



2024

IMPACT REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
02	INTRODUCTION
04	CCH IMPACT OVERVIEW
05	CCH IMPACT BY STRATEGY
06	FOOD ACCESS AND EQUITY
12	REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT HEALTH
16	CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH
20	A SHARED VISION OF THE FUTURE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our deepest gratitude to the community-based partners, researchers, educators, and students without whom this work would not be possible, and who have co-led and guided many of these efforts forward.

The projects described were partially supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH; grant UL1TR001442) and Altman Clinical and Translational Research Institute.



“

At the Center for Community Health, our commitment to community is at the heart of everything we do. We believe every individual deserves equitable access to health and well-being, regardless of their background, zip code, or circumstance. Diversity, inclusion, and the relentless pursuit of health equity guide our efforts to address disparities that disproportionately affect historically underserved and underrepresented populations. Together with our partners and the communities we serve, we are building a future where every voice is heard, every need is met, and every life is valued. This work is not just our mission—it is our promise.”

- Blanca Meléndrez, Executive Director, Center for Community Health



INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1995 at University of California San Diego (UC San Diego) and currently housed within the Altman Clinical and Translational Research Institute (ACTRI), Center for Community Health (CCH) has over three decades of experience partnering with diverse communities to tackle complex health disparities at multiple levels.

Guided by a set of 10 Community-Led Transformation Principles co-developed with community, CCH partners with communities in San Diego County and across California who disproportionately experience poor health outcomes - including low-income, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant and refugee families, youth, farmers, and others - to advance healthy communities where everyone has an equitable opportunity to thrive.



CCH MISSION

Advance health equity through community partnerships by transforming public health practice, research, and education.

CCH VISION

Healthy communities where everyone has equitable opportunities to thrive.

COMMUNITY-LED TRANSFORMATION PRINCIPLES

Community-led



Co-designed



Partnership-based and trust-driven



Culturally humble



Healing-centered



Strengths-based



Adaptive and responsive



Collaboratively funded



Sustainable



Community-owned



Central to CCH's work is a focus on centering community through ongoing co-development and implementation with community members, community-based organizations (CBOs), and multi-sector partners, researchers, and other stakeholders locally and across the state. This includes a commitment to storytelling that honors co-leadership and community voice. Key strategies focus on transforming public health practice, research, partnerships, education, systems change, and dissemination to achieve improvements in core focus areas of food access and equity; refugee and immigrant health; and child and family health.



CCH KEY STRATEGIES



Practice

Co-Design, implement, and evaluate community health programs, curricula, and assessments.



Research

Facilitate community-centered research.



Partnerships

Developing and support community engagement and collaboration.



Education

Providing capacity building, training and resources to support community priorities.



Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Change

Supporting lasting community change locally, regionally, and nationally.



Dissemination

Share key findings and best practices for replication and sustainability.

CCH FOCUS AREAS



Food Access and Equity

Improve food access and health equity.



Refugee and Immigrant Health

Provide culturally relevant health and social services.



Child and Family Health

Reduce and prevent childhood obesity and chronic diseases.

CCH IMPACT OVERVIEW

CCH's community-led transformation approach ensures programming and research are conducted with and not on communities, advancing equity-driven, research-to-practice models and driving the translation, replication and sustainability of culturally responsive, co-led interventions.

To-date, CCH has achieved substantial impact and improvements in **community, clinical, economic, and policy** benefits, aligned with the Translational Sciences Benefits Model (TSBM) framework for measuring and demonstrating impact.

This report highlights CCH's key accomplishments and impact through the end of 2024 across key strategies and focus areas, gathered through annual output and outcome reporting across CCH units and including examples that illustrate the measurable impact of CCH's work towards meaningful improvements in health equity for all. Outcomes across projects demonstrate high alignment of community-led, culturally affirming programs with community priorities along with improved resource access, community health and well-being, and economic stability for the communities we serve.

