



Healthy South Chicago Coalition

Working Together  
for a Healthier Chicago

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**Strategic Plan for  
Community Health Improvement**

Executive Summary

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## Healthy South Chicago Coalition

Coalition Coordinator: Dinah Ramirez, R.N.

### Members:

Ada S. McKinley Community Services  
Advocate Trinity Hospital  
Alderman John Pope  
Arnold Mireles Academu  
Bowen High School  
Bush Homeowner and Tenant's Association  
Centro Comunitario Juan Diego  
Chicago Department of Human Services  
Chicago Department of Public Health  
Chicago Family Health Center  
Chicago Police Department 4th District  
Chicago Housing Authority Corporation  
Children & Adolescent LAN 87  
Claretian Associates  
Community Alternative Policing Strategies  
East Side United Methodist Church  
El Valor  
Family Rescue  
Germano Millgate Community Center  
Healthcare Consortium of Illinois  
Healthy Families South Chicago  
Hegewisch Community Center  
Illinois Hispanic Nurses Association, Southeast Regional  
Jackson Park Hospital  
La Causa  
Sarah Lopez  
Metropolitan Family Services  
Morning Star Bible Church  
Neighborhood Housing Services  
New Communities Program  
Power Circle Center  
Jennifer Rosas  
Dr. Maria Rudisch  
St. Michael's Church  
Southeast Alcohol & Drug Abuse Center  
Southeast Chicago Anti Gang Initiative  
Southeast Chicago Development Commission

Southeast Environmental Task Force  
Southeast Youth Services Board  
South Chicago Chamber of Commerce  
South Chicago Consortium  
South Chicago Public Library  
South Chicago Tax Increment Financing Housing Task Force  
South Chicago YMCA  
Spanish Coalition for Housing  
South Shore Hospital  
University of Illinois-Chicago Midwest Latino Research,  
Training and Policy Center  
Villa Guadalupe Senior Center  
Washington High School  
YouthNet 4th District  
The Zone

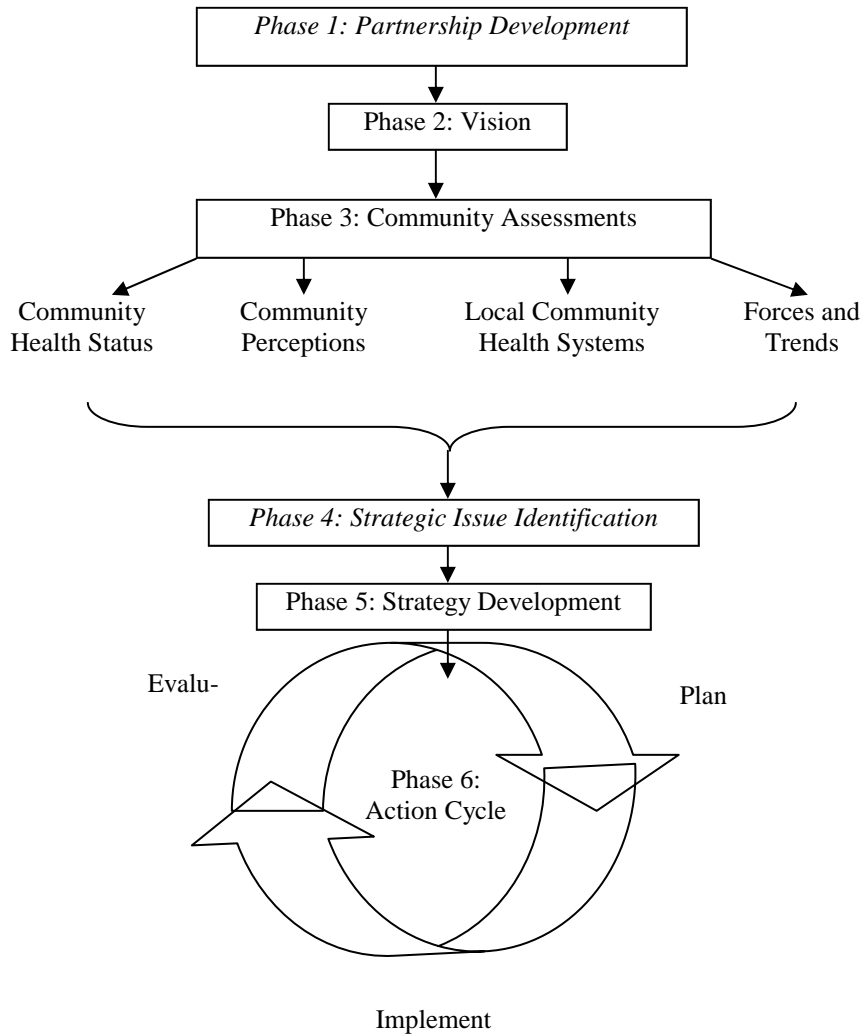
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# Healthy South Chicago's Strategic Plan for Community Health Improvement

The Healthy South Chicago coalition (HSC) was formed in August, 2001 as a pilot project initiated by the Chicago Partnership for Public Health. HSC members followed a community health improvement planning model adapted from the National Association for County and City Health Officials and the Centers for Disease Control, *Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships* (MAPP). HSC assessed the South Chicago community's assets and needs and formulated a plan to address identified concerns.

