

A YEAR IN REVIEW: JULY 2018 – JUNE 2019

HEALTHY MONTGOMERY TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE





SHARING BEST PRACTICES: 1

As an innovative public health initiative, TCI seeks to share promising practices to reduce obesity and promote tobacco-free living. This past year, the TCI partnership launched a communications campaign to facilitate resource sharing focused on highlighting success stories that demonstrate how a collective impact approach is improving community health. Accordingly, the TCI released a mini-documentary to highlight the cross-sector partners implementing innovative strategies to improve health outcomes in Montgomery County. Additional outreach efforts include the launch of the two-part webinar series [*“Community Food Access: Reducing Food Insecurity and Obesity through the Healthy Montgomery Transforming Communities Initiative”*](#) to highlight the TCI’s Healthy Food Access Strategies. In addition, the TCI continues to facilitate information sharing by providing a media training and technical assistance to help community partners share their stories via media outlets and community engagement.

2 TOBACCO-FREE LIVING

GOAL:

Increase the minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21 to reduce tobacco use among youth and young adults.

Through the TCI, **the American Lung Association** promotes tobacco-free living in Maryland. The American Lung Association worked with partners from American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and the American Heart Association, and the Institute for Public Health Innovation among other local and national organizations, to form the Maryland Tobacco 21 campaign.



THIS YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- ♥ Identified key legislative champions in both State and House Senate, including the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, the House Economic Matters Committee, and the Senate finance Committee.
- ♥ Gained support and sponsorship from the Democratic Caucus.
- ♥ Hosted Tobacco 21 trainings for the Lung Health Ambassador Program and youth advocates who testified in the legislature, participated in a Lobby Day, gave media interviews, and sent over 125 letters.
- ♥ Launched a social media campaign to provide clear and consistent messaging for the Bill.
- ♥ Successfully passed Tobacco 21 legislation in the Maryland House and Senate – the Bill was signed by the Governor in May 2019.

SCHOOL HEALTH AND WELLNESS: 3

Montgomery County Public Schools are working with TCI to implement Local School Wellness Councils (LSWCs). The pilot program kicked off during the 2017-2018 school year at 15 elementary schools within TCI priority communities. These schools were provided with resources on school wellness policy implementation, including promising practices and lessons learned. Since launching this initiative, this strategy has seen significant growth.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- ♥ Expanded the LSWC's to 75 schools district-wide, increasing the number of schools actively accessing and utilizing available resources to expand wellness activities.
- ♥ Awarded \$26,000 in min-grant funding to 28 schools for projects related to student access to healthy foods, nutrition education, increase physical activity, develop school gardens, and enhance initiatives to support mental health.
- ♥ Hosted wellness, mindfulness, trauma informed care training for 90 attendees, including LSWC champions, teachers and administrators in collaboration with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and Kaiser Permanente.



GOAL:

Create and maintain healthy school environments by increasing school wellness policy implementation through the formation of local school wellness councils.

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL:

GOAL:

Increase the number of students in priority communities who walk or bike to school.

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) strategy seeks to increase the number of students in Montgomery County who walk or bike to school. **The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT)** performs walking audits of all Montgomery County Public Schools to ensure students in the walk zone have a safe way to walk or bike to school. Through this partnership with MCDOT, TCI is conducting SRTS assessments within the County. Additionally, TCI is collaborating with the MCDOT to: develop and promote user friendly SRTS maps for schools, increase the number of SRTS bicycle and pedestrian educational and safety trainings in priority ZIP codes, and increase collaboration for sustainability between Montgomery County Public Schools and the MCDOT for future SRTS programming.



THIS YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- ♥ Completed SRTS three assessment studies in TCI priority areas and created maps of South Lake Elementary School, Captain James Daly Elementary School, and Roscoe Nix Elementary School.
- ♥ Organized public events including Walk to School Day and Imagination Bethesda to disseminate information on school transportation safety, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and upcoming SRTS events around the County.
- ♥ Completed a monthly safety theme calendar and safety activity book to teach students how to safely walk and bike to school.

COMMUNITY FOOD ACCESS: IMPLEMENTING THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY FOOD SECURITY PLAN

The **Montgomery County Food Council** is addressing food insecurity and obesity in Montgomery County through the implementation of the Montgomery County Food Security Plan (FSP). The FSP outlines strategies and recommendations for reducing the number of food insecure individuals in the County through coordinated efforts of community nonprofits, businesses, and agency partners.

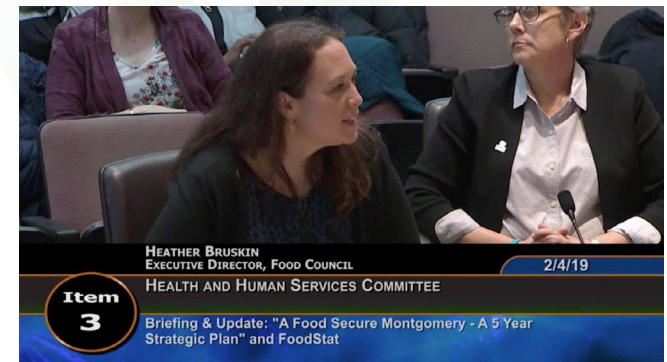
THIS YEAR'S SUCCESSES INCLUDE:

