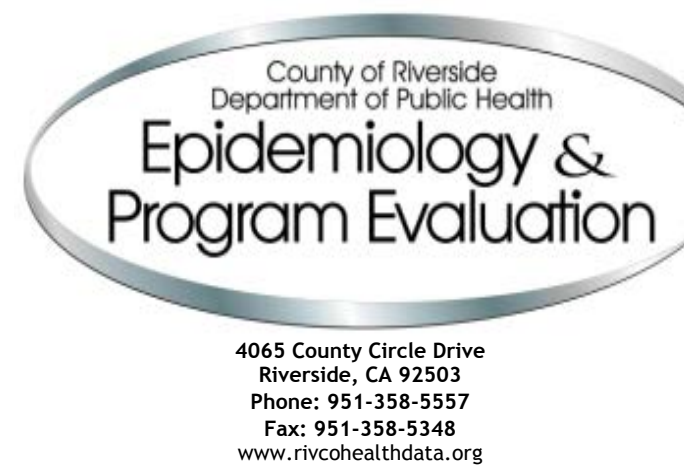


Bottom-Up, Top-Down, & Peer-to-Peer: Behind the Scenes on Policy Development

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Introduction

Riverside County Department of Public Health (RCDOPH) is charged with promoting and protecting the health of all county residents. Heading the Epidemiology & Program Evaluation/Vital Records branch of RCDOPH is Wendy Hetherington, Branch Chief. She served as project supervisor and site preceptor for the Randal Lewis Health Policy Fellows. Projects addressed health from different approaches, and required interactions with branch chiefs, department heads, line staff, community members, and professors.

Addressing Childhood Obesity

A policy brief was developed to review and share RCDOPH activities aimed at decreasing childhood obesity. Programs focused on improving access to fresh food, health education, and policy advocacy.

RCDOPH Programs

Market-Make Overs

Nutrition & Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP-SACC)

Re-Think Your Drink

Supporting Cities (CX³)

Multiple School Programs

Best practices are explored while suggesting connections between program activities and program outcomes and effects on Riverside County community members. The brief is intended to share success stories of RCDOPH with similar health entities, city officials, and interested partners in the county and elsewhere to maximize the impact on childhood obesity.



The Accreditation Process

Riverside County has officially begun the process of national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) in 2014, and is now completing their first-ever county-wide Community Health Assessment. Involving community outreach throughout the 28 cities; conducting surveys, focus groups, and community forums. Accreditation allows RCDOPH to demonstrate how they achieve the ten essential functions of public health ending with an external review from PHAB. Ultimately, ensuring county residents are receiving public health services that meet national standards of quality.

Results

Table 1. displays examples of tasks undertaken to complete the three projects, and their impacts on RCDOPH and community health.

Table 1. Project Results

| Project | Procedure | Impact |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Expanding Internship Opportunities | • Conducted needs Assessment | Improves Public Health exposure |
| | • Built relationships with colleges/universities | Cultivates future workforce |
| | • Established organizational policy | |
| Addressing Childhood Obesity | • Conducted unstructured interviews with program staff | Improves exposure to potential funders |
| | • Researched childhood obesity in Riverside County & national trends | Shares best practices with other health entities |
| | • Developed policy brief | |
| The Accreditation Process | • Reviewed the community assessment survey tool | Ensures quality improvement of community health services |
| | • Formalized community meeting agendas | |
| | • Coordinated an accreditation team | Optimizes collection of accreditation materials |
| | • Developed procedure for submitting materials | |

The overlap of these projects takes place in their ability to address most of the essential services of public health. Whereas, expanding internships to include students not traditionally recruited for public health positions, exposes them to the possibilities of practicing their craft in this setting; cultivating the future workforce. The brief is a medium to circulate best practices from RCDOPH case studies, taping multiple essential services; and, furthering the reach of programs targeting childhood obesity. Taken together, these projects can be used to demonstrate the achievement of RCDOPH according to the national standards. Overall, the work put into these projects produced overlapping, usable parts, which raised awareness of critical health concerns, but also helped RCDOPH move closer to reaching their organizational goals