## Healthy South Chicago's Road to Community Health Improvement



## Healthy South Chicago Vision Statement

Healthy South Chicago is a community-driven process that empowers those that live and work in the community to achieve their highest level of well being and quality of life. Strengthened by collaborative efforts and shared resources, we enhance community awareness to promote a safe, secure, environmentally conscious community that fosters healthy lifestyles by bridging cultural, linguistic, generational, and economic gaps

**Community Assessments**

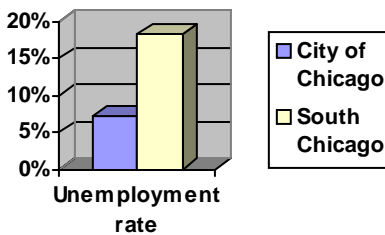
**Community Health Status Assessment**

The South Chicago community has 38,596 residents, of whom 68% are African American and 27% are Hispanic. From 1990 to 2000, South Chicago experienced a demographic shift, with the African American population increasing by 8% and the Hispanic population decreasing by 7%. However, though difficult to measure, much evidence of an increasing undocumented immigrant population exists. Along with this specific population change comes issues such as increased difficulty in accessing the health care system.

The community has had, for the past ten years, consistently high rates of mortality due to heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Yet, during that same time period, the rates of teen births, maternal smoking and of mothers who received no prenatal care while pregnant decreased (Chicago Department of Public Health Community Area Health Inventory).

*Over the past ten years the rate of teen births has decreased by 5%.*

South Chicago's unemployment rates are significantly higher than the citywide average of 7.2%, with a rate of 18.2%. Significant shifts in economic conditions, including area industry closings over the past 20 years, have left many residents both unemployed and un- or underinsured.



New housing developments, a new Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, and new industrial plants have introduced fresh opportunities to the area.

**Community Perceptions Assessment**

HSC Community Perceptions Committee members conducted three focus groups and one community forum to gather community perspectives on South Chicago's priority health issues, barriers to the delivery of public health services, and changes needed to improve community health efforts and the health status of South Chicago residents.

**Community Perceptions Assessment Results**

Group	Barriers	Recommendations
<b>Adolescent focus group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lack of transportation</li> <li>•Lack of insurance</li> <li>• Poor provider attitudes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A centralized place for teens to receive counseling and information</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Citizen focus group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lack of transportation</li> <li>•Waiting times for appointments</li> <li>•Lack of insurance</li> <li>•Condescending medical staff</li> </ul>	
<b>Adult focus group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Language/cultural differences</li> <li>•Lack of insurance</li> <li>•Cost of co-pays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•More services in area</li> <li>•More information in Spanish</li> </ul>
<b>Community forum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lack of transportation</li> <li>•Lack of insurance</li> <li>•Waiting times for appointments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Health services for men</li> <li>•Increased specialty services in area</li> </ul>

**Local Community Health Systems Assessment**

The HSC coalition selected two methods to conduct this assessment. The first, a *health care provider survey*, mailed to all area providers, yielded an understanding of the range of healthcare services available to South Chicago residents, including costs, hours of operation, languages spoken, and patient capacity. The second, *Community Landscape Asset Mapping (CLAM)*, involved conducting a block-by-block assessment of a variety of quality of life indicators in the South Chicago community through community resident observation.

<b>Health Care Provider Survey Key Findings</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 61% of responding physicians were primary care providers, 39% specialty care</li> <li>• 98% of providers accept private insurance and PPOs, with 90% accepting Medicaid and Medicare</li> <li>• 46% offer a sliding scale payment plan</li> <li>• 56% provide indigent care</li> <li>• 71% have at least one Spanish-speaking staff member</li> <li>• 50% are open on Saturdays</li> </ul>

To complete the CLAM, the coalition conducted three types of block-by-block assessments: *Looking Around*, *Grocery Shopping*, and *Eating Out*.

