

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

Fresno Community Health Improvement Partnership, Fresno, Calif.

Funded by Trinity Health, the four-year Transforming Communities Initiative (TCI) supported eight communities to build capacity for — and successfully implement — policy, system, and environmental (PSE) change strategies. Each collaboration — involving a lead community organization with a full-time TCI-funded program director, the local Trinity Health hospital, and other partners — received grant funding and technical assistance and participated in peer learning opportunities. This site profile, prepared by the cross-site evaluation team at the Georgia Health Policy Center in partnership with the local partners, outlines the work and impact supported by TCI between 2016 and 2020.

The Partnership

The Fresno Community Health Improvement Partnership (FCHIP) was established in 2016 to address inequities in Fresno County, Calif. FCHIP is a cross-sector initiative focused on collaboration and aligning the community's health initiatives. FCHIP partners represent a wide range of sectors including education, public health, health care, community agencies, social services, business, and government. FCHIP's vision is that Fresno County be named one of the top 10 healthiest counties in California. FCHIP partners envision a culture of health in Fresno County where everyone works together to ensure that every person has fair and just opportunities to achieve optimal health and well-being.

At 6,000 square miles, Fresno County is the sixth-largest county by land mass and 10th-largest county by population in California. Having one of the fastest-growing and most diverse populations, the county has been growing at a rate nearly twice that of California. More than 26% of the county's population lives below the poverty line, and there are disproportionate rates of chronic disease among low-income residents. FCHIP focuses work on Southwest Fresno, which is identified by the county's Health Priority Index as an area with high levels of health burden and a high level of concentrated poverty. The area has high levels of preterm birth and years of potential life lost as well as high pollution burden and high composite mortality. FCHIP is targeting Southwest Fresno as an area of high need but also because it is an area where there are many opportunities to collaborate and align resources with ongoing efforts and community partners.

During the course of TCI, FCHIP made significant progress in the development of the elements of a coalition backbone structure, implemented a request for proposal (RFP) process to award TCI funds to partners

FCHIP Partners

- Fresno Metro Ministry
- Fresno County Department of Public Health
- Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health
- Fresno County Department of Social Services
- Fresno Unified School District
- Washington Union High School
- Fresno City College
- Fresno State University
- Anthem Blue Cross
- CalViva Health/Health Net
- Youth Leadership Institute
- UC Extension
- Every Neighborhood Partnership
- California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative
- Fresno State Central California Center for Health and Human Services
- JP Marketing
- Tobacco Prevention Program
- American Lung Association
- Saint Agnes Medical Center
- Community Medical Centers
- Valley Children's Healthcare

through the TCI Wellness Fund, and diversified funding through a fee-for-service contract with the Fresno County Department of Public Health to conduct a community health needs assessment (CHNA). FCHIP also established the Founding Member Fund to provide a mechanism for local investment in FCHIP. FCHIP is organized into an evolving network of work groups, including those covering diabetes, food security, health literacy and empowerment, healthy land use planning, tobacco-free coalition, and trauma and resilience. These work groups developed objectives and measurements that prioritized the targeted outcomes and geographic focus of their work.

"I think the greatest success is the fact that we were able to form an actual coalition, a functional group of partners who were excited and ready to work more collaboratively."

The backbone responsibilities for FCHIP have been housed at Fresno Metro Ministry, with oversight provided by the executive committee of FCHIP. TCI funds provided the essential capacity to launch FCHIP by hiring a program director in early 2017 and develop the critical infrastructure and framework of collaboration to address the social influencers of health through PSE changes.

Approach

Trinity Health brought on FCHIP as a TCI site six months after the original TCI sites were selected. FCHIP's primary focus was to strengthen their coalition. FCHIP received less TCI funding and worked together with Saint Agnes Medical Center to deploy resources through community benefit grants that supported the work that was aligned with TCI in Fresno.

As one of 13 California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (CACHI) grantees, FCHIP worked to integrate TCI and CACHI concepts and grant requirements into their community transformation work. CACHI employs the Accountable Communities for Health model¹, which, similarly to TCI, incorporates community engagement, formal infrastructure and fund development, and a focus on preventing illness by addressing root causes. CACHI also requires the development of a local wellness fund, which FCHIP built with TCI funding and then used in Year 4 to provide support for partners' work that aligned with one of the primary purposes of TCI, the reduction of obesity.

- FCHIP received less TCI grant funding and organized a greater local contribution from Saint Agnes Medical Center.
- FCHIP used about **81%** of their TCI funds to support the program director role and coalition building.
- FCHIP tracked more than **\$500,000** in match contributions, derived from **17%** in-kind and **83%** cash contributions made by local commerce, municipal, and business organizations; health care and public health; community-based organizations; academic institutions; and foundations.

