

The East Bay Regional Park District is unique as a Community Transformation Grant applicant in that it has been an “outdoor health care provider” for 78 years, with a long history of maintaining unique programmatic partnerships with organizations of all types: public health, education, community services, physical education, nutrition, etc. Each year the District serves 60,000 schoolchildren through its interpretive programs, and 20,000 passengers with its Parks Express transportation.

PARTNERS

Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) is the local public education agency serving Oakland, CA. With 133 elementary, middle, high and special needs schools, it serves over 46,000 students and their families each year. OUSD is transforming into a full-service community school district. The district has an active Science Department which includes active physical education and nutrition services, and brings health, nutrition, physical, activity and science-based curriculum together. OUSD also has 14 School-Based Health Clinics, more per capita than any other U.S. school district. In 2010-2011, clinics served 3,790 students.

West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) serves six cities in West Contra Costa County, including Richmond. The district has 58 schools serving nearly 30,000 students and their families; 22 of these elementary, middle, and high schools are located in Richmond. GO! will partner with the WCCUSD Comprehensive School Health Department and will complement the Energy Balance 4 Kids (EB4K) project that works with 3rd-5th graders in class, during PE, and in the cafeteria, helping students make healthy food choices. In Richmond, WCCUSD operates three high-school based health clinics, and three elementary schools also have on-site health services.

Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) is the largest provider of K-12 professional development and support services in the Bay Area. In 2006, ACOE implemented an ambitious program to improve the health and nutrition of vulnerable populations attending Alameda County schools. At the core of this effort is Project EAT (Educate. Act. Thrive), funded primarily by the Network for a Healthy California, a program of the California Department of Public Health aims to integrate nutrition education into schools. It now operates in 40 schools in four districts.

EcoVillage, a project of Earth Island Institute, is a community based not-for-profit whose mission is to improve and transform people, communities and their environment through various “hands/ mind on” programs which include: development and community engagement; urban organic farming; environmental stewardship; and healthy eating/activity living. EcoVillage works with all sectors of the Richmond and greater East Bay communities, including schools in WCCUSD and OUSD, local businesses and health care providers. They serve approximately 4,500 participants per year.

Children’s Hospital & Research Center Oakland (CHRCO) is a regional pediatric medical center with specialized staff and facilities able to treat rare illnesses and health problems. It is the only independent children’s hospital in Northern California, and has provided exceptional medical care for children in the region and beyond for 95 years. CHRCO also support nationally recognized pediatric teaching and research. They have expertise in childhood obesity and extensive experience with engaging in research and community collaboratives.

University of California at Berkeley’s Atkins Center for Weight and Health (CWH) conducts inter-disciplinary research, linking academic researchers with community stakeholders, to provide science-based solutions to prevent weight-related health problems, particularly among low-income children and their families. CWH’s research portfolio includes 15 projects supported by a staff of 35 whose professional backgrounds include public health, public policy, epidemiology, statistics, nutrition science, physical activity, medicine, minority health, and community-based participatory research.

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Get Outdoors! (GO!) Network for Kids Health

The GO! Network encompasses three innovative strategies:

- Health care Park Prescriptions training
- School adoption of the California Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights
- Public policy promotion to reduce park access barriers

The East Bay Regional Park District and its partners have applied to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for a Community Transformation Grant. The Park District would use the grant to establish the Get Outdoors (GO!) Network for Kids Health that would work to increase outdoor and physical activity for children and families in Oakland and Richmond, California.

The GO! Network partners include:

- Oakland Unified School District
- West Contra Costa County Unified School District
- Alameda County Office of Education
- EcoVillage
- Children’s Hospital in Oakland
- University of California-Berkeley Center for Weight and Health

Data shows that across the Oakland Unified School District, 39.4% of 5th

graders and 35.5% of 7th graders were scored “High Risk” with regard to body composition and body mass index. In West Contra Costa Unified School District, which serves Richmond, 39.9% of 5th graders and 35.5% of 7th graders were scored “High Risk” with regard to body composition and body mass index.

The GO! Network is innovative in linking three often disconnected sectors that should work together to improve public health: the health care system, school system and park system. The GO! Network will work to implement three strategies: 1) Park Prescriptions training and technical assistance, 2) School systems changes through California Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights, and 3) New, replicable model policies to increase awareness, promote outdoor activity, and reduce park access barriers - all to achieve increased outdoors physical activity in specific communities.



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The East Bay Regional Park District and its multi-sector coalition of partners serve school aged children and their families in two urban centers within the Park District - Oakland and Richmond, California - partnering with the school districts which serve these cities, Oakland Unified School District and West Contra Costa Unified School District, respectively, to impact childhood health outcomes. Population intervention size is approximately 160,000.

In spite of many obstacles, including high crime, drug infestation, and poverty, our children come to school and work to learn their grade-level standards every day. Many are English language learners, some are welfare recipients and all are low-income families. Because of this, they don't have the same opportunities to travel and explore wilderness that other children might.

— Laura C., 3rd Grade Teacher at an EBRPD Healthy Kids Outdoors pilot school in East Oakland

The GO! Network aligns with CTG strategic emphasis: Active Living and Healthy Eating, and with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) long term objective to reduce the rate of obesity through nutrition and physical activity interventions by 5%. GO! is also a local initiative of Healthy Parks, Healthy People U.S. (HHPUS), working to reintegrate health into the mission of public parks and lands.

GO! aims to create a sustainable and replicable model which draws the clear connection between good health, effective educational systems (a key social determinant) and regular use of public space. Data from target communities (Table 1) underscore the dire need for intervention.

Table 1

POPULATION INDICATORS	RICHMOND	OAKLAND	STATE OF CA
Total Population	103,701	390,724	37,253,596
Families with children <18 with income below poverty level	27.2%	25.3%	17.6%
Median household income	\$46,996	\$49,190	\$57,708
Families in local school district eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch (♦)	67.7%	70.4%	N/A
% English language learners in the in local school district (♦)	33.5%	26%	N/A
May 2012 unemployment rate (♦)	14.6%	13.7%	10.8%
% medically underserved (no health insurance)	22.4%	18.4%	18.5%
ETHNICITY	RICHMOND	OAKLAND	STATE OF CA
% Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	39.5	25.4	37.6
% White	31.4	34.5	57.6
% African American	26.2	28.0	6.2
% Asian	13.5	16.8	13.0

Data from 2010 U.S. Census and 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, except ♦ Education Data Partnership, 2010-2011 data; † State of California Employment Development Department.



The World Health Organization's Commission on Social Determinants of Health tell us that *social determinants*, the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work, and age, as well as the systems put in place to deal with illness, are shaped by a wide set of forces: economics, education, social policies, and politics. The poorest people around the world are inevitably the least healthy, and health equity demands action on the social determinants of health.

This concept is key to GO! because the communities of Oakland and Richmond face the greatest challenges in public health and the social determinants of health (e.g., education, economics, public safety) of nearly all communities located within the EBRPD.

