

## Local Spotlight: Region 2/3

[Health & Wellness Alliance for Children](#) of Dallas and Collin County is a group using the collective impact model to address two critical issues around children's health: Asthma and Obesity.

Alliance has identified multiple opportunities to align the organization's work with the framework of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) County Health Rankings and Roadmap. At its annual retreat in January, Dallas Steering Committee thought leaders focused on ways to move forward with that alignment. Led by Co-Chairs Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., Chief Medical Officer for Prevention for the American Heart Association, and Amy Johnson, Chief Development Officer for the Cooper Institute, Steering Committee members participated in The Alliance Café, four break-out sessions where representatives from each Working Group laid out their group's goals for 2017.

The Asthma Working Groups are building on synergy with the County Healthy Rankings health factors of Housing and Transit, and Access to Care and Quality of Care:

- The Healthy Physical Environments Working Group will move forward with a home rehabilitation loan/grant program through the 1,000 Communities Campaign. The program will target health-related poor housing conditions in the Lancaster-Keist corridor of Dallas, with the goals of prioritizing available funding for families that include children with asthma, and improving families' ability to manage their children's asthma.
- The Equipping Children and Families Working Group committed to training more community health champions, including promotoras and health professionals, on Healthy Housing assessment standards. These health champions can help families in areas with high-health care utilization make evidence-based changes to their home environments that will reduce children's risk for asthma attacks.
- The Improved Access to High-Quality Care Working Group will implement Cultural Competency education opportunities to health care providers throughout the DFW area. Culturally competent care has been shown to effectively eliminate health disparities in the healthcare setting.
- The Improved Access to High-Quality Care Working Group will also continue with a quality improvement project at Foremost Family Health Centers, focused on increasing the adoption of asthma action plans. The Alliance brought together Foremost Family Health Centers, Dallas ISD and Mesquite ISD to track asthma action plans provided to school nurses and to compare health care outcomes for students with asthma who have asthma action plans on file, versus those who don't.

The Healthy Weight Management Working Groups will focus on the health factor of Diet and Exercise with an emphasis on multi-component, school-based obesity prevention:

- The Healthy Eating Working Group is pursuing alignment with existing after-school supper programs at sites where students have a high risk for obesity. The goal is to improve the nutrition and physical activity choices of participating children through healthy meals, nutrition education and quality enrichment activities. The Working Group is also exploring potential new after-school supper program sites.
- Building on its work with School Health Advisory Councils (SHACs), the School and After-School Working Group is implementing its SHAC maturity ranking model for Garland ISD and Mesquite ISD. The model introduces best practices at both the district and individual campus levels that will help move the SHACs to a higher level of maturity, more in line with state standards. The Working Group has also partnered with Dallas ISD to facilitate relationships and leverage collaboration with community stakeholders to improve school health at two potential campuses: the Young Men's Leadership Academy at Fred F. Florence Middle School and/or Harry Stone Montessori Academy.

The Alliance Café allowed attendees to get a closer look at the activities and needs of each Working Group. As the speakers for each Working Group explained their goals, other thought leaders spoke up to offer ways for their representative organizations to connect and collaborate. To conclude the retreat, the Data Measurement Team presented details on how each Working Group's activities would be measured throughout 2017.

Dr. Sanchez left members with an encouraging quote from Diana Nyad, the first person to swim the shark-infested waters from Cuba to Florida without a shark cage. She said, "We should never, ever give up.... And it looks like a solitary sport, but it takes a team."