

Communities Count Accomplishments

Communities Count reports were released in 2000, 2002 and 2005. Summary color inserts of reports were published in the Seattle Times. With the release of the 2005 edition, the report is “coming into its own” in the sense that agencies and persons anticipate the next report as a valuable resource for updated, regional data. The next report will be released in late 2008. Communities Count indicators have been used in important ways. The reports have shaped policy discussions, informed program development, and helped to identify funding priorities. Some examples of how the report has made an impact on local planning and action include:

- A South King County partnership was formed to address low scores on how frequently children were read to in the home. Partners included libraries, WIC clinics, pediatricians, literacy groups, and PHSKC. A new partnership with Sustainable Seattle formed in 2007 in order to push forward an action agenda around sustainable communities.
- The City of North Bend modified its action plan, changing from main street beautification to support for youth.
- Hundreds of presentations have been made to policy makers and to private and public sector groups and agencies. An analysis of health disparities found in Communities Count 2005 was provided to the Health and Human Services and Race and Social Justice Sub-Cabinets, a cross department implementation team for the Mayor’s Race and Social Justice Initiative, three specific department management teams and the Seattle Women’s Commission. The King County Board of Health requested a special report on health disparities based on results of Communities Counts’ data.
- PHSKC and United Way of King County made a commitment to monitor changes in population-level school readiness... Starting Points, a coalition of public health, community organizations and local school districts, formed to address local action agendas that support healthy early childhood development.
- The City of Burien committed \$50,000 to early childhood development programs after seeing community-specific data on school readiness.
- The Communities Count Initiative has played a significant role in forming public-private partnerships to sustain its work and to identify new indicators that reflect community interest and concern. Some examples

include:

- A partnership of local foundations was organized by The Seattle Foundation in order to assure sustained funding of the Communities Count Initiative.
- A partnership with The Urban Institute developed in order to report on the cultural vitality of King County relative to other metropolitan areas in the U.S.
- A partnership with United Way's School Readiness Impact Council emerged to identify indicators of parent nurturing and maternal depression.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognized Communities Count in the July 2007 issue of Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy. Communities Count was cited as an example of using the new paradigm in community wellness and health promotion which incorporates the role of socioecological factors and calls for expanding traditional surveillance programs.