CCH Alignment with TSBM

- ✓ **Community and Public Health Benefits**
CCH programs including food is medicine, maternal health, and refugee health initiatives directly improve community and public health outcomes. Key outcomes include increased access to health services and resources for underserved populations; improved community health/well-being and social determinants of health; and reduced health disparities and inequities.
- ✓ **Clinical and Medical Benefits**
CCH programming and research strives to increase generalizable knowledge on evidence-based, innovative, client-centered health strategies, expanding access to culturally responsive healthcare and other services for underserved populations including immigrants and refugees.
- ✓ **Economic Benefits**
Economic benefits of CCH's work include improved financial resources for community-based organizations through re-granting to support community, and improved economic stability, cost savings, and cost effectiveness for community residents and partners.
- ✓ **Policy and Legislative Benefits**
CCH efforts contribute to dissemination and advancement of successful models, programs, and best practices, including scalable policy models that influence local, state, and national public health systems. Examples include enhancing public health policies for maternal mental health and lactation.

CCH Investment in Communities and Community Partners

From 2019 to 2024, CCH has generated **\$47 million in funding** to support communities locally and throughout the state, including **\$25 million re-granted to more than 70 community-based organizations** locally and across the state.

New Funding in 2024



Food Access and Equity

Food is Medicine: Secured \$500,000 to support United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP)

Urban Food Equity: Secured \$100,000 to support UC San Diego Student Food Security program; Secured \$783,000 to support Growing Equity California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) program



Refugee and Immigrant Health

Secured additional \$10mil to continue the Afghan Refugee School Impact/Afghan Youth Mentoring (ARSI/AYM) program, supporting 4 coalitions across the state with 48 direct service organizations receiving re-granted dollars



Child and Family Health

Secured \$5mil for the KIN: Community Incubator Network

Will continue as the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative backbone team with a county contract of nearly \$1.7mil

CCH IMPACT BY STRATEGY

2024 HIGHLIGHTS



Practice

CCH works collaboratively with partners and community to co-design and implement programs, curricula, and assessments that are culturally responsive, decrease disparities and increase community health, well-being and economic stability in alignment with evolving community priorities.

- 12 active non-research programs/projects reached over 100,000 individuals
- 6 community assessments conducted engaging over 700 community members
- 4 new technologies implemented



Research

CCH partners with researchers and community members to increase diverse and inclusive participatory community-centered research to address health disparities.

- 9 active research studies engaged close to 20,000 participants
- Over 50 researchers partnered with, including Co-PIs and key project partners
- Over 50 consultations provided to researchers including technical assistance and training support
- 4 research committees participated in or co-facilitated



Partnerships

CCH supports collaborative multi-sector community coalitions and/or workgroups to increase community partnerships and collective impact outcomes.

- Over 1,000 community and multi-sector partners engaged
- 10 coalitions/workgroups received backbone support from CCH
- Over 200 meetings or events facilitated with over 500 community members and multi-sector partners
- \$8.9M re-granted to 79 partners locally and statewide



Education

CCH facilitates capacity building training and/or creates resources for researchers and community members to increase knowledge and skills related to emerging and culturally relevant best practices to advance health and well-being.

- 6 curricula, resources, and toolkits completed
- Over 100 technical assistance, training or consultation sessions facilitated reaching over 2,000 attendees
- 30 student interns/volunteers engaged
- 8 additional projects supported by CCH as evaluation or technical assistance lead



Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change

CCH supports policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes in partnership with community members and stakeholders to increase awareness of local needs statewide and nationally.

- 7 PSE efforts supported
- 15 residents engaged as part of Community Council co-leading PSE efforts with the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative (COI)
- Provided backbone support for San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition (SDRCC) Policy Council



Dissemination

CCH develops dissemination products for varied audiences including reports and publications sharing successful approaches and best practices to drive the sustainability and replication of successful projects, innovations, and outcomes.

36 dissemination products including:

- 3 academic journal articles published
- 10 professional reports developed
- 14 conference posters or presentations shared
- 3 media features developed

FOOD ACCESS AND EQUITY

Food is Medicine

The Food is Medicine (FIM) team within the Food Access and Equity unit is dedicated to improving health outcomes, particularly for community members experiencing chronic disease and health disparities, by developing evidence-based nutrition incentive, produce prescription and medically tailored meal programs, and research initiatives that improve healthy food access and food security. Through cross-sector partnerships with food system, health system and community-based organizations we advance health equity, while simultaneously providing economic support for local food systems as part of a collaborative effort to build healthier and more resilient communities. We envision a future where food is recognized as a fundamental component of healthcare, including both the prevention and management of chronic disease, ensuring every community member has access to nutritious foods that support their health and well-being.

