

# Washington 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. 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](mailto:BRICinfo@chronicdisease.org).

### State-Level Activities

#### Overarching

- Conduct state-level partnership assessment to identify opportunities for partnership development with strategic emphasis on supporting state plan activities that work across teams, agencies, and with external partners to center historically and currently minoritized populations that include, but are not limited to, Black, Native American, Pacific Islander, Latinx and various other populations disproportionately experiencing health inequities.
- Demonstrate Washington State's dedication and commitment to state-wide equity through representation on NACDD's Health Equity Advisory Council.
- Partner with Department of Health's Center for Public Affairs (C4PA) to integrate activities to mitigate, prepare, and/or respond to the impact of COVID-19. Activities aim to support state COVID-19 pivots via recommendations in the areas of improved food and nutrition security;

opportunities for safe, accessible, and equitable spaces for physical activity and transportation (with social distancing); and social connectedness for the State's advanced-age population. Additional attention is given to acknowledging and addressing the intersection of these focus areas with socio-demographics known to increase risk for adverse complications from COVID-19, including advanced age, disability, and/or identifying as a minoritized population member, into the next iteration of the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). It is the intention of Washington State to deliberately seek input and buy-in from equity stakeholders in review and formulation of recommendations.

- Partner with Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to integrate actions for improving social connectedness for the State's advanced-age population, with special attention paid to age, ability, and marginalized populations, into the next iteration of the State Plan on Aging (SPOA).

#### Food and Nutrition Security

- Participate on equity workgroup for the Washington State Food Policy Forum to ensure application of an equity lens in state policy and programming efforts to address COVID-19 food systems-related concerns.
- Secure funding from Department of Agriculture to expand fruit and vegetable incentives during COVID-19. The Washington Fruit and Vegetable Incentive Program is addressing health equity through the creation of a SNAP Consumer Advisory Committee composed of program participants.
- Identify key strategies to address food and nutrition security priorities within the Healthy Eating Active Living program.

#### Safe Physical Activity Access

- Convene meetings with existing and new physical activity partners to educate on barriers to safe physical activity access with respect to health equity and COVID-19.
- Participate with Walla Walla county's Blue Zones project, upholding the State's commitment to health equity and COVID-19 response centering those most impacted.
- Host quarterly calls with the Department of Transportation to foster cross-agency collaboration between public health and transportation partners around promotion of built environments that are both activity friendly and invite active transportation. Additionally, calls will review and uplift emerging research related to best practices for centering health equity in physical activity promotion.
- Host NACDD's Walkability Action Institute for up to nine communities.

#### Social Connectedness

- Collaborate with DSHS and other stakeholders involved in updating the SPOA to incorporate strategies that support social connectedness among Washington's advanced-age population.
- Work with Arthritis partners to identify PSE changes to support safe physical activity opportunities that promote social connection through a lens of equity and acknowledge the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Washington's advanced-age population.

- Represent Office of Safe and Healthy Communities on committee addressing age-friendly public health systems to promote incorporation of BRIC social connectedness strategies into SPOA/SHIP.

## Community-Level Activities

### Ferry County (Rural, Tribal)

#### Food and Nutrition Security (Reaching an estimated 290 residents)

- Rural Resources Community Action will establish a planning Community Collective to assess and address the needs of Ferry County and Confederated Tribes of Coleville residents related to food and nutrition security. The aim of the Collective is to enhance food and nutrition security via increased access to nutritious and culturally relevant foods. Procurement strategies of culturally relevant foods include opportunities for Indigenous-led programming to grow such foods. Programming, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous led, are noted to provide social connectedness opportunities at the Inchelium Community Connection site and associated community garden.

#### Social Connectedness (Reaching an estimated 1010 residents)

- The Inchelium Community Connections site will serve as a safe space for Ferry County and Confederated Tribes of Coleville residents to gather. The site will become an established social health access resource point for the Ferry County community as well as a place offering programs for enhanced wellness. The Inchelium Community Connection Site is a permanent meeting place where individuals can safely connect, explore, and share their own unique culture while coming together to grow both traditional and western foods. The Collective will develop partnership agreements with various community stakeholders and other anchor institutions to sustain efforts and opportunities for the community to connect.

