

Connecticut State Profile

Building Resilient Inclusive Communities

Overview

Building Resilient Inclusive Communities (BRIC) is a program of the [National Association of Chronic Disease Directors](#) (NACDD) [Center for Advancing Healthy Communities](#). NACDD and its more than 7,000 Members seek to improve the health of the public by strengthening leadership and expertise for chronic disease prevention and control in states, territories, and at the national level. Established in 1988, in partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NACDD is the only membership association of its kind serving and representing every state and U.S. territory's chronic disease division.

In collaboration with the CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO) and the Division of Population Health (DPH), and a team of nationally recognized experts, NACDD is providing funding to 20 states (including 15 DNPAO SPAN-funded states and five DNPAO Ambassador states) to implement BRIC at both a state and local level. As part of the program, states are engaging more than 60 communities to address food and nutrition security, safe physical activity access, and social connectedness through policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change strategies. Social determinants of health, health equity, and social justice principles are integrated into the planning and implementation of all three strategy areas, in addition to accounting for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on groups at highest risk.

The initial project period was Jan. 1, 2021 – Dec. 31, 2021; an additional year of funding was awarded in 2021 and again in 2022, expanding the project period to Dec. 31, 2023. Connecticut accepted BRIC funding for Years 1-2 only. These profiles represent the state- and community-level activities planned by each BRIC state.

Learn more about the [BRIC program](#) or e-mail BRICinfo@chronicdisease.org.

State-Level Activities

Overarching

- Collaborate with Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) staff from Chronic Disease, State Physical Activity and Nutrition, and Public Health Systems and Equity (PHSE) to inform assessment of existing state partners related to health equity.
- Partner with the DPH PHSE and other organizations, as needed, to inform the implementation of the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) including participating in at least one SHIP coalition working group – the Healthy Food and Housing work group – to develop and implement action plan items that support food and nutrition security, equity, resilience, and COVID-19 recovery.
- Collaborate with the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) and other organizations to coordinate efforts that support implementation of the Connecticut State Plan on Aging 2021-2023.

Food and Nutrition Security

- Partner with Connecticut Foodshare to develop and implement a series of trainings for food pantries/anchor organizations on recovering from COVID-19 and improving equity through Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP) and client choice implementation.
- Participate in the Connecticut Food Policy Council meetings to coordinate state efforts and report on BRIC progress.
- Partner with Connecticut Foodshare to conduct capacity assessments with select food pantries to identify agencies most ready to implement client choice and nutrition guidelines with SWAP.
- Partner with Connecticut Foodshare and Connecticut's SNAP-Ed programs to further expand SWAP and client choice in five additional pantries.
- Purchase materials for SWAP implementation, such as posters, shelf tags, and training materials, and produce up to three (3) short videos for use on social media, website, and other communication channels on stigma associated with seeking food assistance, how to access food assistance, and volunteer opportunities.

Safe Physical Activity Access

- Partner with Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) to address equity statewide by providing a training on racial equity, the importance of expanding partnerships, and addressing COVID-19 impacts to improve access to physical activity for statewide Active Living and Active Transportation (ALAT) committee and community partners. ALAT is a statewide committee, which provides oversight to SPAN and BRIC physical activity and active transportation activities.
- CRCOG will convene the ALAT statewide committee and present community-level information on BRIC activities related to physical activity access, health equity, and COVID-19 to ensure state coordination of equitable access.

Social Connectedness

- Develop partnership with the DADS to identify state- and community-level partners and potential PSE activities/initiatives.
- Collaborate with DADS to coordinate efforts and support implementation of social connectedness strategies in State Plan on Aging.
- Meet with SHIP 2020-2025 Community Strength and Resilience workgroup members to ensure coordination of efforts related to social connectedness, equity, and COVID-19 recovery.

Community-Level Activities

Bridgeport (Urban)

Food and Nutrition Security (*Reaching an estimated 9,514 residents*)

- Establish mobile fresh produce/pantry at three low-income senior housing complexes in the East End Neighborhood of Bridgeport with support from trained local youth.
- Identify at least one site to participate in financial incentive programs such as Double Up Bucks or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

- Conduct a survey with East End seniors to assess needs related to food and nutrition security and social connectedness. East End Neighborhood Revitalization Zone committee will distribute the survey to lower income, Black, Hispanic, Haitian, and Jamaican senior residents in the East End neighborhood of Bridgeport.
- Support greater access (three sites) to healthy foods for East End seniors living in low-income senior housing complexes in collaboration with Bridgeport Food Pantries; engage youth volunteers from schools and community-based organizations to support food distribution.

Social Connectedness (*Reaching an estimated 1,260 residents*)

- Secure partnership agreements between the East End Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Committee, United Cerebral Palsy of Eastern Connecticut (UCP), Connecticut Tech Act Project, and other community partners to support seniors and seniors with disabilities (from senior housing complexes) in accessing technology through donated devices and broadband access with training and support from local youth. The technology training will be the gateway for youth and seniors to connect on life experiences among other topics.
- East End Neighborhood partners will develop partnerships and supporting Memorandums of Agreement with schools and youth serving organizations to help sustain the partnership and programs.

Hartford (Urban)

Food and Nutrition Security (*Reaching an estimated 26,900 residents*)

- Connecticut Foodshare will collaborate with existing food pantry networks, Mayor's committee on food access, and Hartford Food Policy Commission to identify planning process and priorities towards building a coordinated food pantry network in Northeast Hartford. A community advisory group of residents will inform the project plan and implementation, and ensure equity is considered in terms of client experience and food choices.
- Connecticut Foodshare will collaborate with community partners to host two to four focus groups with Hartford residents to understand barriers to accessing charitable food, inform planning priorities, and ensure equity is considered.
- Connecticut Foodshare will collaborate with the Hartford Food Policy Commission to draft and share associated policy related to recommendations from pantries and residents.
- Connecticut Foodshare will fund up to 10 food pantries to support efforts to distribute healthy foods and improve infrastructure through refrigeration and shelving.

Safe Physical Activity Access (*Reaching an estimated 14,660 residents*)

- Convene advisory group with community representatives from Frog Hollow neighborhood to provide guidance and ensure that equity considerations are at the forefront.
- Conduct initial infrastructure assessment and series of community meetings to install diverters and inform neighborhood of active transportation plan.
- Install diverters at select intersections in Frog Hollow and Clay Arsenal neighborhood; locations will be based on community input.

- Develop final active transportation plan based on lessons learned from diverter pilot.
- Develop final neighborhood traffic calming plan.

New Haven (Urban)

Safe Physical Activity Access (*Reaching an estimated 5,175 residents*)

- Install a series of demonstration projects at key neighborhood intersections that will improve safety in neighborhoods with vulnerable populations; expand the existing city-wide plan with lessons learned. Demonstration projects will be based on previously held community meetings.

Health Equity Spotlight

- Partner with DPH PHSE and other organizations to inform implementation of SHIP; participate in the Healthy Food and Housing work group of the DPH SHIP coalition to develop and implement action plan items that support food and nutrition security, equity, resilience, and COVID-19 recovery.



BUILDING
resilient inclusive
COMMUNITIES

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