FIM Key Accomplishments: 2024

- ✓ Allocated \$18M in nutrition incentives and produce prescriptions to 100,000+ community members
- ✓ Expanded ¡Más Fresco! Plus Nutrition Incentive Program
- ✓ Expanded CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Pilot Project
- ✓ Developed innovative produce prescription program with Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCS)
- ✓ Conducted California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) assessment as part of countywide Food is Medicine Workgroup
- ✓ Serve as a Providing Access and Transforming Health (PATH) technical assistance and training provider for the California Department of Health Care Services, helping to advance CalAIM implementation across San Diego County



CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project

In 2022, UCSD was awarded funding from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to develop and implement the CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project. A key goal of this grant was to demonstrate that nutrition incentives could effectively be earned and redeemed directly from a CalFresh recipients' CalFresh EBT account, without requiring the need for coupons, vouchers, receipts or even a separate loyalty card. The project also aimed to demonstrate that once incentives were earned at participating retailers, they could then be redeemed at any SNAP authorized retail outlet.

Key Outcomes

Working in collaboration with over 80 Mother's Nutritional Center (MNC) stores across Southern California, this highly successful program:

- ✓ Allocated close to \$18 million in nutrition incentives to more than 90,000 CalFresh households who shop at any MNC location
- ✓ Achieved a high redemption rate of approximately 98% of incentives earned
- ✓ Increased access to and purchasing of fresh fruits and vegetables amongst participants
- ✓ Achieved high satisfaction amongst participants and MNC retail staff
- ✓ Developed point-of-sale technologies and systems now being replicated in other states including Washington, Rhode Island, Colorado, and Louisiana

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Clinical, Economic, Policy

CalAIM Food is Medicine Support

CCH is currently a California DHCS Providing Access and Transforming Health (PATH) Technical Assistance and Training Provider under the statewide CalAIM initiative. A key goal of this work is to advance health equity among Medi-Cal enrollees with complex health needs. This includes helping to increase awareness of and utilization of Food is Medicine community supports, including medically tailored meals/groceries, produce prescriptions and healthy food vouchers.

Through this work, UCSD also established and co-facilitates a local Food is Medicine workgroup bringing together community organizations and other key stakeholders involved or interested in supporting the success of CalAIM across San Diego County.

Key Outcomes

In 2024, CCH conducted a CalAIM community assessment, including a survey with 60+ community and multi-sector respondents and a facilitated discussion with close to 50 FIM workgroup members, to better understand what is working well, challenges, and future opportunities to enhance CalAIM implementation locally, with focus on Medically Tailored Meals components of CalAIM. Recommendations based on key findings from this assessment included:

- ✓ Increase Education/Awareness
- ✓ Streamline Administrative Processes
- ✓ Increase Collaboration, Communication and Coordination

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Clinical, Economic, Policy

Key Outcomes

In collaboration with local farms/food sector partners (Foodshed Cooperative, Yasukochi Family Farms, Foodsmart), community-based organizations (SBCS, Comité Organizador Latino de City Heights-COLCH, Union of Pan Asian Communities), and health clinics (Alliance Health Clinic, Vista Community Clinic) across San Diego County, as of the end of 2024 ¡Más Fresco! Plus:

- ✓ Enrolled 2,640 community members experiencing nutrition insecurity and diet-related chronic disease, including 64% from County zip codes designated as having limited access to resources, and 60% with at least one chronic condition
- ✓ Delivered more than \$1,650,000 in nutrition incentives to participants, including the home delivery of over 52,000 farm-fresh produce boxes.
- ✓ Increased fruit and vegetable access and healthy eating behaviors including fruit and vegetable consumption amongst participants
- ✓ Supported improved social/emotional health and chronic disease management for participants
- ✓ Increased CBO capacity and partnerships and re-granted over \$65,000 to local CBOs/health clinics
- ✓ Generated an economic impact of more than \$3 million in food sector support including over \$2.5 million for local farms

¡Más Fresco! Plus Nutrition Incentive Program

In 2022, CCH was awarded funding by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to expand its successful ¡Más Fresco! More Fresh nutrition incentive program beyond CalFresh recipients to underserved community members experiencing health disparities, including food insecurity and diet-related chronic disease. A key goal of this project was to more effectively leverage key food system and health system resources to improve healthy food access, food security and nutrition and health status of participating households.

