

A FOCUSED COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Bedford, Massachusetts

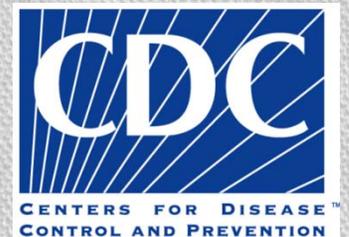
Community Health Assessment



- To identify the status of health in Bedford as perceived by the community and school department leaders
- To help plan more effective public health programming in the future in response to health indicators and disparities
- A stepping stone for future assessments to track improvements over time

CHANGE

- Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Breaks down the assessment process
- Provides a snapshot of policy, systems and environmental change strategies- 'assets' and 'needs'
- Provides feedback as we institute change to support healthy living



The CHANGE Process

- 2 (out of 5) sectors
 - Community at Large- community-wide
 - School- Bedford's 4 public schools- Davis, Lane, Glenn, and BHS
- Data collection
 - Interviews- Town of Bedford employees, community leaders, school administrators
 - Observation
 - Photos
- Took place over summer- late June through August, 2011

School: Chronic Disease Management

Based on your team's knowledge or observations of the community, use the following Policy and Environment scales to indicate the most appropriate responses for each statement. Position the cursor over each rating option to see further explanation and an example (examples provided are for item #1).

In the two response columns, please indicate the appropriate number (#) from the scales below that best represents your answers for each item. Provide both a Policy Response # and Environment Response # for each statement in the appropriate column, with supporting documentation in the corresponding comment boxes. Response # 99 should be used only when the strategy is not applicable at the site (e.g., stair promotion not suitable in one-story building).

Response #	Policy	Environment
1	Not identified as problem	Elements not in place
2	Problem identification/gaining agenda status	Few elements in place
3	Policy formulation and adoption	Some elements are in place
4	Policy implementation	Most elements are in place
5	Policy enforcement and evaluation	All elements in place
99	Not applicable	Not applicable

To what extent does the school:	Policy Response #	Environment Response #
1. Provide chronic disease self-management education to individuals identified with chronic conditions or diseases (e.g., diabetes, asthma)?	5	5
2. Meet the nutritional needs of students with special health care or dietary requirements (e.g., allergies,	5	4

Navigation: District | Physical Activity | Nutrition | Tobacco | **Chronic Disease Management** | Leadership | After-School

Results

Community-at-Large (CAL)

	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
Physical Activity	CALE1 (60.61%)	CALP1 (68.57%)			
Nutrition		CALE1 (65.96%)		CALP1 (84.09%)	
Tobacco	CALP1 (60%) CALE1 (52%)				
Chronic Disease		CALE1 (62.22%)	CALP1 (73.33%)		
Leadership		CALE1 (70%)	CALP1 (78%)		

School

	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
District				SP (81%) SE (83%)	
Physical Activity				SE (88%)	SP (96%)
Nutrition		SP (68%) SE (70%)			
Tobacco			SP (80%) SE (80%)		
Chronic Disease				SP (90%) SE (90%)	
Leadership		SP, SE (67.27%)			
After School				SP, SE (83.33%)	

Assets: CAL

- Public recreation facilities
- Land use planning, mixed land use *
- Community gardens, farmer's market, food pantry
- Many *strategies* for community health education and prevention
 - Especially in the Council on Aging
- Public involvement
- General awareness that something must be done about sidewalks, bike facilities- included in the Comprehensive Plan
- Good public transportation options- BLT, MBTA *

*Also comes up in “needs”



Assets: School

- Physical activity requirements- gym*, recess
- Chronic Disease control
 - School nurse
 - Case Management Plans
 - Access to Prescription Medications
- District-wide Wellness Policy
- Physical education, nutrition education, tobacco prevention curricula *
- Options for tobacco cessation programs through YFS
- Offers healthy choices at lunch- choices have been improving
- School gardens in elementary schools

*Also comes up in “needs”

