



COMMUNITY HEALTH  
IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS  
*making a difference together*

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

*Chula Vista Healthy Start Collaborative aims to improve health and reduce health disparities*

Today Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP), a San Diego non-profit organization, was awarded a grant of over \$2 million over three years to improve healthy food and physical activity environments for young Latino children 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. 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. They 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.

Seventeen organizations are receiving funds for basic implementation activities; 32 additional organizations, including CHIP, are receiving funds to immediately expand their scope of work to improve health and reduce health disparities. REACH is financed in part by the Prevention and Public Health Fund of the Affordable Care Act.

“The Chula Vista Healthy Start Collaborative will work with childcare providers and community health centers to implement policies designed to improve the health of Latino children aged 0-5,” 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.”

This grant will leverage the work of two local coalitions, the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative and the San Diego Healthy Weight Collaborative. Collective efforts of these multi-sector, public-private partnerships have targeted reversing the high rates of childhood obesity.

Collaborative partners include Scripps Health, YMCA Childcare Resource Service, UC San Diego Center for Community Health, Chula Vista Community Collaborative, San Diego Hunger Coalition, and San Ysidro Health Center.

Specifically, project partners will work with licensed childcare providers to measure and improve food and physical activity environments. In addition, partners will work in two community health centers—Chula Vista Medical Plaza and San Ysidro Maternal and Child Health Center—to create environments where breastfeeding is encouraged and supported.

“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 in the healthcare and childcare settings.”

To learn more about the Chula Vista Healthy Start Collaborative, contact Cheryl Moder at (858) 609-7961 or [cmoder@sdchip.org](mailto:cmoder@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](http://www.sdchip.org).