### King County (Urban)

#### Food and Nutrition Security (Reaching an estimated 250,200 residents)

- Prioritize access to nutritionally dense and culturally relevant foods as part of The King County Emergency Food Coordination Call formed directly in response to COVID-19. The group includes emergency food system stakeholders at the state, local, foundation, and non-profit level who meet regularly to share knowledge, resources, and funding opportunities; network; and strategically plan for regional food and nutrition security promotion.
- Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate technical assistance to support grocers in successful business mastery of point-of-sale systems that automatically integrate Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) incentive, generating a continued implementation of the SNAP/EBT incentive program and better connecting King County residents using SNAP to culturally relevant foods.
- Provide support to Washington Food Coalition (WFC) in adopting and implementing nutrition standards that align with Healthy Eating Research Guidelines and Dietary Guidelines for Americans to prioritize the procurement and distribution of nutritionally dense and culturally relevant foods.
- Support WFC member agencies in developing their own nutrition standards that promote increased food and nutrition security through access.

## **Pacific (Rural)**

### Food and Nutrition Security (Reaching an estimated 3,738 residents)

- Establish a diverse network of partners dedicated to addressing health inequity through the promotion of increased food and nutrition security. These efforts seek to center those at higher risk of COVID-19-related complications including those of advanced age (notably higher on average in this community than the State average, [32.2% versus 15.4%](#)).
- Assess needs for expansion of services due to the influx of homebound seniors amidst COVID-19.

### Social Connectedness (Reaching an estimated 7,069 residents)

- Work with local community-based healthcare providers to implement a screening and referral system to successfully identify risk of food and nutrition insecurity and social isolation in seniors and connect them to appropriate resources. The referral will connect older adults to a local community-based organization that will serve as a “hub” and coordination point for checking-in with seniors and connecting them to resources that may fit their current needs related to food and nutrition insecurity and/or social isolation.

## **Wahkiakum (Rural)**

### Food and Nutrition Security (Reaching an estimated 622 residents)

- Provide support to the area food pantries to increase distribution of nutrient-dense, perishable foods by aiding in the purchase of said foods and expansion of cold storage capacity.
- Forge relationship with Wahkiakum Senior Center to support and leverage aggregate meal programs to promote connections to food and nutrition security resources and other social health programming.

### Social Connectedness (Reaching an estimated 1,459 residents)

- Participate in Community Outreach Coalition meetings to address the issue of social isolation and social connectedness amongst older adults.
- Assess and modify existing space at the Wahkiakum Senior Center where physical activity and social connectedness programming are offered for area seniors. Modifications will be made in collaboration with community-based organizations and community residents to provide more opportunities for gathering safely.

## **Yakima (Rural)**

### Physical Activity Access (Reaching an estimated 96,968 residents)

- Form community partnerships among strata of stakeholders that share the common goal and vision of addressing health equity through creating safer and more inclusive spaces for walking/biking. Partnerships include those with community groups, stakeholders, community-based organizations, and clinics that can center efforts in response to the needs specific to Yakima County. Key players include Yakima Bikes and Walks! Clinics, Cowiche Canyon Trail, PNWU, Yakima Greenway, Yakima County, Yakama Tribal Safety & HCT, and Yakima Parks and Recreation.
- Conduct at least two environmental observation assessments of trail/greenways to evaluate the environment, physical elements, and qualities of their functionality.

- Consult with the community to assess needs and improvements to Yakima County trails/greenway and Yakima Tribal Reservation using multiple community engagement methods including social media; email through interested Yakima County employers, clinics, and community-based organizations; and through community health workers.
- Implement non-permanent trail improvements to Yakima Greenway based on assessment results and community feedback that reflect improved accessibility, inclusion, and health equity.
- Participate in the Eastern Park Rx Regional Advisory Committees to assist the development of pilot Parks Rx.

### Health Equity

- Washington ensures the long-term health of partnerships by continuing conversations around equity, sustainability, and looking critically at the long-term impacts of PSE change to support and foster partnerships representing those communities that have been historically excluded and those that continue to be marginalized.
- Create spaces for conversations and action planning across team, agency, and state health entities to coordinate social health access referral points to address healthy equity gaps related to and beyond COVID-19.



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