Healthy Homes Grantees in Region X, Northwest/Alaska

Name of Grantee: Neighborhood House
Name of Project: High Point Healthy Homes and Community: Breathe Easy Home Demonstration Project
Amount Awarded: $850,000
Year of Grant: 2003 - 2007
Contact Info:
Denise Tung Sharify, 206-431-8430, nhouse@nhwa.org

Project Partners: Public Health Seattle and King County, Seattle Housing Authority, University of Washington and Simon Fraser University, Puget Sound Neighborhood Health

Summary of Project Activities:
"The goals of environmental health are to maintain a healthy, livable environment for humans and other living species, an environment that promotes well being and a high quality of mental and physical health for its inhabitants. Responsible leadership requires that policy makers, health professionals, industry representatives, and the general public all carry an expanded and enhanced vision of environmental health forward into the 21st century. New approaches will be required, including strategies to deal with waste, unhealthy buildings, urban congestion, suburban sprawl, poor housing, poor nutrition and environmentally related stress.

Institute of Medicine Workshop, June 2000

For many decades, America's public housing projects have provided refuge for disenfranchised populations. Today, across the nation, many housing projects are being transformed through the Department of Housing and Urban Development's HOPE VI program, which both upgrades the quality of homes and integrates residents within new, mixed-income communities.

The organizations in our partnership have been working for several years to improve environmental health in our community with a special focus on reducing asthma among children. Our continuum of work has spanned the past seven years and has included the following services:

- Conducting assessments of homes and identifying hazards
- Educating and empowering families to reduce asthma trigger exposures in their homes
- Remediating existing homes with structural defects
- Providing outreach and disseminating information about risk reduction
- Creating incentives for longer-term household change to improve family health.

The Seattle Housing Authority's HOPE VI project at High Point offers a unique opportunity to take the next step in our research by showing the benefit of providing new homes designed to reduce asthma together with new approaches to community education.
This grant will take advantage of the 'natural experiment' presented by the HOPE VI project.

**Goal.**

Our project's primary goal is to design and build a community that supports human health and the health of the environment. The community at High Point consists of people who have long faced many challenges—language barriers and cultural obstacles, lack of job opportunities and access to services, and low incomes. In response to a special community need, this project is designed to address multiple components of the environment—social, biological, chemical, built-in an integrated intervention to reduce asthma morbidity, and to test the effectiveness of that strategy. We bring together three systems—new construction, community-based education and rigorous scientific analysis—in an effort to help the people with asthma that live at High Point to improve their health and lives.

**Partners.**

Each organization in our partnership brings long experience and special expertise in working toward the shared goal of improving environmental health for the children and families at High Point:

- **Neighborhood House (N111)** is a community-based organization active in the Seattle and King County since 1906 and at High Point since 1966. The mission of NH is to help diverse communities of people with limited resources attain their goals for self-sufficiency, financial independence and community building. Neighborhood House is our lead agency, and will provide overall coordination and multilingual community education.

- **The Seattle Housing Authority (SHA)** is a municipal corporation whose mission is to create and sustain decent, safe and affordable living environments for people with low incomes. SHA is responsible for the redevelopment of High Point, and will lead the construction tasks in this proposal.

- **UW/Public Health Seattle King County (UW/PHSKC)** has a strong track record of working to improve environmental health in the region through both services and research. LTW/PHSKC will lead the assessment, data collection and analysis, and evaluation tasks for the project.

**Objectives.**

Our partnership has the following objectives:

- to leverage the resources being invested in the physical transformation of High Point into measurable improvements in the environment.
- to create a number of "Better New Homes for Asthma" with special features that address the needs of persons with asthma and other respiratory health problems.
- to support the housing intervention with a community education strategy that:
  - provides tools, information, and training
  - actively engages residents throughout the project
• builds capacity of community members to create and sustain a healthy environment.
• to measure the effectiveness of the integrated intervention in reducing the impact of asthma on the lives of children.
• to potentially offer a model that will influence the design of other HOPE VI projects and large scale residential projects across the nation.

**HOUSING INTERVENTIONS**
- Construction of "Better New Homes for Asthma"

**FAMILY INTERVENTIONS**
- Culturally-appropriate education and information

**EVALUATION**
Lead: UW/Public Health - Seattle & King County

**Funding Need.**
Our continuum of interventions is being developed through the contributions of many funders. These include current grants from HUD and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) to Public Health Seattle King County for remediation of existing scattered site homes throughout King County. For this project, our partnership is working to secure funding from two key sources: HUD, through this grant process, and NIEHS. We applied for the NIEHS grant in January, and our proposal has received a very favorable score. We expect a positive final decision in July 2003. The resources we are requesting from HUD would enable us to combine these resources to achieve the goals we have set.

**Product Outcomes/Outputs:**
We will measure the effectiveness of the integrated home environmental intervention in reducing the impact of asthma on the lives of children and their families. The intervention will include in home-based education and supplies from community healthy workers and new housing. We will follow the families and collect data for two years: the first year in their old homes and the second year in their new homes. Our results will offer an model that will influence the design of other HOPE VI projects and large scale residential projects across the nation.