Conclusions

Policy Development

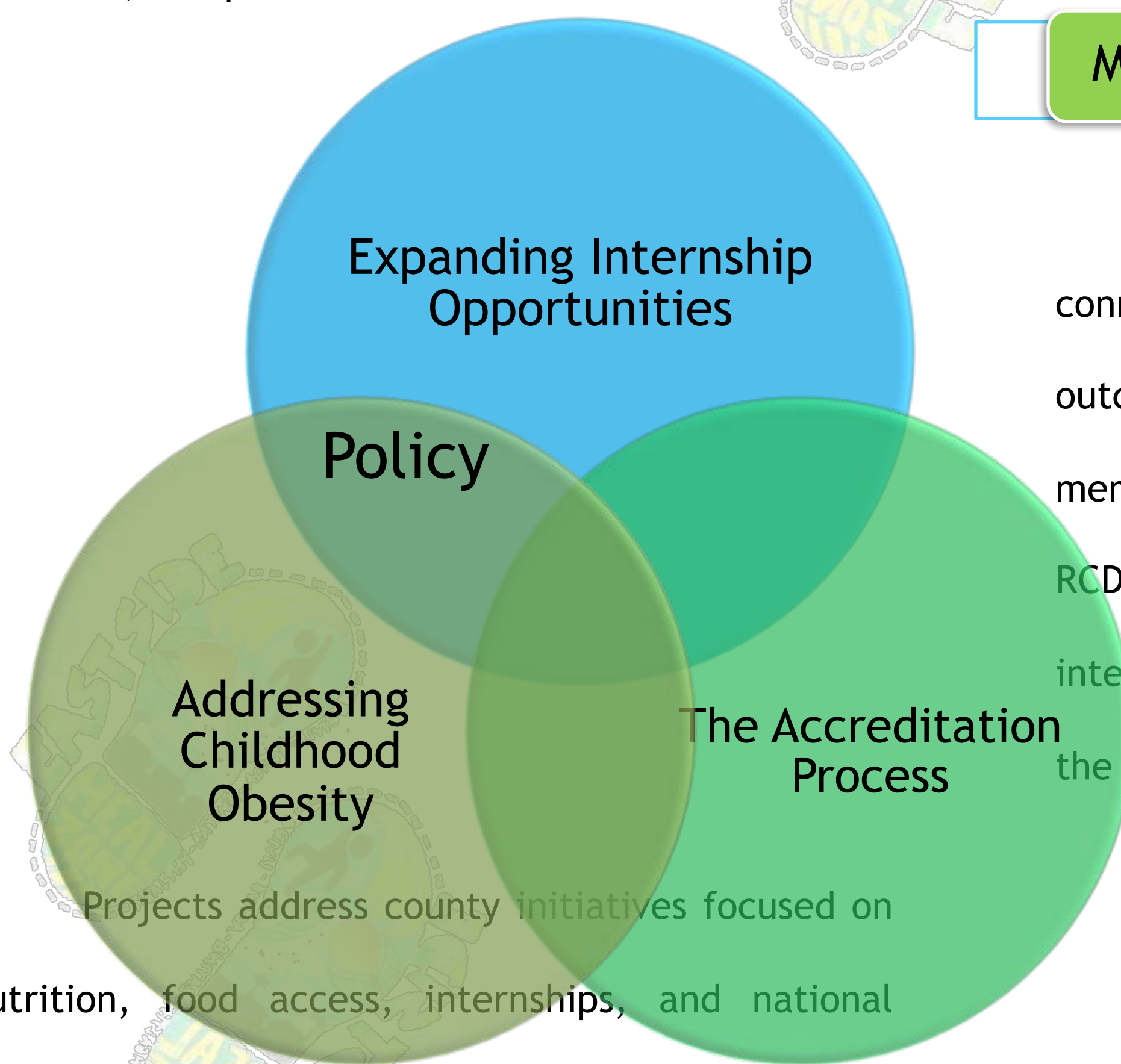
Community Dimensions of Practice

Communication

MPH Competencies Pyramid



10 Essential Competencies



Projects address county initiatives focused on nutrition, food access, internships, and national accreditation. With the connecting point to each of these projects being policy development and advocacy.

Methods

Expanding Internship Opportunities

This project developed out of a need to improve the capacity of RCDOPH to produce advertising materials that rival those created by larger health entities and, more importantly, modern streams of media that often support less than healthy behavior. The ability to compete with these organizations without a full-time staff member trained in the creative arts and familiar with the “tools of the trade” is difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, policy was developed to recruit students from local colleges and universities that are majoring in these fields to assist in the creation of advertising products.