

Boston REACH: Partners in Health and Housing *April to Sept 2017 Highlights*

Volume 3, Issue 2

Fall 2017 Newsletter

Communication Highlights

- Boston REACH: PHH is featured on Boston Neighborhood News (Aug)
- Congratulations Fresh Truck on being featured in [Civil Eats](#) (July)
- Developed and shared [2 success stories](#) (Sept)
- Developed and posted 183 social media messages with 3,618,201 media impressions

Inside this issue:

439 Boston families now have access to smoke-free housing

4 health centers provide healthy affordable food to thousands

243 residents complete 3rd annual Resident Health and Wellness Survey

8th Annual Bridging the Gap Event a success!

Congratulations Fair Foods on Winning the Boyan Award!

Thank you Resident Health Advocates

439 Boston families now have access to smoke-free housing

Smoke-exposure is linked with cardiovascular disease and other poor health outcomes. Two large management companies, **Harbor Point and St. Helena, transitioned to smoke-free** this July and September, respectively. They collectively house 439 units, 351 of which house priority population residents. Boston REACH: PHH conducted trainings for 6 large management companies to support future transition efforts and reduce unintended smoke-exposure for Boston residents.

BHA continues to make strides on improved implementation of their smoke-free policy. BHA finalized a [non-smoking policy guidebook for managers](#), and transi-

tioned the smoking complaint reporting line from project to BHA Operations staff. To implement **HUD's recent smoke-free ruling** – BHA updated their smoke-free policy to include the prohibition of hookahs and pipes, and increased the smoke-free boundary around BHA buildings from 15 to 25 feet. Signage was posted and residents were notified via rent statements in multiple languages.

Section 8 rental apartment openings are listed on BHA's housing portal. BHA has been increasing visibility of the smoke-free check box allowing Section 8 landlords to disclose whether their units are smoke-free, by sending reminder e-mail messag-



es and posting a reminder on the front page of the portal. This has resulted in a **steady increase in smoke-free unit disclosures** – from 15% of the disclosed units being smoke-free in March 2017 to 17% in June 2017 to 19% in September 2017. Smoke-free is often an amenity at high end complexes, that is now being marketed to Section 8 tenants.

4 Health centers provide healthy affordable food access to thousands

Boston Community Health Center (CHC) patients, many whom are BHA residents have benefited from over 5,100 on-site healthy affordable food transactions at 4 CHCs in just 6 months. That has contributed to a total of over **15,300 on-site healthy affordable food transactions** since the beginning of the project. This has been made possible in partnership with [Childrens Health-Watch](#) (CHW) and committed health center staff and non-profit food partners, Boston Foods, Fair Foods, and Fresh Truck.

Through Fresh Truck's City of Boston parking waiver at

South End Community Health Center (SECHC) in 2015 Fresh Truck has been able to triple its presence and be a healthy food access point for more residents right where they are. More recently they **committed to doubling that presence this fall** (totaling 12 hours/month, and 6-fold the access at the start of Boston REACH: PHH). This is just one example of how clinical-community partnerships have continued to grow and support residents.

With Technical Assistance and a fully-implemented and operational Community of Practice led by CHW, all 4 CHCs (South End, Southern JP, Uphams Corner, and Whittier

Street) have built food insecurity screening questions into their workflow, utilizing the 2 question validated tool, the Hunger Vital Signs. CHW will continue to lead the Community of Practice (CoP) in the project extension year. Anyone who is interested in joining the CoP is welcome and can contact Aileen at ashen@bphc.org.



UPCOMING EVENTS

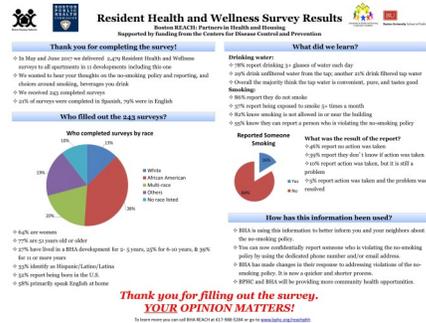
REC Gala (Oct)
CC Holiday Party (Dec)
Focus Groups
(Winter 2017/2018)

Follow us on Twitter
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Check us out at
www.bphc.org/reachphh

Third and final annual Resident Health and Wellness Survey Completed

The third and final round of Resident Health and Wellness Surveys went out in May, with two rounds each, totaling 2,479 surveys distributed across 11 Boston Housing Authority (BHA) developments. 243 responses were returned completed, and analyzed. Results were similar to that of previous years, with most respondents being older females. Results have been shared at numerous meetings and events, including September's Bridging the Gap Event. Posters have been printed for posting at each participating development.



Resident Health and Wellness Survey Results Poster

8th Annual Bridging the Gap Event a success! Over 60 participants joined the event at Amory Street on Saturday September 16th. Thanks to John Kane for sharing updates about the smoking complaint tracking database, and to Boston Foods for doing a pop-up event.



Congratulations Fair Foods on Winning the Boyan Award!



Thank you Resident Health Advocates for your hard work, and congratulations on your acknowledgement by BHA Administrator Bill McGonagle!

