WHAT WE VALUE

IMAGINE RESIDENTS LEADING INCLUSIVE, COMMUNITY-WIDE EFFORTS TO CREATE HEALTHIER HOMES, NEIGHBORHOODS, SCHOOLS AND WORKPLACES. THAT IS THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE.

We believe residents - and community organizations that serve them - know the assets and resources of their communities best. They are also uniquely positioned to identify local challenges and develop and implement innovative policies based on their self-determined needs and priorities. We realize that underlying socioeconomic factors have a significant impact on opportunities for healthy eating, active living and positive academic outcomes for students.

The Community Engagement Initiative is funded by the Kansas Health Foundation (KHF) and is managed in partnership with the Center Global Policy Solutions, a social change nonprofit based in Washington, DC.

OUR FOCUS

Being healthy is more than absence of illness or access to healthcare. A healthy community considers how jobs, housing, transportation and educational opportunities impact individual and community health and champions strategies enabling residents to live healthier lives, attend quality schools, save for the future and thrive in a 21st century economy.

KHF believes approaches to health improvement must take into account these social determinants of health and other community concerns. Through community engagement, new perspectives and understandings of community life can be promoted and incorporated into policies and strategies aimed at improving health.

Five communities were awarded grants to lead resident-driven initiatives:

1. Wyandotte County (Zip Codes 66101 and 66102)
2. Allen County
3. Topeka Housing Authority (Pine Ridge, Echo Ridge, Deer Creek)
4. SW Bricktown (Hutchinson)
5. Fairmount Neighborhood (Wichita)
Wyandotte residents wanted to increase civic engagement and voter turnout so they created a toolkit and led a Get Out the Vote effort.

THEMOS WILLIAMS, TOPEKA RESIDENT

Allen County residents wanted to improve student achievement so they opened a comprehensive vocational technical center for USD 256, 257, and 258.

Resident Advisory Groups that meet monthly to discuss their Community Action Plan.

Residents in Topeka wanted to increase community engagement so they created Resident Advisory Groups that meet monthly to discuss their Community Action Plan.

SW Bricktown residents wanted to increase community pride so they changed the name of their neighborhood with an official proclamation from their mayor.

Fairmount residents wanted to increase community safety and engagement so they developed a community-led code compliance program.

The initiative has been good for me because it has gotten me involved a lot more. I love my neighborhood and I want to make it nicer and safer for our families.”

DELICIA OLIVERA, SW BRICKTOWN RESIDENT

MISSION STATEMENT The Kansas Health Foundation’s mission is to improve the health of all Kansans. We envision a culture in which every Kansan can make healthy choices where they live, work and play.

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