### Looking Around Key Findings

- 276 blocks assessed
- 7% had visible police presence
- 63% of blocks had at least one block watch sign displayed
- Only two parks exist within South Chicago borders

### Grocery Shopping Key Findings

- 28 grocery stores
- 11% had an aisle for low salt, low sugar or diabetic food
- 7% displayed nutritional information
- 21% sold alcohol
- 86% sold tobacco
- 32% sold fresh fruit
- 36% sold fresh vegetables

### Eating Out Key Findings

- 32 restaurants
- 78% offer chicken, 63% offer fish, 72% offer beef
- 34% offer salad
- 50% are smoke-free
- 9% had signs warning pregnant women about alcohol
- 50% are handicap accessible

Chicago

- Policy changes: decreases in government funding for local programs/services

### Strategic Issue Identification

HSC identified strategic issues by exploring the combined results of the four assessments. The identified issues represent the prominent cross-cutting findings that need to be addressed to reach the coalition's vision.

### Identified Strategic Issues

#### How can the coalition:

1. Increase awareness of existing services?
2. Improve health education efforts?
3. Improve the safety in South Chicago?
4. Eliminate the linguistic and cultural barriers to accessing health care?
5. Improve provider attitudes?
6. Enhance and expand public transportation?
7. Reach and provide services for undocumented immigrants?
8. Identify and improve economic resources?
9. Increase and improve services?
10. Facilitate and promote education?
11. Improve the quality of education?
12. Increase the availability of healthy food choices?
13. Create and foster healthy recreational activities?

### Forces and Trends Assessment

Coalition members identified external forces and trends that impact the health of the community.

- Community Development: new housing developments, infrastructure development, new commercial and industrial development
- Youth: limited number of activities and after-school locations for youth, poor quality of education
- Lack of affordable and accessible health resources
- Economic opportunities: steel mill closure, untrained workforce, new TIF
- Crime: lack of community involvement in crime prevention
- Population shifts: increased immigration from Mexico, South America, and Haiti
- Community image: lack of community involvement and pride, sense of hopelessness, lack of community leadership
- Programming: lack of services for all populations in South

### Action Area and Strategy Development

To address the strategic issues, the HSC coalition developed a series of strategies grouped into four broad *action areas*.

#### 1: Facilitate Access to Care through Information

- Increase awareness of existing services in the community
- Promote the elimination of linguistic and cultural barriers to accessing care
- Improve service provider attitudes and customer service
- Promote outreach to undocumented immigrants regarding available existing services

**2: Promote Healthy Behaviors through Education**

- Promote and improve the quality of health education through service providers and health promoters
- Educate the community on healthy food choices

**Strategy highlight**

In collaboration with HSC, the South Chicago Chamber of Commerce teamed up with local grocery stores and restaurants to increase the availability of healthy foods.

**3: Foster a Positive Community Environment and Support Community Development**

- Collaborate with key City of Chicago departments to promote and secure a safe community environment
- Provide linkages to public transportation officials to inform the community about available services as well as work to increase services in South Chicago
- Work to foster and create healthy recreational activities for the community
- Identify and promote economic development
- Facilitate and promote educational development in the community
- Advocate for quality education

**Action Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation**

*“Critical to the success of each action plan has been the creation and strengthening of collaborations...”*

To address priority strategies, the HSC coalition developed an action plan. Coalition members continually assess HSC’s membership to assure all the key players are involved, and monitor resources available to implement priority strategies. HSC members participate on

action area committees to plan and implement specific actions for each strategy. Critical to the success of each action plan has been the creation and strengthening of collaborations to best leverage available resources.

As the community changes and new issues emerge, the coalition will adapt as necessary, revisiting the assessments, the vision and the coalition membership on a regular basis.

Action Area Committee	Current Activities
<b>Action Area 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing formal linkages with local agencies</li> <li>• Creating a newsletter to increase residents’ awareness of existing services</li> </ul>
<b>Action Area 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting monthly samplings of Healthy South Chicago <i>Food of the Month</i> at grocery stores and community events</li> <li>• Coordinating donations of fruits and vegetables from large grocery stores to small corner stores to increase the availability of healthy foods in the community</li> </ul>
<b>Action Area 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing trainings for residents on making CAPS meetings more effective</li> <li>• Merging with the South Chicago Crime Prevention Task Force to strengthen efforts</li> <li>• Partnering with the 4th District YouthNet on a local gang prevention/reduction initiative</li> </ul>



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## **Healthy South Chicago Contact Information:**

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## **Chicago Center for Community Partnerships**

HSC is a partner of and is supported in part by the Chicago Center for Community Partnerships (the Center). An effort of the Chicago Department of Public Health, the goal of the Center is to establish and support a sustainable network of community-based partnerships that have the capacity to identify and implement local health improvement priorities. Center staff provide technical assistance to local partnerships in conducting and implementing health improvement plans.

The Center currently supports four other community coalitions:

Healthy Albany Park

Healthy Austin

Healthy Chicago Lawn

Healthy Hermosa

*For more information, contact the Chicago Center for Community Partnerships at:*

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