CCH Strategies Employed



TSBM Aligned Impact

Community
Clinical
Economic
Policy

“

At Alliance Health Clinic one of our clients who signed up for the Mas Fresco Plus! last year has very positive words to say about the program. While he had enjoyed the bi-weekly delivery of fruits and vegetables, he indicated that because of access to fruits and vegetables delivered to him in the comfort of his home, he feels a lot healthier than before. He says one very revealing effect is that he feels now more energetic, and his pale skin has changed to a glowing skin. He has now adopted new eating habits and healthy food preparation.”

- Simin Khadivi, Alliance Health Clinic



“

Mas Fresco Plus is a public-private partnership that leverages co-investment in the local food supply chain that can generate economic benefits for years to come.”

- ¡Más Fresco! Plus Food Sector Partner

New Project: A Community-Centered Approach to Produce Delivery Program and Food is Medicine

In 2024, UCSD and FHCS were awarded a USDA GusNIP Produce Prescription Grant. A key goal of this grant is to leverage USDA produce prescription resources along with CalAIM Food is Medicine resources to create a more sustainable program to address the needs of underserved community members experiencing food insecurity and diet related chronic disease. Community members who enroll in this program will benefit from receiving 12-months of home delivered farm-fresh produce boxes, to be followed by 6-months of CalAIM Medically Tailored Meals.

CCH Strategies Employed



Research



Partnerships

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Clinical, Economic, Policy



Selected Dissemination Products, 2024: Food is Medicine



Professional Report:

Retail Implementation of the CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project



Professional Report:

CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Project: Perspectives from Implementation in Grocery stores



Professional Report:

¡Más Fresco! Plus Nutrition Incentive Program Report, December 2024

The Urban Food Equity (UFE) team within the Food Access and Equity unit was founded in 2017 and focuses on improving food access through place-based community interventions and consultations. We aim to improve availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability, and accommodation of food through an asset and strength-based approach. We build capacity and resource development for food justice solutions identified and prioritized by communities most affected by disparities in our health and food systems. Our projects support farmers and community leaders in building a more equitable local food landscape. Additionally, we take great pride in shaping the next generation of food systems and health equity leaders by managing fellowships and internships for UC San Diego students to gain food justice-focused experiential learning opportunities.

UFE Key Accomplishments: 2024

- ✓ Secured nearly \$1M to improve food security and urban food environments
- ✓ Supported 24 local farms and ag orgs with infrastructure and technical assistance
- ✓ Engaged 2,000+ students to improve student food security
- ✓ Organized 75 leaders to collaborate on sustainable food systems and health equity at UC San Diego
- ✓ Partnered with campus units to co-lead UC President's Bonnie Reiss Climate Action Fellowship, mentoring student-led projects to support the UC's climate action goals
- ✓ Developed Growing Equity, a funding program for urban farmers aimed at promoting community food and health through urban agriculture
- ✓ Co-developed food access best practices curricula and experiential learning opportunities with two UCSD academic departments

Selected Projects and Outcomes in Action, 2024: Urban Food Equity

Testing Student-Driven Solutions to Improve Food Security at UC San Diego

This collaborative project with HWSPH and Hub Basic Needs Center is funded by the Center for Economic Justice and Action at UC Santa Cruz and is meant to study essential needs at UC campuses. This project emerged as an opportunity to address a need identified through our partnerships within UC San Diego Sustainable Food Systems and Health Equity coalition. With more than 51% of UCSD undergraduate students experiencing food insecurity, the Student Food Security Project is a UCSD campus effort to ensure that students struggling with food security have access to programs like CalFresh. On campus student outreach teams assist peers in applying for and navigating CalFresh.

CCH Strategies Employed



Research



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community
Economic
Policy

Key Outcomes

During 2024, the project:

- ✓ Engaged more than 2,000 students
- ✓ Developed two interdisciplinary convening workshops
- ✓ Hosted 75 leaders from across campus to discuss the creation of a new Sustainable Food Systems and Health Equity unit at UC San Diego

Growing Equity

Growing Equity is a new program for urban farmers in San Diego County aimed at promoting community food and health through urban agriculture. Funded with \$800,000 provided through the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), Growing Equity aims to increase access to public funding for local urban agriculture; organize and amplify urban growers as agents of change, land stewards, and community leaders; invest in California Climate Priority Population communities with urban agriculture projects; and promote community food sovereignty through local urban agriculture. The program will accomplish these goals through providing seed funding micro-grants, training/capacity building, and technical assistance for small urban farmers across the County to support farming infrastructure, supplies/equipment, workforce development, and community engagement activities.