Areas of Impact

FCHIP served as a connector and facilitator, engaging residents, local leaders, and other coalitions and networks to identify and address health needs and social determinants of health in Fresno. The primary programmatic focus for their TCI work was on coalition development, food access, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and community needs assessment and planning. What follows is a list of the primary strategies used, accomplishments, and a brief description of FCHIP's work during TCI.

DOMAIN	YEARS	PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES INFLUENCED BY TCI-SUPPORTED WORK
 <p>Coalition Development</p>	2-3	<p>Developed a new brand and website, securing approximately 700 views a week. Increased FCHIP visibility on Twitter with a total of 153 followers and approximately 200 views per week, and Facebook, with 295 consistent followers, the majority of which live in Fresno. Developed a monthly newsletter.</p>
 <p>Create a Wellness Fund</p>	3-4	<p>Developed and administered an RFP process that resulted in two Wellness Fund grants totaling \$25,000 supporting trauma informed care and resilience and food access.</p>
 <p>Community Food Access</p>	3-4	<p>The Food to Share program increased food recovery sites from 13 to 36 and food distribution sites from 43 to 49, and redistributed a total of 1.2 million pounds of food. The community garden hosted three trainings; planted 84 fruit-bearing plants; and was home to 14 active farmers. Increased fruit and vegetable consumption and confidence budgeting and cooking healthy meals among the majority of 159 participants in 15 Cooking Matters classes. <i>Estimated reach: the Food to Share program — 2,450 people on average weekly, Community garden — 1,138 people, and Cooking Matters classes — 159 people</i></p>
 <p>Trauma and Resilience</p>	3-4	<p>Completed 73 Community Resilience Initiative (CRI) trainings with 815 people trained, including three train-the-trainer sessions, and received funding for a system to track organizations' progress in implementing trauma-informed practices.</p>
 <p>Conduct a Community-driven CHNA and CHIP</p>	4-4	<p>Engaged 480 residents and community leaders and presented priority areas back to the communities where data were collected. Identified eight community health priorities for community health improvement planning. Gathered over 300 survey responses that have been used to inform local COVID response efforts.</p>
 <p>Tobacco</p>	3-3	<p>Secured a city ordinance in Selma City in May 2018 that requires all city parks and city events to be smoke- and tobacco-free. In May 2019, the city of Firebaugh became the first city in Fresno County and the Central Valley to pass an ordinance for smoke-free, multiunit housing and to update tobacco-related definitions in the municipal code. <i>Estimated reach: 33,143 people (Selma: 24,807; Firebaugh: 8,336)</i></p>



Coalition Development

FCHIP, Fresno Metro Ministry, Every Neighborhood Partnership, JP Marketing, and CACHI partnered to develop the coalition as a trusted and recognized leader in Fresno County for addressing community health needs through collaboration, alignment, and leveraged resources. During TCI, FCHIP:

- Informed the community about FCHIP's value and impact
- Connected partners to new partners and resources
- Launched a newly designed and branded FCHIP website to create a consistent theme of bright colors that communicate community and health, which has garnered approximately 700 views a week since 2018
- Increased FCHIP visibility on Twitter, with a total of 153 followers and approximately 200 views per week, and Facebook, with 295 consistent followers, the majority of which live in Fresno
- Increased the dissemination of a monthly newsletter — a crucial tool for FCHIP to share updates, connect with partners and the community, and disseminate partner messages, events, or other opportunities to the FCHIP network
- Created a video about FCHIP titled About FCHIP
- Technical assistance from Community Catalyst supported this work



Create a Wellness Fund

FCHIP partnered with Every Neighborhood Partnership, Fresno Metro Ministry, CACHI, Fresno County Department of Public Health, Anthem Blue Cross, CalViva Health, Valley Children's Healthcare, Community Medical Centers, Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health, Fresno County Department of Social Services, and Fresno State's Central California Center for Health and Human Services to create a wellness fund framework, an annual pipeline of unrestricted funding. During TCI, FCHIP:

- Invested TCI funds in the wellness fund
- Developed and administered an RFP process that resulted in two Wellness Fund grants totaling \$25,000 invested in trauma and resilience and food access
- Leveraged local investment through the Founding Members Fund, a sustainable investment mechanism for founding partners to contribute directly to FCHIP to support the backbone and investments in the work of the community



