of Chula Vista, Scripps Health, and the UC San Diego Center for Community Health.

Objectives include strengthening the General Plan in Chula Vista to include language involving community health and identifying urban design, land use, and zoning opportunities to encourage active transportation and increase access to healthy foods.

In the schools, REACH Chula Vista will work with Sweetwater Union High School District on strengthening its wellness policy and with Chula Vista Elementary School District on strengthening its wellness policy in pre-schools. The project will also help schools and local farms establish better connections, bringing fresh, local produce to schools. Garden-to-cafeteria training and certification is included. In partnership with the San Diego Family Childcare Association, the project will implement trainings to build the capacity of mentors on healthy foods, and improved physical activity environments. Partners will work in two community health centers—Chula Vista Medical Plaza and San Ysidro Maternal and Child Health Center—to further support environments where breastfeeding is encouraged. REACH Chula Vista will utilize the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative’s 5-2-1-0 messaging campaign which promotes four practices that can be adopted daily to improve overall health and avoid obesity.

UC San Diego Center for Community Health will provide messaging to community members and partners around these activities, and also conduct an ongoing evaluation of the project.

“As a family physician in Chula Vista for 20 years, I have witnessed the health challenges families face when they lack access to healthy foods and safe physical activity, need more support for breastfeeding, and live in environments that don’t support health,” said Shaila Serpas, M.D., Associate Program Director; Scripps Family Medicine Residency Program and the project’s principal investigator. “This program is intended to address these issues.”

To learn more about REACH Chula Vista, contact Dan Fesperman at (858) 609-7982 or dfesperman@sdchip.org.

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About Community Health Improvement Partners

The mission of Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP) is to assess and address priority health needs through collaboration. CHIP focuses on bringing partners together to tackle relevant and pressing health issues. CHIP programs include the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, Suicide Prevention Council, Resident Leadership Academy, Independent Living Association, and Lemon Grove HEAL Zone. For more information, visit www.sdchip.org.

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