



# Boston REACH: Partners in Health and Housing Newsletter

October 2017-March 2018 Highlights



## Whittier Street residents are empowered as their buildings undergo a Boston Housing Authority redevelopment project

Boston Housing Authority (BHA) is hosting an innovative 8-9 week long food resource group for residents impacted by the Whittier

Choice Neighborhood redevelopment project. Twelve participants have the opportunity to take field trips to community gardens, healthy affordable grocery stores, go on walking tours of their community to see how community action has driven change, hear from guest speakers around different topics including data, among other topics. The

hope is that by the end of the food resource group, residents will feel empowered to voice their opinion around food access in their community and what they would like to see come out of the redevelopment project. Meanwhile, a toolkit is being developed to empower residents for future redevelopment projects at BHA and nationwide.



Food resource group members on March 3, 2018 at the Food Project in Dudley

## An additional 1,500 residents have been screened for food insecurity

Over 1,500 food insecurity screenings were conducted between October 2017 and March 2018 at our 4 partnering community health centers (CHCs): South End, Southern JP, Uphams Corner, and Whittier St. This has been made possible with Children's Health-Watch's (CHW) continued technical assistance to the CHCs. This movement is gaining momentum, partic-

ularly in alignment with Accountable Care Organizations, and CHW and Boston REACH: PHH will be presenting successes at this April's Boston HealthNet meeting to leaders of other CHCs who may be interested in screening at their CHCs.

**Ensuring a lasting impact:** Sewing seeds and growing roots in partnerships have been a key component of

REACH: PHH. In addition to partnerships with community pillars like CHCs and non-profit food partners, Boston Public Health Commission has been a part of the Food Is Medicine Planning Counsel at Harvard Law School and helped organize a successful March Boston listening session, and is committed to continuing this work beyond the grant.

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### Upcoming events:

- 5th and Final Focus Group, in Haitian Creole (April)
- Boston HealthNet presentation (April)
- Relaunch of Landlord Smoke-free home campaign (May)
- NEHA/ HUD Annual Education Conference Presentation (June)
- BHA Unity Days (Summer 2018)

## More residents benefit from smoke-free housing

Mission Main, a mixed finance site in Roxbury went smoke-free on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, with technical assistance from PI Eugene Barros! Mission main houses 545 units.



Mission Main is now smoke-free

Additionally, BHA continues to enforce their smoke-free policy, and has been continuing to provide manager training. At the end of March 2018, landlords of 99 Section 8 units had chosen to list their units as smoke-free on BHA's website.

Boston REACH: PHH submitted an abstract around BHA's non-smoking policy enforcement to NEHA/HUD's Annual Education Conference, which got accepted! The team will be presenting this June. Additionally, Year 3 Resident Health and Wellness Survey (RHWS) Results have been shared with residents at all participating 11 developments with the aid of BHA managers who have posted large posters on site. The last RHWS focus group, which is to be conducted in Haitian Creole, is scheduled for April.

## Strengthening Communications!

Amina Egal, Boston REACH:PHH Coordinator along with other members of the BPHC Community Initiatives Bureau have been participating in a Social Media Quality Improvement (QI) Project with the BPHC Communications Office to increase audience engagement with Facebook and Twitter messages. The QI project has gradually increased the popularity of REACH:PHH tweets and has overall, improved the process developing and posting messages. This period, REACH: PHH posted 234 social media messages that totaled 441,264 media impressions. Boston REACH: PHH also featured Fair Foods in a success story, which can be read [here](#).



## Food partner shout-outs

All of our non-profit partners continue to do great work. Special shout out to **Fresh Truck**, who added an additional site at South End Community Health Center this Spring, which has contributed to an 18 fold on-site presence since the beginning of REACH: PHH. Another shout-out to **Daily Table** for opening a healthy affordable grocery store in Dudley Square this January. You can read about it [here](#). And another shout-out to colleagues at the **Office of Food Access and the Chronic Disease**



Daily Table Dudley Store Ribbon Cutting on January 19, 2018

Division for developing a Boston Food Access Guide. A copy can be accessed [here](#) in multiple languages.

## Event Highlights



Community Committee members celebrating their achievements in amplifying resident voice at the Annual Holiday dinner on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017



The Annual Resident Empowerment Gala was held on October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017 at the Boys and Girls Club. This years' theme was "Let Your Voices Be Heard"



Amina Egal and Selam Engda presenting on food insecurity screening data at the BPHC Showcase event on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017.



Community partners stand for a photo at the official Whittier Street Groundbreaking Ceremony on February 27, 2018.