

Communities Creating Healthy Environments: Understanding the Landscape of Children's Health

The Landscape Mapping Process

With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and under the leadership of The Praxis Project and the Psychology Applied Research Center (PARC) at Loyola Marymount University (LMU), a Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) national landscape mapping process was conducted to:

- understand the environment and health of African American, American Indian, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Latino children in under-resourced and underserved communities;
- identify and map strategies used by community-based organizations (CBOs) to prevent childhood obesity for 0 to 5 year olds, including strategies that are not necessarily labeled as or seen as such;
- continue prior Praxis efforts to grow a core constituency of organizations advancing health equity and health justice;
- provide supports and resources to the core constituency aimed at strengthening their efforts to win policy and systems change related to 0 to 5 childhood obesity prevention; and
- identify organizational expertise and capacity building needs among the core constituency and connect groups to each other.

Health Equity & the Social Determinants of Health

The landscape mapping findings aligned with the **social determinants of health**. While health is often discussed as a matter of personal choice, our ability to make healthy choices is largely determined by the environments or conditions in which we live. Structural and historical racism and discrimination underlie how robustly present or absent the social determinants of health are. In the Praxis model, **identity, including race, gender, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation are embedded within each determinant.**

- Food Security
- Parks & Recreational Space
- Natural Environment
- Hope & Efficacy
- Community Interconnectedness
- Cultural Identity
- Transportation Access
- Affordable & Safe Housing
- Promoting Healthy Products & Services
- Community Safety
- Economic Justice
- Educational Equity
- Healthcare Access
- Immigration Policies

About LMU PARC

Housed in the Psychology Department of LMU's Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts, [PARC](#) is a grant-funded center that collaborates with a variety of CBOs and groups to inform social change and community empowerment through applied, action-oriented research. Established in 2009, under the direction of Center Director Cheryl Grills, Ph.D., PARC has conducted evaluation and technical assistance on dozens of local, state and national projects. It's CBPR is primarily focused on direct service and social justice priority issues of underserved communities of color addressing inequity, disproportionality, and disparity issues. The Center commits itself to conducting research that is participatory, culturally relevant, collaborative, and flexible, contributing to social change and products of lasting value to all stakeholders.

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About The Praxis Project

[The Praxis Project](#) is a national organization that works in collaboration with national, tribal, regional, state, and local partners to assist communities building power to achieve health justice. Our mission is to build healthy communities by transforming the power relationships and structures that affect our lives and our communities. Praxis supports policy advocacy and local organizing as part of a comprehensive strategy for change. We emphasize developing fields of work in ways that encourage multi-level trans-disciplinary learning and collaboration across issues, across the country and across the globe.