This project is aligned with the San Diego Food Vision 2030 goals and will serve to build the capacity of lower-resourced and socially disadvantaged farmers across the county.

Key Outcomes

In preparation for the project’s official launch in 2025, accomplishments to-date include:

- ✓ Conducted 10 in-depth field interviews with farmer participants
- ✓ Co-designed award goals, parameters, and all administrative technologies and communication methods and products
- ✓ Hosted information session, office hours, 1:1 meetings and translation to support 84 individuals with application assistance
- ✓ Received 40 proposals, with plans to award 12 at \$10,000 and 3 at \$50,000

CCH Strategies Employed



Partnerships



Education



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Economic, Policy

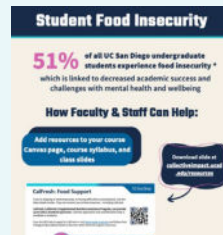


Selected Dissemination Products, 2024: Urban Food Equity



Infographic:

Student Food Security Results Fall 2024



Practitioner’s Resource:

Faculty Food Security Resources Fall 2024

REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT HEALTH

Launched within CCH in 2017, the **Refugee and Immigrant Health (RIH) Unit** works to co-create culturally responsive approaches that promote health equity and well-being in refugee and immigrant communities. Our vision is healthy and prosperous refugee and immigrant communities that are supported by equitable and inclusive systems. We serve as an institutional and community-centered resource hub to deploy evidence-based health practices, technical assistance and training, capacity-building, and research in support of refugee and immigrant communities in San Diego County and across California. We prioritize inclusive collaboration and coalition-building through community-led programs that address social determinants of health. Our strategic priorities are fostering collaborative and inclusive systems, promoting culturally responsive and affirming partnerships, and driving community-centered research and communication.

RIH Key Accomplishments: 2024

- ✓ Administered delivery of \$13M for Afghan Refugee School Impact and Afghan Youth Mentoring Programs
- ✓ Supported San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition (SDRCC)
- ✓ Supported 200 local businesses with \$750,000 in micro-grants
- ✓ Facilitated and hosted cultural sensitivity training for 79 healthcare partners
- ✓ Engaged and provided training to 26 youth leaders
- ✓ Conducted Community Assessment of youth needs with over 500 local youth and parents



Afghan Refugee School Impact and Afghan Youth Mentoring Program

The Afghan Refugee School Impact (ARSI) and Afghan Youth Mentoring (AYM) Program is a statewide program funded by supplemental funds from the Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act allocated by The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide support services to newly arrived youth and families from Afghanistan. CCH in collaboration with regional lead organizations supports the co-design and implementation of the programs across four regions within California – Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Diego. The program goals are to: 1) engage and connect Afghan youth and families with available resources, providing them the support they need to succeed academically and socially while integrating into their communities, and 2) to build CBO capacity through backbone support, including Community of Practice (CoP) training opportunities.

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy

Key Outcomes

Through the end of 2024:

- ✓ In alignment with community-identified priorities, 3,525 families were supported with direct services provided by 47 CBOs across the state of California.
- ✓ Five CoPs were held with participating CBO partners in 2024, covering topics including Fiscal and Invoicing, Hiring and HR, Sustainability, Grant Writing, Budget Development, and Program Evaluation
- ✓ Participating youth and families self-report improved resource access, social/community connections, coping skills, family relationships, and English language skills, and youth report increased school and career readiness
- ✓ CBO participants report increased organizational capacity and partnerships/collaboration

“

Intentional coaching and capacity building [were critical for] achieving broad reach. [The] structured mentorship model [provided through ARSI/AYM] played a significant role in achieving outcomes. Our region implemented a hands-on approach to support smaller and newer CBOs, building confidence and operational capacity. Given that many sub-awardees were new to government-funded programming, this intentional coaching model was critical in ensuring program success.”