Community Food Access

FCHIP's partner, Fresno Metro Ministry, has done food access work that has included food recovery and distribution through their Food to Share program,² nutrition education and cooking skills courses using a Cooking Matters curriculum,³ and developing a permaculture garden and urban farm to increase access to healthy foods. The primary partners that have worked with Fresno Metro Ministry have been Fresno Unified School District, Fresno City College, Fresno State University, Fresno County Department of Public Health, Youth Leadership Institute, local farmers, and UC Extension. During TCI, Fresno Metro Ministry:

- Added the Food Security Network to the list of active work groups with a stated purpose to increase healthy food consumption and decrease food insecurity through improved food recovery and distribution systems, access to healthy food, and improved family knowledge by 2028
- Scaled food recovery and distribution efforts by adding van capacity, additional staffing, and food storage to delay distribution
- Increased recovery sites by 23 — from 13 to 36, distribution sites by six — from 43 to 49, and redistributed a total of 1.2 million pounds of food during the TCI grant period through a network of food pantries, kitchens, churches, and nonprofits that have existing food programs serving low-income, under-resourced neighborhoods with a specific focus in Central and South Fresno
- Increased fruit and vegetable consumption and confidence in budgeting and cooking healthy meals among the majority of 159 participants in 15 Cooking Matters classes
- Completed the Yosemite Village (YoVille) Permaculture Community Garden and Urban Farm Incubator, a seven-acre resident-led community garden and urban greenspace, in Year 4. The garden/farm includes native hedgerows and habitat, insectaries, fruit trees, a greenhouse, a walking path, and composting
- Established a resident garden leadership team that has been active in working in and engaging others in the garden



Trauma and Resilience

FCHIP partnered with the Every Neighborhood Partnership, other community-based organizations, local school districts, and the police chaplaincy through the Trauma and Resilience Network work group to increase the capacity of organizations to create trauma-informed environments through trainings and coaching. The trauma and resilience work focused on Community Resilience Initiative (CRI)⁴ trainings to create a trauma-informed community and a Stress Health Campaign.⁵ During TCI, the FCHIP Trauma and Resilience Network:

“We observed an immediate positive impact due to the CRI seminars. Our high school experienced less office referrals, less suspensions, higher graduation rates, and we were chosen as a Model School for the state of California.”

- Aligned strategies to create trauma-informed communities in partnership with the CACHI cohort, the Cradle to Career Network, and many of FCHIP’s partners
- Provided preliminary ACEs and trauma information presentations to 250 people
- Facilitated training and certification of three train-the-trainer courses, with these trainers now training and certifying groups of people and entire organizations in the first two courses
- Completed 73 CRI trainings with 815 people trained and certified
- Received funding from the Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health for the ACEs Connection Community Tracking system to track the steps organizations have taken toward becoming trauma-informed across 11 evidence-based milestones
- Supported collaboration with the Center for Youth Wellness in San Francisco to create a strategic plan on how to best implement the Stress Health Campaign for Fresno
- Hosted eight workshops that reached 550 participants to assess how ACEs and toxic stress affect residents of Southwest Fresno; listened to ideas, recommendations, and advice for how to best engage with the community; and examined the potential contributions they could make to the Stress Health community campaign



Conduct a Community-driven CHNA and CHIP

FCHIP partnered with Fresno Metro Ministry, Fresno State Central Valley Health Policy Institute (CVHPI), and a network of community-based organizations and agencies to conduct a community needs assessment and identify key priorities that would be the basis for a community-driven community health improvement plan (CHIP). The CHNA focused on identifying and addressing health needs and social determinants of health through deep community engagement. During TCI, FCHIP and the partners:

- Established a model for collecting wide community input on the social influencers of health using an extensive process for qualitative data, including 38 focus groups and 49 key informant interviews covering a range of geographies (urban and rural), vulnerable populations, stakeholder groups, and specific topics (oral health and vaping), engaging 480 participants in total
- Conducted primary and secondary data analysis to find the top health priorities
- Presented priority areas back to the communities where data were collected in community feedback meetings that resulted in eight health priorities, including public transportation; income, jobs, and stable economic opportunity; health care services — i.e., access to quality and affordable care, access to specialty care, and cultural humility and appropriate services in the health care system; air pollution; parks and safe public spaces; community engagement; affordable quality housing; and access to healthy foods (listed in order of community priority)
- Conducted a community survey to assess residents' most urgent needs related to the pandemic and crisis response in Fresno. The survey gathered over 300 responses and has been used to inform local networks and leaders' collective COVID response efforts



Tobacco

California had passed Tobacco 21 in 2016, prior to the launch of TCI. FCHIP's Tobacco-Free Coalition work group worked to reduce tobacco use, secondhand smoke exposure, and tobacco smoke residue exposure (third-hand smoke) through efforts that include retailer education, reducing the availability of tobacco products to youth, and increasing the number of smoke- and tobacco-free public and private spaces in the county. During TCI, the FCHIP work group:

- Added the FCHIP Tobacco-Free Coalition Workgroup with the purpose of increasing the availability of cessation classes and the number of policies addressing tobacco exposure by 2028
- Worked with municipal governments to pass smoke-free ordinances including —
 - The Selma City Council passed a city ordinance in May 2018 that requires all city parks and city events to be smoke- and tobacco-free
 - In May 2019, the city of Firebaugh became the first city in Fresno County to pass an ordinance for smoke-free, multiunit housing and to update tobacco-related definitions in the municipal code
- Trained 77 youth and seven adult allies between July 2018 and April 2019 in policy systems change, youth advocacy, public speaking, engaging with decision-makers, and storytelling
- The Youth Leadership Institute educated community stakeholders and the Fresno County Board of Supervisors on the impact of tobacco use on Fresno County residents and the benefits of tobacco-free policies within Fresno County

- Hosted Fresno County Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing Summit in December 2018 with the Tobacco Prevention Program
- Worked to strengthen the FCHIP Tobacco-Free Coalition Workgroup by promoting collaboration and alignment between members from organizations that have specific grant outcomes tied to their funding

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted FCHIP's TCI work in some areas while accelerating TCI work in other areas. Areas of work that were impacted included their backbone collaboration with other networks, which in some ways slowed or stopped and, in other ways, accelerated; for example, collaboration related to the need for streamlined emergency response communication was accelerated, while other projects unrelated to the pandemic response slowed down, such as plans for the Southwest Health Hub. Funding was shifted to focus on COVID-19 emergency relief efforts, which included identifying and meeting the top needs of the community, staff diversion to the COVID-19 response, and food, mental health, and immigrant and refugee response teams that focused on supplying food boxes, diapers, formula, and community resident emergency support funds. More specifically, the reallocated funding provided 750 food boxes, 5,500 diapers, 9,000 wipes, 50 containers of formula, and 43 minigrants between \$400 and \$700 to help alleviate some of the immediate financial burden caused by the pandemic.

Key Insights from TCI

During the course of TCI, FCHIP's work was responsive to community needs, the work of partners, and the requests and structure of the funder, Trinity Health. Lessons learned in this process included:

- Data and stories are important to establish priorities, assess that efforts are having the intended impact, and communicate the value of FCHIP.
- Processes and strategies need to be flexible and adaptable to changing situations to be relevant and impactful.
- Aligning and sharing the work and opportunities of FCHIP with other groups that are already doing great work in Southwest Fresno increases efficiency and impact.
- Involving community residents in FCHIP's decision-making process is an important next step in building community capacity and authentic community engagement, which requires time and commitment to mutual benefit.
- TCI in-person meetings helped FCHIP connect with and learn from the Trinity staff and other sites' staff doing similar work in a way that was not possible by phone meetings.
- Technical assistance supported the developing work of FCHIP, including food access and community engagement.
- The support of local funders and leaders moved the work of FCHIP forward in meaningful ways.

Looking Ahead

Sustainability has been a priority since the launch of the FCHIP network, and resources have been dedicated to building the infrastructure that will continue to evolve and help sustain community investment work that promotes policy, systems, and environmental changes through diverse funding streams. To ensure sustainability, FCHIP has:

- Engaged a fund development support consultant to identify prospective grants and funding opportunities and create systems and materials to support fundraising efforts
- Developed multisector partnerships and a framework of collaboration that provides a structured means for continuous, sustainable partnerships
- Diversified funding streams through the FCHIP Founding Member Program and an annual State of Our Health fundraiser breakfast that provide sustainable sources of backbone and operations funding, as well as a renewable resource for the wellness fund
- Conducted and shared results from a communitywide sustainability audit that sought input from its stakeholders and partner organizations throughout Fresno County

Endnotes

¹ The Accountable Communities for Health (ACH) model incorporates a focus on prevention, community engagement, formal infrastructure, and funding development, including the development of a local wellness fund.

² A community food partnership that addresses food insecurity and environmental solutions by recovering perishable food that would otherwise go to waste and redistributing it to people in need through foodbanks and other community organizations and agencies.

³ Cooking Matters provides professional-level curricula and instructional materials, training, evaluation, and national leadership support, while local program partners provide hands-on, grassroots-level resources, facilitators, program customizations, and relationship building locally.

⁴ A train-the-trainer approach to the Community Resilience Initiative's Trauma-Informed Certification.

⁵ A national ACEs movement being driven by pediatric clinicians, educators, parents, policymakers, and other child-serving professionals and advocates who are working to implement universal screening for ACEs and treat the effects of toxic stress.

