

Constitution Hill Neighborhood Woonsocket, Rhode Island

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Many adults have poor health and serious health conditions.
- The adult smoking rate (32%) is very high.
- Rates of overweight (44%) and obesity (32%) are of concern.
- More screening for health conditions would be useful to identify affected adults before they start having symptoms.

NEXT STEPS

The Institute is available to help communities and community-based organizations use the data from the Constitution Hill neighborhood surveys. Contact the Institute at info@riphi.org to discuss your needs.

YWCA Northern Rhode Island is planning a community forum and other activities to talk to neighborhood residents and others about how to address survey findings. To learn more or get involved, contact Deborah Perry at 401-769-7450.



For more information

Rhode Island Public Health Institute
Patricia A. Nolan, MD, MPH, 401-863-6416, info@riphi.org, www.riphi.org

Web-based access to statewide health data
Karine Monteiro, MPH, 401-222-3395
www.health.ri.gov/programs/assessmentinitiativefordatadissemination

Comprehensive Constitution Hill Neighborhood Health Assessment
www.health.ri.gov/publichealth/about/communityassessments

Constitution Hill Project or the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant
Carol Hall-Walker, MPA, 401-222-5935, carol.hall-walker@health.ri.gov

Rhode Island Department of Health
HEALTH Information Line, 401-222-5960 / RI Relay 711, www.health.ri.gov

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About this report

This report is based on a 2010 survey in Woonsocket's Constitution Hill neighborhood. This lower income neighborhood is racially and ethnically diverse, with some subsidized housing and shelters. We completed in-person interviews with 106 randomly selected adults 18 and older¹ living in this neighborhood. We asked them about their health, their health behaviors, specific diseases they may have, and how their neighborhood supports healthy living. The survey findings represent the 777 adults² living in the 20-block neighborhood.

Constitution Hill is one of three Rhode Island communities we are learning about. The other two communities are Southside Providence⁴ and Central Falls (in progress in 2011).

¹ We used the Neighborhood Health/Check Survey developed by the Rhode Island Public Health Institute to talk with residents. This survey is based on the statewide Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey conducted annually by the Rhode Island Department of Health.

² Adults living in shelters were not eligible for the interviews and are not represented in these findings.

³ We did not complete an environmental survey in Constitution Hill, because this neighborhood was evaluated by a recent community development process organized by the Rhode Island Local Initiatives Support Corporation. (See www.rilisc.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/LISC_ConstHi_Fairmt_SC_final.pdf for more information.) Going street-by-street through the neighborhood, we did an informal assessment of environmental support for physical activity, such as places to be physically active, safety of sidewalks and streets, and whether or not there are certain destinations (e.g. grocery stores, fast food stores, libraries, and schools) within walking distance.

⁴ See health.ri.gov/publications/datareports/2011SouthsideCommunityHealth.pdf for more information.