- ARSI/AYM Regional Lead



San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition Policy Council

The SDRCC Policy Council (PC) aims to coordinate policy, systems, and environment change efforts across all initiatives and to represent the priorities of our refugee and immigrant communities. The SDRCC-PC meets bi-weekly for trainings, updates about the different collaborative spaces in which the SDRCC is represented, and to ensure that policy council members are accurately representing the interests of refugee and immigrant communities in their work and in external meetings across our four policy priority areas of housing, healthcare, education, and employment.

Key Outcomes

With funding from the Blueshield Foundation of California, the SDRCC Policy Council has regranted \$42,000 to eight small ethnic CBOs in the greater San Diego region to directly address community-identified priorities since 2023.

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community Policy

“

The [Refugee and Immigrant Health Unit] is a remarkable team that provides crucial support to the San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition (SDRCC). The [RIH] team is genuinely interested in uplifting refugee and immigrant communities by offering services such as workforce capacity planning, research data evaluation and reporting, professional networking and partnerships, team building, and training. These contributions have been instrumental in advancing the SDRCC's Community Health Initiative (CHI), and I am incredibly thankful for their dedication to serving our communities.”

- Moyosore Buari, San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition

Key Outcomes

In 2024, YAC members completed a Youth Community Assessment to help inform PSE changes, increase access to services, address barriers to SDOH, build on community-identified strengths, and improve the health and well-being of refugee and immigrant communities. The assessment results present youth needs and concerns, barriers to access, and protective factors. Additionally, it identifies five youth services or activities that are needed: youth job fairs, financial literacy training, employment services, mental health education, and cultural activities that foster social and community connections.

Youth Advisory Council

Launched in 2015, the CCH-facilitated Youth Advisory Council (YAC) brings together young leaders to advocate for healthy initiatives in communities that have experienced historical and systemic health in equities. YAC promotes and fosters culturally competent youth leadership. YAC's work is made possible through generous gifts from The California Endowment (TCE), Peace Makers Fund, Kaiser Permanente, as well as through the individual philanthropic community champions.

CCH Strategies Employed



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community

SDRCC Youth Assessment

Member organizations of the SDRCC partnered with the CCH RIH to conduct a comprehensive assessment of local refugee youth needs and priorities across San Diego County. A survey was administered with local youth/young adults and parents, along with focus groups in collaboration with SDRCC’s leadership and Young Leader Council (YLC). SDRCC and YLC members partnered with the RIH on instrument design, supported data collection through the SDRCC’s peer-based staff of community health workers (CHWs) and provided feedback on results.

Key Outcomes

Key findings highlighted youth needs and priorities related to education, employment/job readiness, social and emotional well-being, community safety, food access, healthcare access, and substance use.

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy

Selected Dissemination Products, 2024: Refugee and Immigrant Health



Professional Report:

SDRCC Youth Assessment 2023-2024



Professional Report:

Final Social Entrepreneurs for Economic Development (SEED) Report 2024



Professional Report:

SDRCC Community Health Initiative Report 2023

“

UCSD’s Center for Community Health is truly transforming the way that institutions and systems honor, hold, listen, and respond to community. In the several years I’ve worked alongside staff and leadership at CCH, I’ve gotten to witness countless demonstrations of truly authentic engagement with, and commitment to, community leaders and members. This has been everything from facilitating community agenda and priority setting to creating space for organizations to have the difficult and logistical conversations around power-shifting and how to compensate community members sharing the expertise of their lived experience. It extends to supporting individual community members through trying times, leveraging social capital to ensure their successful employment in the health sector serving their neighborhood, to leading the collective push on levers that are inequitable and harming community health. We also worked closely with CCH’s Youth Advisory Council to help envision and create San Diego’s first ever Office of Child and Youth Success. This head and heart-led approach really makes all the difference in the efficacy of CCH’s work, and their partnership in tackling the experience of child poverty across our region is what gives me hope that we can eventually succeed.”

- Erin Hogeboom, San Diego for Every Child

CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH

The **Child and Family Health (CFH) Unit** strengthens health equity through a coalition-driven, collective impact model that engages communities in policy, systems, and environmental change. We bring together multisector coalitions to co-develop place-based solutions that improve maternal and child health, food access, and opportunities for active living. We focus on strengthening community-led initiatives, reducing health disparities in chronic disease prevention, and bridging research with lived experience to inform sustainable solutions, while serving as a backbone for cross-sector collaboration driven by community voices.

