

West Virginia 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.

State-Level Activities

Overarching

- Join the statewide coalition Take Back Our Health (TBOH) West Virginia committee and incorporate BRIC strategies into the overall TBOH workplan.
- Partner with public health offices and other organizations, as needed, to inform future development of the State Public Health Improvement plan (SHIP).

Food and Nutrition Security

- Partner with Mountaineer Food Bank (MFB) to develop and implement a statewide training for BRIC community partners and MFB members across the state on food service guidelines to improve access to nutritious foods.
- Develop a Healthy Food Donation campaign in coordination with MFB to encourage donations of healthier foods at food pantries statewide.

Safe Physical Activity Access

- Collaborate with Coalition for Active West Virginia to support safe physical activity and built environment initiatives in each BRIC community.



Social Connectedness

- Partner with the Bureau of Senior Services and other organizations, and serve on the planning committee, to inform future development of the State Plan on Aging.

Community-Level Activities

Boone (Rural)

Food and Nutrition Security *(Reaching an estimated 300 residents)*

- Assess the nutritional and cultural food needs of seniors and other food pantry clients.
- Participate in county-wide nutrition standards training led by Mountaineer Foodbank.
- Partner with Mountaineer Foodbank to adopt nutrition standards to increase access to healthier foods at the Brushton, Ashford, Ridgeview, Nellis (BARN) Community Center feeding site.
- Provide support for storing healthy foods at BARN Community Center through purchase of freezers, refrigeration, and portable generator.

Safe Physical Activity Access *(Reaching an estimated 21,312 residents)*

- Collaborate with BARN Family Resource Network physical activity workgroup supporting Boone County.
- With community partners, make needed enhancements to the walking trail at the BARN Community Center to improve safety and increase usage; examples of enhancements include benches, signage, picnic tables, portable lighting, improved basketball courts, and various sports equipment.
- Plan series of outreach events to encourage community gathering at the BARN Community Center.

Social Connectedness *(Reaching an estimated 21,312 residents)*

- BARN Regional Family Resource Network, BARN Community Center, and West Virginia University (WVU) School of Public Health's, Office of Health Services Research will inventory opportunities in the county to address social isolation and include them on the West Virginia Health Connections platform for individual and physician referrals.
- Offer opportunities for youth to learn important life skills, gardening, and food preservation skills from seniors through greenhouse and apple orchard maintenance.

Clay County (Rural)

Food and Nutrition Security *(Reaching an estimated 8,051 residents)*

- Assess the nutritional needs of Risen Lord Food Pantry clients.
- Partner with Mountaineer Food Bank to explore nutrition standards/guidelines to increase access to healthier foods at the pantry.
- Purchase upright freezer, refrigerator, and cooler bags for storing healthy foods at the pantry.
- WVU Extension Service will provide support for growing healthy foods for distribution by purchasing planters and raised beds for a community garden.

Safe Physical Activity Access *(Reaching an estimated 7,892 residents)*

- Clay County Extension agents will lead a physical activity coalition to develop and implement a connectivity plan in downtown Clay.

- The coalition, along with Center for Active West Virginia and Be Healthy West Virginia (High Obesity Prevention, HOP, program) will assess the needs of the community related to physical activity via focus groups and co-design sessions with community residents to inform the plan.
- Create changes in walkability and safety through enhancements to a rail trail corridor and connections to downtown amenities including pedestrian markings and signage, crosswalk markings, trail kiosk, streetscape items such as planters and signage, multi-use path materials such as benches, sand, bike fixit stations, and other trailhead improvements.

Social Connectedness (Reaching an estimated 7,892 residents)

- WVU Extension agents will create a collaborative of Clay County partners including Clay Senior and Community Services, Town of Clay, Clay Family Resource Network, and Clay Fire Department to implement intergenerational programs.
- Establish a community garden partnership between senior center attendees and families from low-income housing units in downtown Clay.

McDowell County (Rural)

Food and Nutrition Security (Reaching an estimated 3,600 residents)

- Partner with Mountaineer Food Bank to support adoption of nutrition standards at McDowell County Commission on Aging (MCOA) Feeding Site.
- Adopt policy to ensure that 75% of produce grown through MCOA High Tunnel will support the MCOA feeding site for older adults.

Safe Physical Activity Access (Reaching an estimated 3,590 residents)

- The City of Welch will collaborate with the Physical Activity Coalition, the Center for Active West Virginia, and Be Healthy West Virginia (HOP) to assess the needs of the community through focus group and co-design sessions with community members around addressing access to physical activity opportunities.
- Develop and implement a connectivity plan in downtown Welch focusing on expanding physical activity access and enhancing community connections.
- Create changes in walkability and safety through enhancements to a local park and trail and connections to downtown amenities including lighting, ensuring ADA compliance, wayfinding signs and paint, additional crosswalks, and trail beautification.
- Promote City of Welch activities and co-design planning meetings through social media.