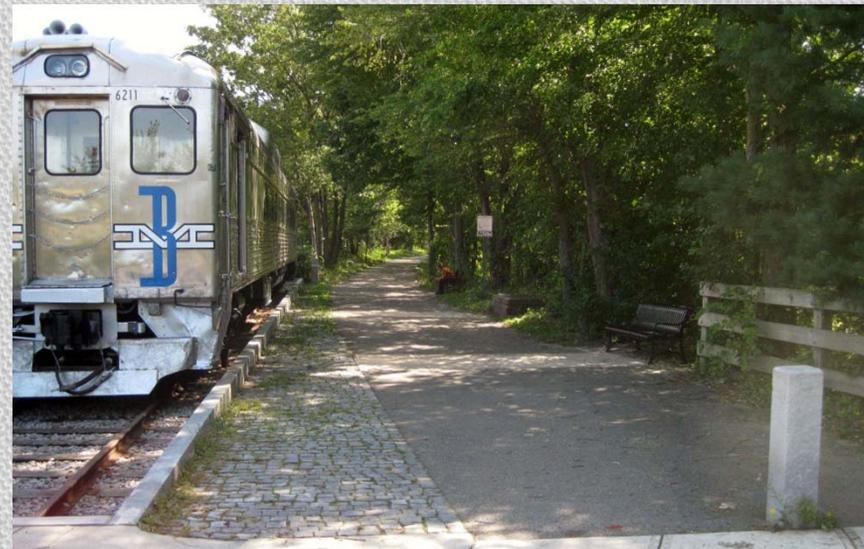


Assets: Recreation



Assets: Bike Route

- Very active Bike Advisory Council
- Minuteman Bikeway
- Potential extension of paved bike bath
- The push for “sharrows”



Good sidewalk examples: Concord Rd.

- Sidewalk ends on one side of the road and crosswalk leads to continuation of the sidewalk on the other



Great Road & Mudge Way intersection

The Great Road- sidewalks
available, crosswalks



Needs

- Connectivity
 - Sidewalk improvements- many streets have no sidewalks
 - Difficult to fix- requires easements from property owners
 - Bike facilities- limited entrances to bike routes, lack of safety on streets
 - More efficient, connected public transportation
 - Networks of walking/biking routes
 - More parks, playgrounds within a reasonable walking distance (1 mile)
 - Will affect walking/biking initiatives for students (Safe Routes to School)
 - Enact more street calming measures- street safety
 - Prioritize physical activity for budgeting

Needs

- Health disparities- apparent in ‘pockets’ of Bedford
 - Ensuring access to healthy foods (fruits, vegetables)
 - Ensuring access to transportation options
 - May not be able to drive to the Town Center to access Food Pantry
 - Limited by public transportation
 - Group home residents
 - Veterans- single room occupancy at the VA
 - Transitional families living in the hotels
 - Bedford Village- low income residents
 - Ashby Place
 - By socioeconomic status
 - By race- different needs

Needs

- Nutrition

- Lack of regulations on banning trans fats, portion size, healthy options in restaurants (cannot be regulated at this level)
- In schools: eliminating unhealthy options, regulating food/beverages offered in vending machines, focus on promoting healthy options
 - Promote healthier eating behaviors through various channels
 - Encourage only health promoting fundraisers- currently lots of bake sales

- Tobacco

- CHANGE indicates need for tobacco free policies, bans on tobacco advertising/promotions in the community
- More emphasis on health in schools- focus on achievement



Needs: Complete Streets Plan

- Lots of bikers on the side of the road (South Road)
- Busy, high traffic streets (Great Road) → need more traffic calming measures



Junction at Great Rd., Concord Rd. and North Rd.

- Area highlighted in the walkability audit
- Lack of crosswalks, sidewalks
- Lots of traffic