CFH Key Accomplishments: 2024

- ✓ San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative-COI nominated for Circulate San Diego's 2024 Momentum Awards in category of Safe Streets and Vision Zero
- ✓ Community Walk Audit Report informed and included as Appendix in SANDAG's Vision Zero Action Plan
- ✓ \$5M AHA grant, Community Incubator Network (KIN), awarded for community-driven research
- ✓ Researched community priorities to address childhood obesity and partnered with Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health (HWSPH) to compare community data
- ✓ Researched impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences
- ✓ Employed precision medicine strategies in HEALTHy 4 You
- ✓ Engaged in cross-collaboration with UCSD Human Milk Institute to develop the San Diego Human Milk Access Network (SDHuMAN)



San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative (COI) is a public-private coalition with over 400 multi-sector partners dedicated to reducing and preventing childhood obesity through policy, systems, and environmental change using a collective impact model, with backbone support provided by CCH. The COI coordinates county-wide efforts, fosters partnerships, provides education and advocacy, and tracks progress toward shared goals. With active workgroups, volunteer leaders, and broad community engagement, the COI leverages diverse resources and perspectives to maximize its impact. COI is implemented by CCH in support of the Live Well San Diego vision for healthy, safe, and thriving communities. For more information, visit LiveWellSD.org.

CCH Strategies Employed



Partnerships



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community Policy

Key Outcomes

During 2024, the COI actively supported the following PSE efforts:

- ✓ Staff wellness policies in support of the Live Well @ Work program
- ✓ Messaging and awareness campaign for SUN Bucks
- ✓ Created and delivered 8-part training series on Empowering Communities, to be available as a free open access training through UCSD Extended Studies
- ✓ Completed 13 walk audits to inform environmental changes to support safe streets, including supporting advocacy efforts where walk audit results were shared with local decision makers
- ✓ Quick build and infrastructure changes in Chula Vista and Julian to increase safe streets as a result of walk audits and Community Council advocacy efforts
- ✓ Hosted a Legislative Breakfast bringing together 90 COI partners, including decision-makers and community members to engage in actionable solutions to improve active living around schools, parks, and healthcare
- ✓ Refreshed and relaunched the 5210+ campaign adding + for sleep and social media content
- ✓ Developed and launched a Healthy School Celebrations Recognition Program

“

I've witnessed firsthand the power of community-driven solutions in combating childhood obesity. Our work goes beyond numbers and statistics; it's about connecting with families, understanding their challenges, and supporting them with the knowledge and resources to lead healthier lives.”

- Regina Moreno, Founding Community Council Member, SBCS



COI Community Council: Centering Community Voice in Collective Action to Address Structural Racism and Promote Health Equity

Funded in part through the Office of Minority Health, the COI’s Community Council of 15 local residents as co-leaders within the COI, with a goal to fundamentally shift decision making authority within COI to ensure community voice is central to policy prioritization and development in alignment with local priorities.

CCH Strategies Employed



Partnerships



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy

Key Outcomes

During this first year of programming, more than 50 partners were engaged in quarterly workshops, monthly advisory group meetings, and two working groups (Access to Lactation Support and Breastfeeding-Friendly Environments). Staff presented at the 2024 HMI Symposium on the collaborative efforts.

- ✓ Awarded \$150,000 grant from the Kaiser Hospital Foundation to support:
 - ✓ Development of a Community Advisory Board
 - ✓ Implementation of a community needs assessment
 - ✓ Development of an online lactation support resource directory
- ✓ \$30,000 in mini-grant funds for CBOs

Key Outcomes

During 2024, the CC was:

- ✓ Nominated as an evidence-based community engagement program by U.S. HHS
- ✓ Highlighted in USDA Newsletter for SUN Bucks Advocacy
- ✓ Presented at the 2024 Live Well Advance with COI partners to outline success of walk audits
- ✓ Engaged in the AHA grant and developed a Next of KIN (NOK) subcommittee to lead the community-led granting program
- ✓ Former CC tri-chairs were promoted to Community Co-PIs to inform the AHA grant

San Diego Human Milk Access Network

The San Diego Human Milk Access Network (SDHuMAN) was established in 2024 and envisions a thriving community where every child and family has access to the benefits of human milk, supported by an inclusive environment that fosters awareness and acceptance of breastfeeding through collective impact.