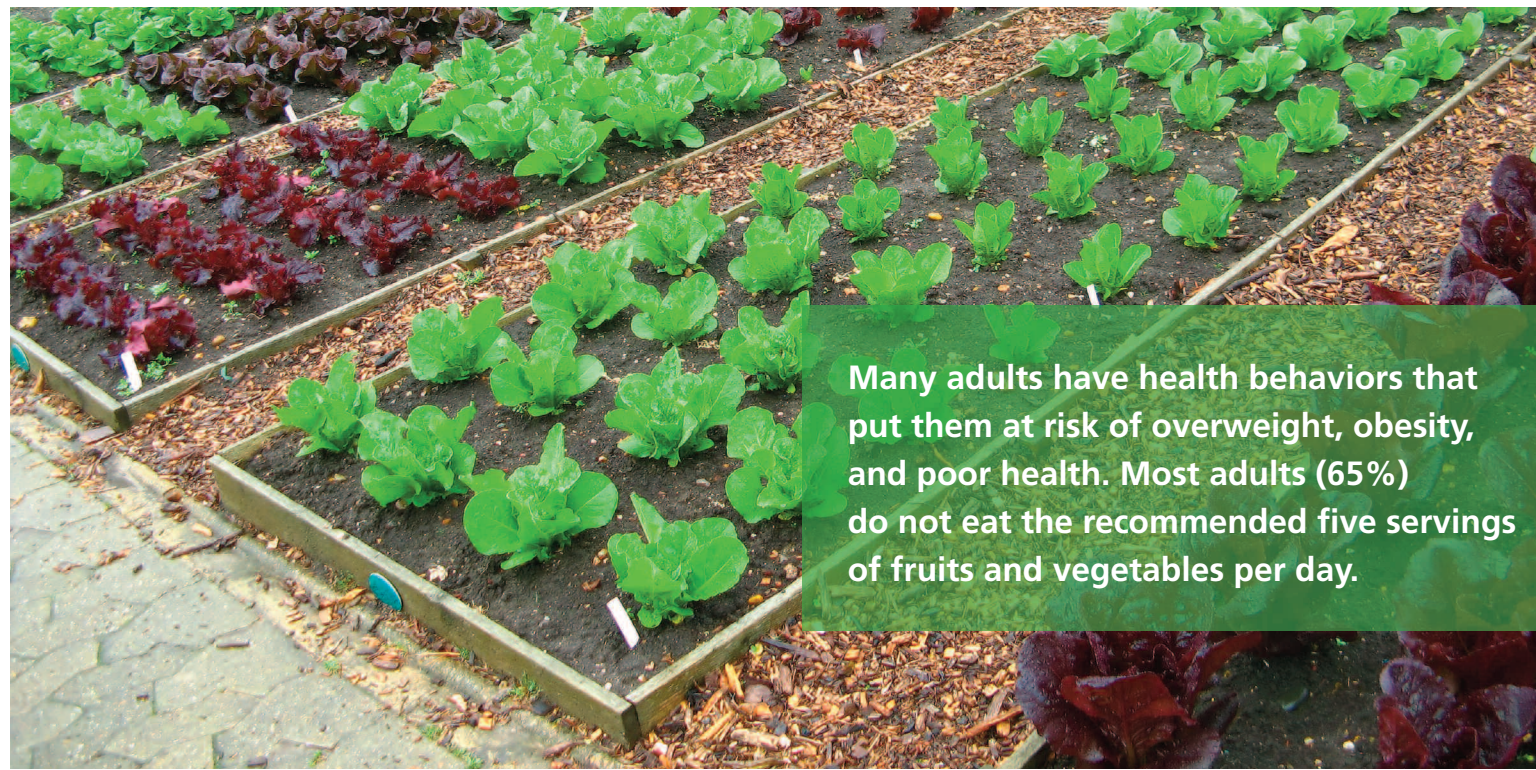
What we do

We go door-to-door in neighborhoods, talking to people about their health.³ We ask about:

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Nutrition
- Physical activity
- Cholesterol
- Heart disease and stroke
- Neighborhood conditions
- Obesity
- Tobacco use

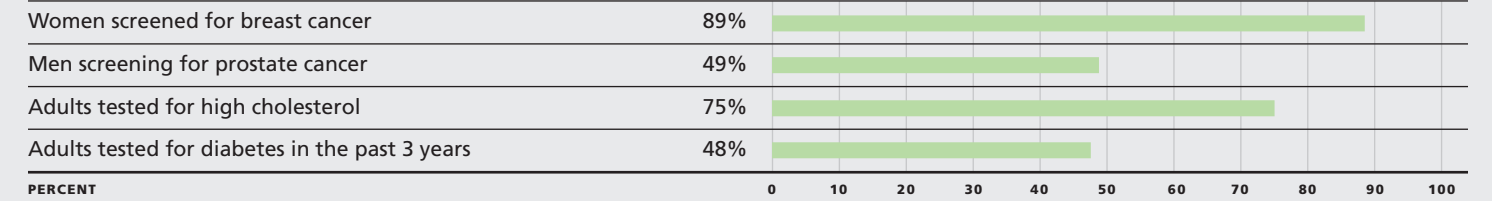
Why we do it

The opportunities for better health begin where people live, learn, work, and play. National and state health data are important, but they can only tell us so much. By talking to people about their health and learning from them about their neighborhoods, we can build understanding of what affects health in their communities. Residents can use the information to work together to make changes. Community-based agencies and the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) can use the data to design programs and services and seek funding. Policy makers and advocates can develop new policies based on clearer understanding of neighborhood issues. Working together and sharing data, we can build healthier neighborhoods and improve community health. We can also evaluate the impact of our efforts.



Many adults have health behaviors that put them at risk of overweight, obesity, and poor health. Most adults (65%) do not eat the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables per day.