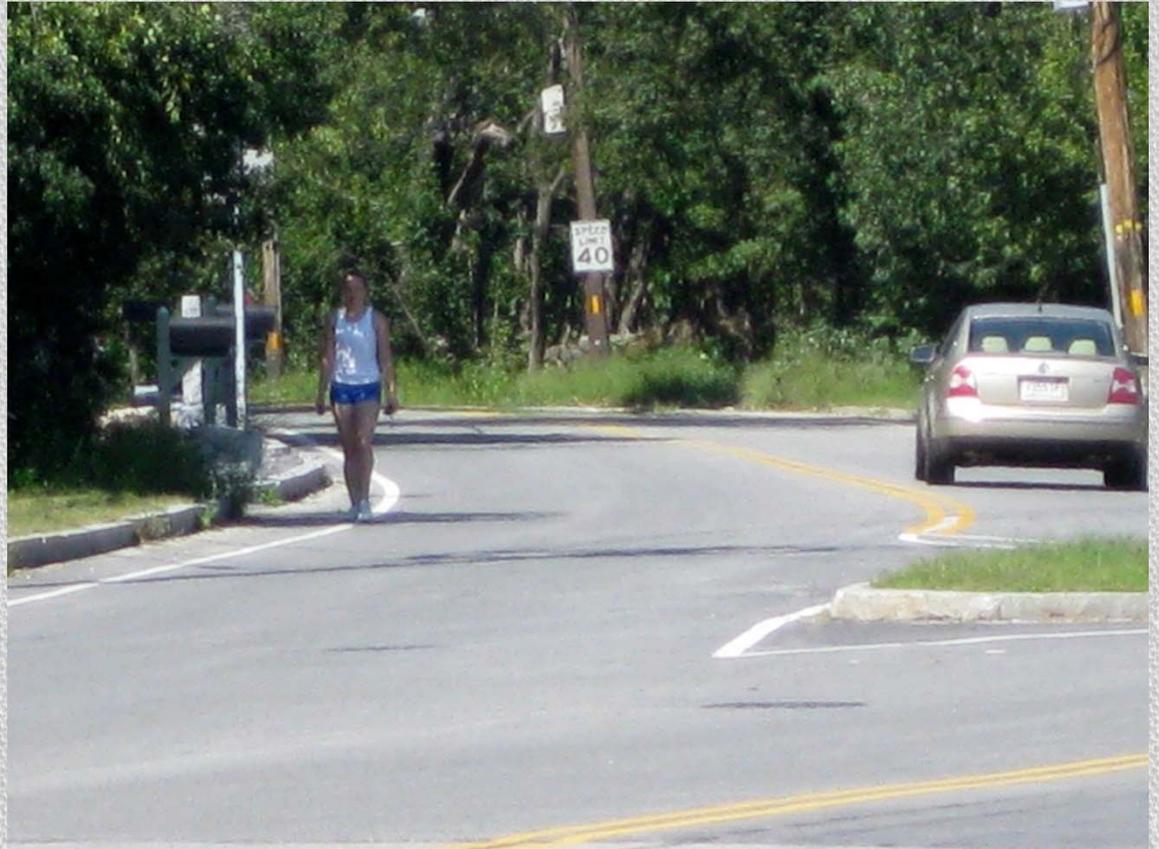
North Rd.

Is it a sidewalk or a parking lot?



Carlisle Road

Lack of a consistent sidewalk
to walk on while cars can
travel at 40 mph



“Where the sidewalk ends”

1. North Road
2. South Road
3. Davis Road



Eliot Park

- Playground/park installed in the SE corner of Bedford off Eliot Rd
- Swing set, basketball court, sand box
- Vandalized
- Most people would rather drive to the center playground than walk to a local one



Next Steps

- The idea of PSE change
 - Policy, System, Environmental
 - Eventually, policy becomes the norm
- Work on connectivity
 - Comprehensive Plan, Zoning bylaws, financing, DPW
- Healthy Dining Policy
 - Start small- in the Town Center, then to local restaurants
 - Reduce prices of healthier choices
- Incentivize Healthy Behavior
 - “Passport to Fitness” program

Next Steps

- Tackle health disparities
 - Already the focus of the upcoming flu clinics for free flu shots
 - Access to healthy foods
 - Advertising BLT/work with food pantry and other groups to provide transportation
- Tobacco- shown to be a need but not a priority
 - State legislation underway
 - Need in town: to ensure compliance by continuing compliance checks
- More health outreach
 - Bedford in Motion program- the main vehicle of health and wellness outreach

Limitations

- Modified
 - Smaller group that met
 - Worked with lots of people
 - Focused on 2 areas that would have important findings
- Other aspects of PH that came up but were not included in the scope of the CHANGE tool:
 - Mental Health
 - Mosquitos and ticks- infectious
 - In schools: eating disorders, drug/substance abuse



Questions, comments?



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all of the Town of Bedford employees, community leaders, and school administrators for taking time out of their busy schedules to speak with me about their areas of expertise.

