

Overview

Since 1993, Asian Pacific Environmental Network seeks to empower low-income Asian Pacific Islander (API) communities to achieve environmental and social justice.

Mission

“All people have a right to a clean and healthy environment in which their communities can live, work, learn, play and thrive. Towards this vision, APEN brings together a collective voice to develop an alternative agenda for environmental, social and economic justice. Through building an organized movement, we strive to bring fundamental changes to economic and social institutions that will prioritize public good over profits and promote the right of every person to a decent, safe, affordable quality of life, and the right to participate in decisions affecting our lives. APEN holds this vision of environmental justice for all people. Our work focuses on Asian and Pacific Islander communities.” –APEN website



Constituency

- Asian & Pacific Islander
- Ages 15-65+
- Relative Caregivers
- Immigrants
- Undocumented
- Formerly Incarcerated

Local Conditions & Critical Issues Impacting 0-5 Childhood Health in Oakland

Forced displacement due to gentrification

Including unaffordable housing, rising rents, evictions and displacement due to immigration status.

Lack of access to quality jobs in the community

Lack of access to community health care

“Fossil Fuel Communities”

Resulting in high concentrations of air pollution (freeways) in Oakland and industrial pollution (toxic/explosive chemicals from oil refinery) surrounding residential communities and schools in Richmond—one study of Richmond households found over 50% of homes tested had indoor air levels of particulate matter above California air quality standards.¹

Limited access to public pre-K programs

Pre-school attendance was positively associated with school readiness among a sample of kindergarteners from Oakland Unified School District; 43% of the sample were “fully ready” for kindergarten.²

Reliance on grandparents/relatives as sole providers of childcare for children below the age of 5

Key Indicators of Childhood Health in Alameda & Contra Costa Counties



63.6%

In Richmond, the prevalence of childhood **asthma** was 17% (over 2x the national average of 8%).¹ In West Oakland, the rate of asthma hospitalization for children 0-5 is 2x higher than Alameda County.³

of Contra Costa children (2-11) ate 5+ servings of fruit/vegetables in the past day.⁴ 41% of children in Alameda County ate at least 5 servings of fruit/vegetables per day.⁵



Only one-third of Contra Costa 5-11 year olds meet the recommended amount of **physical activity** (1 hour daily).⁶ 49.2% of Alameda County adolescents did not engage in at least 1 hour of physical activity for 4 or more days per week.⁶

31%

of Pacific Islander children in Alameda County are **obese**.⁷ 36% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 5th graders in Contra Costa County were overweight/obese, compared to 26.5% of all 5th graders in the county.⁶

1. Lopez, A., Cohen, A., Zota, A., Morello-Frosch, R., Malloy, N., Clark, H., ... Orozco, A. (2009, June). Richmond Health Survey Report, Communities for a Better Environment. <http://www.cbecal.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Richmond-Health-Survey1.pdf>

2. Applied Survey Research. (n.d.). School Readiness in Alameda County District Report, Oakland Unified. Retrieved from http://www.first5alameda.org/files/reports_docs/Oakland_2015_SRA_District_Rpt.pdf

Current Wellness & Safety Efforts

- **Anti-housing displacement** efforts in Oakland including strategic alliance building with other organizations with a shared interest in protecting tenants of color (Latino, African American)
“So while they don’t work with Asian or Asian American or Asian immigrant populations, there’s a deep alliance there that’s being fostered across race lines, across language lines, with the shared interest of maintaining a community presence of folks of color that have helped Oakland to be what it is...maintain the richness in community.”—Mei-ying Williams, Operations Director
- **Healthcare-community linkages**—connecting families to local health care providers



Community Defined “Best Practices” to Improve Childhood Health

- **Multilingual Political Education/Leadership Development (including Linkages to Trainings)**—The APEN Academies help develop leadership/organizing skills for their youth and adult members; they serve to facilitate personal/collective empowerment and solidarity “across Asian communities and beyond”; they also connect their leaders and staff to external training opportunities *“[We] really want to engage folks on a whole family level and think about not just identifying problems but the root of the problems...they also have access to some other trainings from outside ally organizations and various coalitions.”*
- **Community Engagement**—meeting members where they are at (e.g., Tai-Chi in the park, Chinatown) and most importantly having childcare and food at meetings) is a cornerstone of their work
- **Coalition and alliance building**—like-minded organizations with similar visions and shared interest (“building bridges across national origin and language”)
- **Voter Education and Civic Engagement**—Demystifying the legislative process, Get Out The Vote drives, and activities aimed at demystifying the legislative process

Allies Working on Children’s Health

- Communities for a Better Environment – Richmond, CA www.cbecal.org
- AYPAL – Oakland, CA www.aypal.org

APEN Accomplishments in Wellness & Safety

- **Environmental Health and Safety**—In 2008, won lawsuit twice against Chevron by blocking the extension of the refinery to protect both the health of its workers and the residents living in the surrounding area
- **Anti-Eviction and Tenant Protections (including development without displacement)**—Won lawsuit against Pacific Renaissance Plaza (Oakland Chinatown) ensuring rights of families (renters) to remain in their units including construction of 50 new affordable units
- *“Especially in units where there are multiple generations of family living in one space...there are children very much present in these spaces...kids are growing up with that reality...I think the impact has really been felt in having APEN take a stand and say no that’s actually not livable...Really kind of shifting the norm and shifting expectations in communities have been really to the benefit of kids growing up and growing a deeper understanding of worth, dignity, and what fight back can look like.”*
- **Asian Pacific-American Climate Coalition (APACC)**—established a statewide policy/advocacy coalition working towards healthy green communities across California; over 100 core members help to guide state policy campaigns and organize community meetings and trainings in different regions of the state.



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the praxis project

3. Alameda County Public Health Department Place Matters Initiative, CAPE Unit. (2015, September 3). East and West Oakland Health Data Existing Cumulative Health Impacts. Retrieved from <http://www.acphd.org/media/401560/cumulative-health-impacts-east-west-oakland.pdf>

4. Contra Costa Health Services. The Richmond Health Equity Report Card. <http://cchealth.org/health-data/pdf/Richmond-Health-Equity-Report-Card-Full.pdf>

5. ChangeLab Solutions, John Snow, Inc.. (2014, May). The Health and Economic Impacts of Obesity in Alameda County. Retrieved from http://www.acgov.org/board/bos_calendar/documents/DocsAgendaReg_7_14_14/HEALTH%20CARE%20SERVICES/Regular%20Calendar/Alameda_County_Repo rt_Exec_Summ_Obesity_Rpt.pdf

6. Contra Costa Health Services. (n.d.) Childhood Overweight & Obesity. https://cchealth.org/health-data/hospital-council/2010/pdf/39_b_childhood_obesity.pdf

7. Bautista, E., et al. (2014). Alameda County Health Data Profile, 2014. Retrieved from http://www.acphd.org/media/353060/acphd_cha.pdf