

IMPACT REPORT 2020



**PUBLIC HEALTH
ADVOCATES**



A LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR



What a year! In California and across the country, we were met with some of the greatest public health and equity challenges of our lifetime – the COVID pandemic, police violence and civil unrest in communities of color, an unchecked climate crisis and resulting catastrophic wildfires. Public Health Advocates not only survived this tumultuous time—we nearly doubled in size while also developing strategies to meet these challenges.

Our extraordinary staff and board adapted our programs addressing child and community trauma, public safety, access to healthy foods, park-poor communities, and transgender health equity to our shifting reality while we simultaneously launched major new initiatives focused on the pandemic, police reform, and housing affordability.

For more than 20 years, Public Health Advocates has been challenging the social, political, and economic systems that perpetuate racial, economic, and health disparities, bringing a health lens to some of the most pressing issues of our day. We have helped more than 350 cities enact 700 health policies, and we have led groundbreaking statewide campaigns getting soda and junk food out of schools, putting calorie information on restaurant menus, making diabetes prevention available to low-income Californians, and funding a new statewide childhood trauma prevention campaign.

We are proud of these milestones, yet there is still so much work to be done.

In this year-end report, we highlight some of the impact that we have had in partnership with the communities we serve. None of this would have been possible without the support of our funders, partners and most importantly community members. Thanks to all of you!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Harold Goldstein".

Harold Goldstein, DrPH
Executive Director

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS



All Children Thrive – California (ACT) is a statewide community-led and equity-focused campaign connecting community members, city staff, and elected officials to transform current systems to prevent childhood trauma and improve child and family well-being. The 20 cities who joined the campaign this year will be focusing their efforts on one of six key strategies: creating protective environments, strengthening economic supports, mental health and wellness, promoting healthy child development, increasing access to safe and stable housing, and promoting civic engagement. As part of ACT, we also partnered with the Sac Kids First Coalition to pass a public safety resolution in Sacramento from a youth, community, and public health perspective.



In the new year, we will be launching **Public Health's Equity Response to COVID**, a statewide campaign that will bring an equity lens to ensure that there are local, state, and federal protections and interventions to mitigate COVID's impact on communities of color and other historically underinvested communities. With guidance from a steering committee of community partners, we will be developing targeted regional and statewide strategies to advocate for needed policies, programs, and resources for residents most impacted by the pandemic.



Within Our R.E.A.C.H. (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health) partners with African American churches and community-based organizations in Stockton to address persistent health inequities making it difficult for residents to access physical activity resources and healthy food and beverages, or to heal from family and community trauma. This year, we established The Black Table, a collective group of organizations who meet online to develop strategies to address critical issues like the COVID-19 pandemic, policing in communities, and community trauma. Following the protests around the killing of George Floyd, we also began developing community-led interventions to specifically address racism as a public health issue. Through our **Faces of Resilience** project in Stockton, we are training youth organizers to advocate for school district policies that prohibit racial discrimination, expand restorative justice practices, and promote mental health.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS



The combination of the COVID pandemic and reckonings with police violence and racism has created an opportunity to rethink our most fundamental systems and structures, particularly our systems for emergency first response. Through our **First Response Transformation Campaign**, Public Health Advocates is helping California cities reimagine public safety. The Campaign focuses on prevention by championing systemic changes to make emergency response systems more responsive to community needs, less costly, and less racially biased, and aims to build a groundswell of support for similar changes throughout the state.



Healthy Eating, Active Living Cities Campaign is an efficient approach to advancing and implementing long-lasting policies that create healthier local communities. For more than a decade, Public Health Advocates has partnered with the League of California Cities to harness the power of local government to advance health equity by promoting healthy eating and physical activity. With funding from Kaiser Permanente and others, we have helped more than 350 cities establish more than 1,000 health-promoting local policies. This year we helped low income, park-poor cities raise \$18.7 million in funding for new park construction, and we launched a campaign to help cities adopt healthy retail policies, such as those requiring junk-food-free checkout aisles.



In its first year as a Public Health Advocates program, **California TRANScends** partnered with the TransLatino Coalition and Assemblyman Miguel Santiago to pass Assembly Bill 2218, the Transgender Wellness and Equity Fund. The Fund ensures that transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex Californians will get the health care they need. This historic bill is the first to be designed, organized, and championed specifically by trans and gender-nonconforming people in California.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS



My Brother's Keeper was formed from President Obama's initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps for boys and young men of color. As part of My Brother's Keeper Sacramento, Public Health Advocates is helping boys and young men of color find solutions to violence and trauma, starting by expanding awareness, knowledge and advocacy for new and much needed mental health services and supports.



For the last decade, **Building Healthy Communities - Boyle Heights** trained and supported high school students in the East Los Angeles community of Boyle Heights to advocate for school policies, programs and resources to improve student health. We are so proud of them! They got the Los Angeles Unified School District to install new water bottle filling stations (hydration stations) in schools throughout the district, to establish a comprehensive school wellness center at Roosevelt High School, and (most recently) to shift 35% of the school police budget to student services like mental health counseling.



Together with partner organizations and the community, our **State Policy Team** was successful this year in gaining passage of legislation banning police chokeholds (AB 1196), prohibiting probation for academic performance, attendance, or school behavioral issues (AB 901), and banning flavored tobacco products (SB 793). We also produced a statewide voter guide in English and Spanish to provide public health and equity recommendations on the 12 statewide propositions for the November 3, 2020 ballot and helped residents #GetOutTheVote locally, statewide and nationally.

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to the community members, partners and funders who we have worked with over the years. Without them, none of these milestones would have been possible.



We thank you for your continued support in our programs.

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