Social Connectedness (Reaching an estimated 45 residents)

- MCOA will train senior in-home workers to use West Virginia Health Connection to refer senior clients to places in the community for opportunities for social connection, physical activity, and other supports.
- Implement an intergenerational mentoring program between seniors at Welch Senior Center & Bradshaw Senior Center and local youth programs to enhance social connection through maintenance of the MCOA High Tunnel. Youth will be recruited from the local 4-H Program in Welch and Bradshaw, McDowell County Students Against Destructive Decisions Chapter, and Bradshaw Elementary School. Programs will be supported via interagency partnership agreements between MCOA, youth organizations, and WVU Extension. MCOA will utilize AmeriCorps summer VISTA Associates to continue the intergenerational programs.

Mingo County (Rural)

Food and Nutrition Security (Reaching an estimated 1,000 residents)

- Healthy in the Hills Network and Williamson Health & Wellness Center will partner to support the nutritional needs of Mingo County residents.
- Purchase freezer/refrigeration to improve food storage capacity at the local feeding site within Williamson Health & Wellness Center.
- Support refrigerated transportation to deliver food to residents via My Mobile Market (refrigerated trailer), Consumer Supported Agriculture from Williamson Farmers Market, and healthy meal kit distribution with recipe cards and produce from Williamson Farmers Market.
- Attend virtual workshops on the adoption and implementation of food services guidelines in partnership with Mountaineer Food Bank.
- Implement one new/updated policy each year based on identified pantry priorities.

Safe Physical Activity Access (Reaching an estimated 2,500 residents)

- Co-design planning event with Williamson Parks and Recreation to gather perspective about the bike trail project plan and bike trail map.
- Support the county's Community Health Improvement Plan, which includes interventions to improve healthy eating, active living, transportation, and behavioral health.
- Create changes in walkability and safety through enhancements to a bike trail in West Williamson including support for a community hub/meeting space, a bicycle share program, and accessibility additions to a neighborhood playground.
- Increase access to physical activity through pop-up playground and parks improvement initiative to bring mobile playground to neighborhoods that lack access to parks and equipment.
- Work with local mural artist and community volunteers to design and paint a high visibility mural to promote underutilized trails.

Raleigh County (Rural)

Safe Physical Activity Access (Reaching an estimated 17,286 residents)

- City of Beckley, in collaboration with Active Southern West Virginia, Beckley Pride, and Beckley Public Health will assess the food and nutrition security, safe access to physical activity, and social isolation needs of the LGBTQ community.
- Support safe physical activity access and assess current walking and biking in and around the City of Beckley using an automated bicycle/people counter.
- Along with City of Beckley, purchase exercise equipment and shelving for the West Virginia Gay and Lesbian Community Center.
- Train City of Beckley employees on the assessment of local community design and improving safe and equitable access for walking and biking with current and future projects.
- Meet with state-level policy makers to assess safe crosswalks on state roads within city limits.
- Increase/update the number of crosswalks, share the roads signs, art projects, trail improvements, benches, bike racks and trash cans to enhance existing walking and biking trails in Beckley.
- Install outdoor solar lighting on walking path between the WVU Institute of Technology main campus on Kanawha Street and the satellite building on Neville Street.
- Develop a plan to design a network of outdoor recreation to connect communities to healthy means of transportation and places to recreate in City of Beckley.

Wyoming (Rural)

Food and Nutrition Security (Reaching an estimated 3,510 residents)

- Expand Go Grocery Market (Mobile Farmers Market) to make additional stops in Wyoming County. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)-Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), SNAP Stretch (double-up SNAP program), Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and senior vouchers are accepted at all market stops. The Go Grocery Market provides residents access to fresh fruits and vegetables in this very rural county.
- Purchase additional refrigeration/freezer equipment to support Go Grocery Mobile Market.
- Onboard one local grocery store in Wyoming county to accept SNAP, EBT, WIC, and senior vouchers.

Social Connectedness (Reaching an estimated 3,510 residents)

- Planned placemaking activities will occur at Go Grocery Market stops with community members and mayors. This will include creative events like seed exchanges, recipe swaps, and opportunities for farmers to share their experiences growing a variety of crops.
- Engage local youth in all facets of produce distribution at each route to increase opportunities for social connection. Youth will be supported by SNAP Ed/Family Education staff through activities such as Kids Market where youth receive a passport to redeem \$4 worth of goods, weekly activities, and recipes.

Health Equity

- Coordinate with the Office of Minority Health, West Virginia Health Equity Action Team, and Healthy People Healthy Places Equity Team to conduct a virtual equity workshop series for all BRIC counties.



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