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy

New Project: KIN: Community Incubator Network

The KIN: Community Incubator Network is a new collaborative effort between the UC San Diego’s Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science (HWSPH), CCH, the YMCA of San Diego County, and the COI with the Community Council at the center. Funded by the American Heart Association, KIN is designed to advance food access for all through community-driven research. This program is a 5-year community regranting program and seeks to reverse the research paradigm by placing the community in the decision-making role.

The KIN project includes three core components:

- Community-led granting program that funds community priorities
- Academic-led scientific methods program to support community-led grants
- Postdoctoral training program focused on community-driven research

CCH Strategies Employed



Research



Partnerships



Education



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community Policy

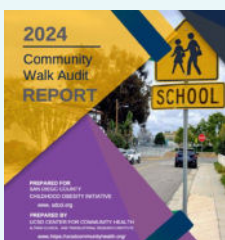


The San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition proudly joins forces with the UCSD Human Milk Institute Community-Academic collaborative, recognizing its pivotal role in understanding community health needs and improving maternal-child health outcomes in San Diego. Through close collaboration in community engagement initiatives, we aim to narrow the gap in breastfeeding data, meticulously exploring avenues to collect uniform and standardized information on breastfeeding practices among the Latino community in San Diego County. This strategic partnership is integral to advancing our collective commitment to enhancing community well-being and elevating healthcare standards.”

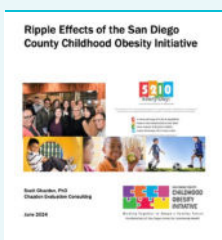
- Kiera Schminke, San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition



Selected Dissemination Products, 2024: Child and Family Health



Professional Report:
Community Walk Audit Report



Professional Report:
Ripple Effects of the San Diego Childhood Obesity Initiative



Blog Post:
SUN Bucks Outreach in San Diego County

A SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Investing in CCH's long-term sustainability will reinforce UC San Diego's commitment to health equity and advancing translational research but also expand its role as a national leader in community-driven public health. This investment will strengthen partnerships with funders, policymakers, and local communities, driving sustainable impact at every level.

Call to Action: Partner with Us to Improve Community Health

Real change starts with action. Join us in strengthening communities through community-led public health solutions to improve health outcomes, ensuring all communities have the resources to thrive – regardless of race, income, or zip code.

Your Support Will:

- ✓ **Expand community-driven research:** Create opportunities for community members to co-lead research on health disparities, ensuring their lived experiences shape solutions.
- ✓ **Strengthen community leadership in public health:** Support community members and CBOs in shaping public health policies, programs, and research through paid leadership roles.
- ✓ **Fight hunger and expand nutrition access:** Scale community-led programs like ¡Más Fresco! Plus, increasing access to affordable, healthy food while supporting local farmers.
- ✓ **Advance refugee and immigrant health:** Expand culturally affirming care, workforce training, and advocacy through the Refugee and Immigrant Health Unit.
- ✓ **Build capacity for community organizations:** Equip ethnic-led organizations with tools, funding, and partnerships to expand services, research, and advocacy.





Take Action Today:

- ✓ **Give** – Invest in community-led solutions that improve health and well-being.



- ✓ **Collaborate** – Partner with us on research, advocacy, and public health programs.
- ✓ **Get Involved** – Volunteer, share our mission, and help create lasting change.

Contact Us:

Email CCH Executive Director Blanca Melendrez, bmelendrez@ucsd.edu to explore funding opportunities, research partnerships, and collaborative projects.

Thank You!

We couldn't do this work without you and we look forward to growing our partnership to improve community health together.

“

The [Center for Community Health] provides highly respected leadership in one of the most urgent challenges researchers face when engaged in problem-solving, solutions-oriented action research for public benefit --that is, co-creating authentic community-university relationships that are equitable, trusted and transformationally impactful.”

- Keith Pezzoli, Ph.D., Teaching Professor, Dept. of Urban Studies and Planning. Director, Bioregional Center for Sustainability Science, Planning and Design. University of California San Diego

2024 IMPACT REPORT