- ♥ Expanded the capacity of the Montgomery County Food Assistance Directory, which provides service information for 73 food assistance programs in the County, by launching an online searchable database, developing bilingual resources, and working to standardize data collection practices to more effectively identify gaps in services among food service providers.
- ♥ Built capacity of the food assistance community by sharing information and best practices about how to serve particular populations such as immigrant communities, children, and seniors.
- ♥ Hosted the FSP Community Update with Department of Health and Human Services and CountyStat, an event that brought together approximately 100 food security stakeholders, partners, and community members to learn about food security initiatives in the County.
- ♥ Organized monthly Food Recovery and Access Working Group meetings to improve the accessibility of food assistance resources, identify gaps in services, and build the capacity of the food assistance providers through technical training and best practice exchange.
- ♥ Launched a 14-member Community Advisory Board to convene community partners working on food security and residents who have experienced food insecurity to inform the implementation of the FSP.
- ♥ Launched the Senior SNAP and Hunger Outreach Program, a volunteer training program to help eligible seniors enroll in SNAP and provide them with anti-hunger resources.
- ♥ Coordinated meetings between County hospitals and food-assistance providers to share best practices and local resources for hospital-based screen and intervene programs.

HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS 5

GOAL:

Reduce food insecurity in Montgomery County, Maryland by creating system-level changes in the coordination and delivery of food assistance resources, and by increasing access to healthy food for our most vulnerable communities.

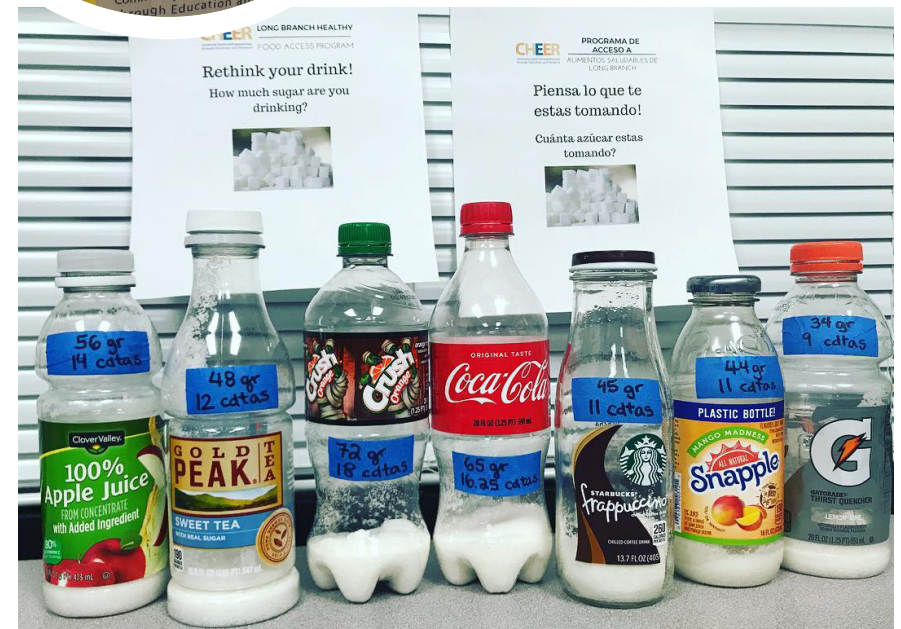


COMMUNITY FOOD ACCESS: REDUCING BARRIERS TO HEALTHY FOOD THROUGH FOOD IS MEDICINE

TCI funded the **Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County** and a group of community partners to implement the “Food is Medicine Program,” a systems approach to food security screening and referral between safety-net health care clinics and food and nutrition service providers. Partners of the Food as Medicine Program include: Manna Food Center, the Montgomery County Food Council, CHEER, Mobile Med, Mercy Health Clinic, Adventist Healthcare, Holy Cross, and Catholic Charities.

THIS YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- Expanded implementation of food security screening and referral by recruiting 6 new partners, all of which provide follow-up and care coordination to patients screened as food insecure.
- Increased capacity for culturally competent and linguistically appropriate care coordination by ensuring staff are trained in referral resources and understand the role of community health workers to provide skilled expertise as part of care coordination.
- Institutionalized the screening and referral process into the CARE for Kids (CFK) program resulting in greater stability of the strategy and full integration into the case managers' workflow.
- Leveraged TCI Food Access partner, the Montgomery County Food Council, to establish connections with other hospital systems to share resources related of the screen and referral strategy.
- Utilized match funding to increase the number of patients to over 1,600, with five clinics participating in routine screening and referral, as well as the CFK program.





IN CLOSING 6

Thanks to our many community partners, this has been another pivotal year for launching and implementing a number of TCI strategies. We look forward to building on these successes to reduce childhood obesity, encourage tobacco-free living and shine a spotlight on efforts to promote health and well-being in our communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



THIS SUMMARY WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE SUPPORT OF TRINITY HEALTH'S TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE AND HOLY CROSS HEALTH.

THE HEALTHY MONTGOMERY TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

The Healthy Montgomery Transforming Communities Initiative (TCI) is a partnership between the Institute for Public Health Innovation, Holy Cross Health, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, the Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee, and numerous other community and government partners. It is a multi-year effort focused on numerous public health strategies, including obesity prevention. TCI is funded nationally by Trinity Health, one of the country's largest healthcare systems. Funding is also provided by the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, and the Healthcare Initiative Foundation.

For more information on the Healthy Montgomery Transforming Communities Initiative, please visit us www.institutephi.org/healthymontgomerytci or email **Evelyn Kelly at Ekelly@institutephi.org**