For more information on FCHIP

www.fchip.org

[About Us FCHIP Video](#)

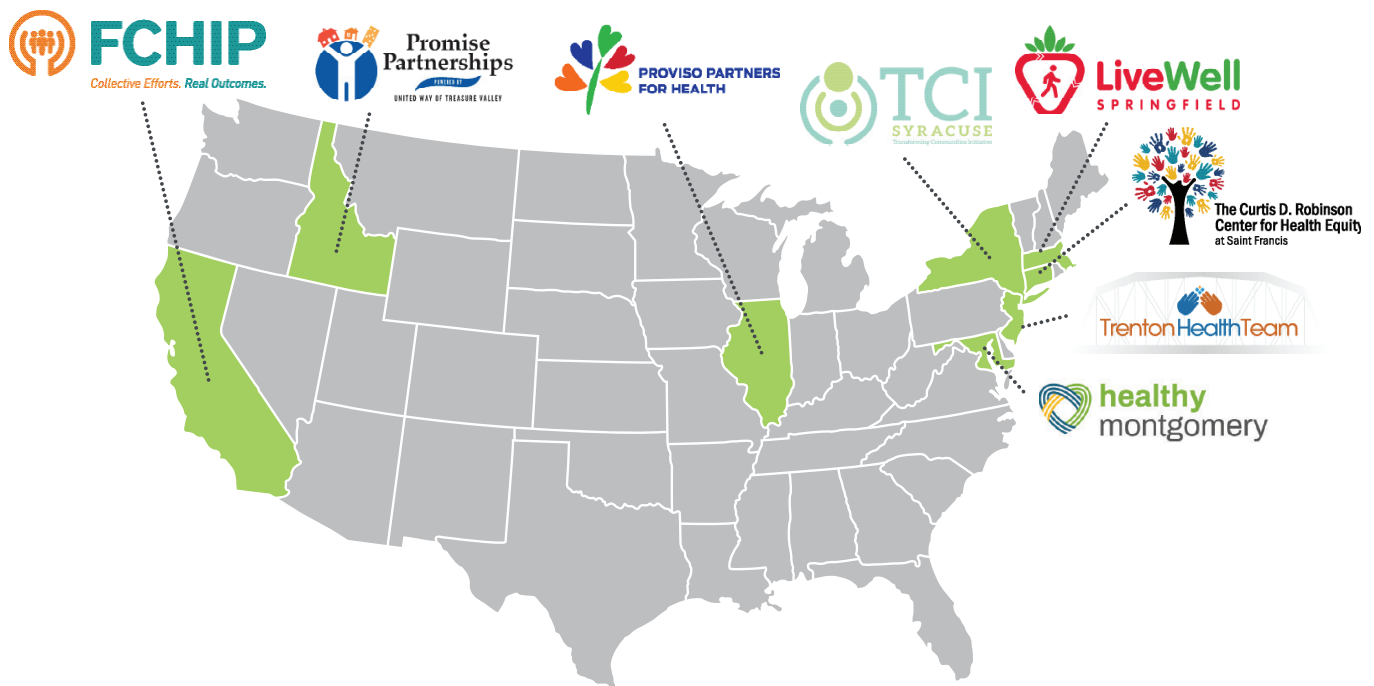
[2019 FCHIP Annual Impact Report](#)

[Fresno County CHNA 8 Priorities](#)

[FCHIP Wellness Grant Partners in Action Photos](#)

[FCHIP and Partners in Action Photos](#)

About the Transforming Communities Initiative



Trinity Health launched the Transforming Communities Initiative (TCI) in 2016 to provide grant funding and technical assistance to hospital-community partnerships. Between July 2016 and June 2020, these partnerships worked on a range of initiatives including tobacco prevention and reduction, public school wellness, early care centers' policies and practices, community food access and nutrition, built environment policies and infrastructure to improve walkability and safety (Complete Streets), breastfeeding policies, and economic development. Partnerships also built community capacity and strengthened local coalitions.

TCI technical assistance was provided by [ChangeLab Solutions](#), [Community Catalyst](#), [Public Good Projects](#), [Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids](#), and the [Georgia Health Policy Center \(GHPC\)](#).

GHPC — in close collaboration with local evaluators — conducted the TCI cross-site evaluation to assess partnership development and collaboration, as well as policy, systems, and environmental change reach, implementation, and impact. Data sources included key stakeholder interviews, TCI partner collaboration surveys, and project documents including site annual reports, meeting notes, site visits, and observations. Quotations in this profile are from stakeholder interviews and partner surveys.