



Healthy Places in Built Spaces

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Built Environment...

Considerable research has been done in recent decades by criminologists to understand the connection between crime in our rapidly growing and urbanized environments. Sociologists and Criminologists have increasingly started to look beyond the individual to adapt a more comprehensive view of crime and violence in our communities¹.

The Built Environment is commonly described as not only the physical places human conduct activity but encompasses the social activity that happens in these places as well.

The physical make-up of the city, where our neighborhoods are located and what residents consider as the “community” all play a part in influencing how we interact with the environment and with each other.

These interactions can influence health outcomes that follow residents long after they move out possibly disadvantaged areas².

...Its Impact on Health

Research was conducted on the various in which the built environment influences behaviors and various health outcomes^{3,4}.



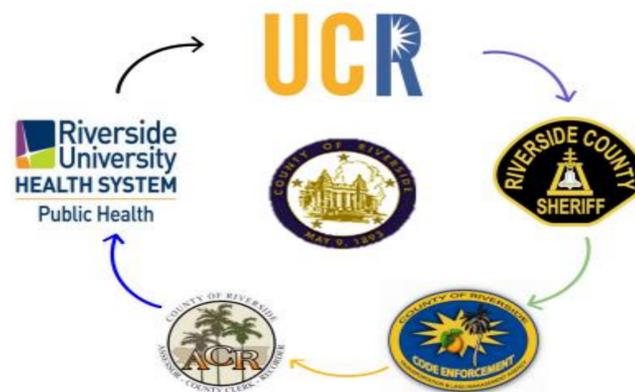
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to public transit • Sidewalks • Traffic patterns • Land use • Social services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of community pride • Domestic violence • Isolationist tendencies • Illicit activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative perceptions • Decreased physical activity • Cognitive impairment • Lack of investment |
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Key Activities

Throughout the Fellowship, research shifted beyond typical health concerns stemming from the individual and looked towards building connections to the environment. I helped build the foundations for a comprehensive narrative that include the settings in which county residents through both academic research and data analysis.

- Meet** • Met with various departments over what to incorporate and cover into our research
- Research** • Used academic and public sources and datasets to inform direction and scope of study
- Analyze** • Synthesized research to create multidisciplinary narrative document
- Produce** • Currently producing larger built environment, violence and health for future publication

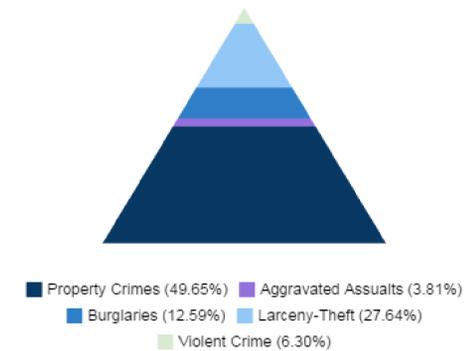
Healthier Together



Compiling data for this research initiative has been challenging due to the cross-departmental nature of the topic. The information required to get a comprehensive snapshot of the county is coming from varied sources, such as Public Health for health indicators, the state Attorney General and Sheriff’s office for crime data in the county, and Code Enforcement for various code violations.

Environmental Hazards

Crimes in Riverside County 2015



There is a disconnect between health, environment, and crime but research indicates that local criminal activity can substantially impact health outcomes throughout the lifespan.

Example of improper waste removal on residential property that contributes to issues surrounding community pride and perception and health. Courtesy of County of Riverside Code Enforcement

Conclusion

The fields of policy and health must embrace the idea that the problems of crime, violence and the built environment are interconnected to and influence each other.

Future policies and action plans must account for and plan to deal with this interconnectivity when researching and implementing programs.

A cross-departmental approach would not only benefit the work at Public Health but the conversations sparked by this project should hopefully lead to improved planning and outcomes for residents of the county.

References

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