

# Introduction to Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

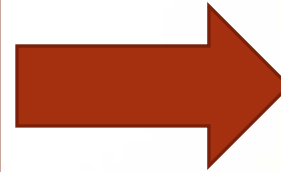


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# Background

## Stressors in the social & physical environment

- Lack of access to healthy, affordable food
- Lack of access to safe, affordable places to be physically active
- Abundance of liquor stores, fast food restaurants
- Exposure to poor air quality, illegal dumping and poor conditions in the built environment etc.




## Risk factors and poor health outcomes

Obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory diseases etc.

# Background (continued)



- ❖ Disproportionate burden of disease associated with these stressors borne by low income communities and communities of color
- ❖ Extensive set of skills, strengths and resources exist among community members to address stressors and promote health and well-being




# Background (continued)

- ❖ Historically, research has rarely directly benefited and sometimes actually harmed the communities involved
- ❖ Resulted in understandable distrust of, and reluctance to participate in, research
- ❖ Those communities most impacted by health inequities are least likely to be involved in the research process



# Background (continued)

- ❖ Public health interventions have often not been as effective as could be because:
  - Often not tailored to the concerns & cultures of participants;
  - Rarely include participants in all aspects of intervention design, implementation & evaluation;
  - Often focused only on individual behavior change with less attention to broader social & structural determinants of health and well-being



# Background (continued)

- ❖ Increasing calls for more comprehensive & participatory approaches to research and practice to understand and address health disparities
- ❖ Increasing interest in and support for such partnership approaches
- ❖ Community-based participatory research is one such partnership approach

# Rationale for CBPR

- ❖ Complex health and social problems ill-suited to “outside expert” research
- ❖ Increasing interest in health disparities
- ❖ Increasing community and funder demands for community-driven research/collaboration
- ❖ Disappointing results in intervention research
- ❖ Increasing interest in use of research to improve best practices/best processes
- ❖ Increasing understanding of importance of local context



# Definition of CBPR

“ Collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change to improve community health and eliminate health disparities.”

W.K. Kellogg Community Scholar's Program  
(2001)



# Definition of CBPR

- ❖ Community-based participatory research is a partnership approach to research that:
  - equitably involves community members, organizational representatives, and academic researchers in all aspects of the research process;
  - enables all partners to contribute;
  - enhances a common understanding; and
  - integrates knowledge gained with interventions and policy change

# Key Principles of CBPR

1. Recognizes community as a unit of identity
2. Builds on community strengths and resources
3. Promotes collaborative and equitable partnerships



# Key Principles of CBPR (continued)

4. Facilitates co-learning and capacity building
5. Balances research and action for mutual benefit of all partners



# Key Principles of CBPR (continued)

6. Focuses on determinants of health from a local standpoint
7. Disseminates findings to all partners and involves them in the dissemination process
8. Promotes long-term process and commitment





# Figure 1: Core Components/Phases in Conducting CBPR



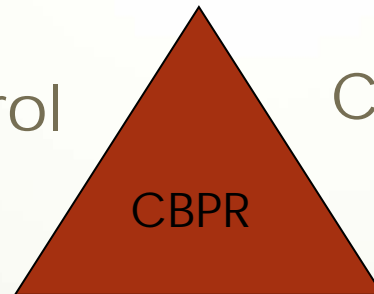
# Challenge of Research/ Community Relationships

Shared University/  
Community Control



University Control

Community Control



CBPR



# Challenge of Participation in Community

- Minimal Consultative versus Comprehensive throughout Process
- Participation Questions:
  - Who is included? Who is excluded?
  - Who is representing the community?
  - Service providers vs. community members
  - Hidden discourse (what will never be known)
- Scientific/Academic Time vs. Community Time



# CBPR Methodology at each Stage

1. Build and Maintain CBPR Partnerships (continual)
2. Identify Research Questions and Methodologies
3. Participatory Data Collection
4. Conduct Participatory Data Analysis and Interpretation
5. Conduct Participatory Dissemination
  - To community (ies)
  - To academic profession





## Maintain humility

If you have chosen a goal that is achievable in your lifetime, then it is the wrong goal. Choose the highest vision, and then just hack away at it.

*Myles Horton, founder Highlander Center*