1. HEALTH SCREENING BEHAVIORS OF CONSTITUTION HILL ADULTS



2. HEALTH BEHAVIORS AND CONDITIONS OF CONSTITUTION HILL ADULTS

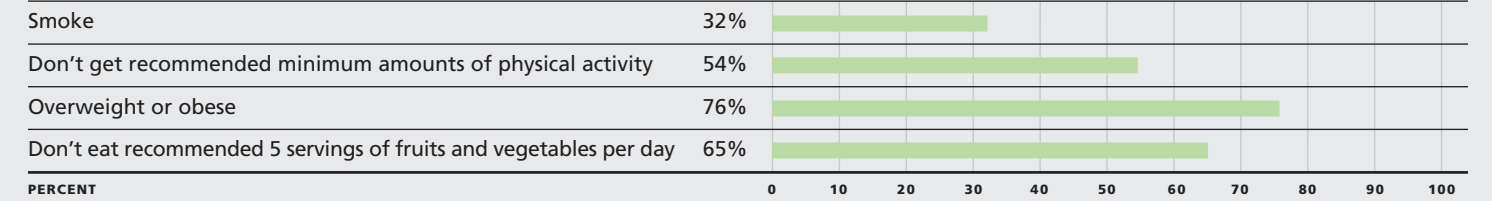


CHART NOTES

Charts 1 and 2 source: Neighborhood Health\Check, 2009

Who we are

HEALTH funds this effort through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant. The project's lead partner is the Rhode Island Public Health Institute (the Institute), an independent, not-for-profit organization established in 1993 to promote health and wellness by partnering with local community-based organizations, academic institutions, government agencies, and the business community. The Institute and HEALTH work together to support projects that improve the health of people and their communities.

Who we work with

HEALTH and the Institute work closely with YWCA Northern Rhode Island in Woonsocket. The African Alliance of Rhode Island, the Center for Hispanic Policy and Advocacy, John Hope Settlement House, Progreso Latino, Inc., St. Joseph Health Services of Rhode Island, and the Urban League of Rhode Island advised on this work and on work in their own communities. Many other organizations and residents helped.

Who we talked to

We talked to 106 adult residents, age 18 and older, living on 20 blocks. The information they shared represents the 777 adults living in the 20-block neighborhood.

- **Language:** 26% of adults prefer to be interviewed in Spanish.
- **Gender:** 46% of adults are male, and 54% are female.
- **Race/Ethnicity:** 36% of adults are Hispanic. 25% are Black, 24% are White, and 15% identify with another race.

- **Age:** 67% of adults are 18-44 years old. 32% are 45 years or older.
- **Income:** 43% of adults have a household income of less than \$25,000 per year. 22% make between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year, 21% make \$50,000 or more per year. The household income of 15% of the population is unknown.
- **Employment:** 57% of adults are employed, and 43% are not employed.
- **Education:** 26% of adults have less than a high school education, and 43% have finished high school only. 31% have completed some college or are college graduates.

What people told us about their health

Key Finding: Many adults have poor health and serious health conditions.

- Four out of ten adults have excellent or very good health. Roughly one out of four has fair or poor health.
- Almost half of adults are unable to carry out daily activities on some days because of poor mental or physical health.
- 44% of adults are overweight, and 32% are obese.
- 32% of adults have high blood pressure.
- 13% of adults have diabetes.
- 11% of adults have heart disease or have had a stroke.
- 2% of adults have a history of cancer.

Key finding: The adult smoking rate is very high.

- 32% of adults are current smokers, compared to 19% in Southside Providence and 18% across Rhode Island's urban core cities⁵.
- Eight out of ten current smokers have tried to quit at least once.
- Many adults may have high risks of cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic lung disease, and asthma from smoking.
- In a neighborhood where many people live in multi-family buildings, the risk of exposure to second hand tobacco smoke is also high.

Key finding: Rates of overweight and obesity are troubling.

- 32% of adults are obese, compared to 26% in Southside Providence and 22% across Rhode Island's urban core cities⁶.
- 44% of adults are overweight.
- Many adults have health behaviors that put them at risk of overweight, obesity, and poor health:
 - » 65% of adults do not eat the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
 - » 54% of adults do not get recommended minimum amounts of physical activity.

⁵ Core cities are those with more than 15% of children living in families below the federal poverty level. In Rhode Island, they include: Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick, and Woonsocket.

⁶ Data source: HEALTH Web Data Query System www.health.ri.gov/programs/assessmentinitiativefordatadissemiation

The data suggest that: More screening for health conditions in this community would be useful to identify affected adults before they start having symptoms—especially in light of the neighborhood's high rates of smoking, overweight, and obesity.

- 48% of adults have been tested for diabetes in the past three years, but some still have trouble getting preventative care.
- Women have more access to medical care that includes cancer screening than men.
 - » 89% of women have been screened for breast cancer.
 - » Only 49% of men have been screened for prostate cancer.
- There is reasonable access to cholesterol screening in the community; however we could do better.
 - » Three out of four adults have been screened for high cholesterol.

What we heard about your neighborhood

Is the glass half empty or half full?

- 72% of adults feel that the neighborhood is well maintained.
- Half of adults feel that the neighborhood is not free from garbage, litter, and broken glass.
- Nearly three out of four adults (72%) feel the neighborhood is pleasant for physical activity, but safety is still a concern.
- About one out of three adults feels that the neighborhood is not safe from traffic (31%) or crime (39%) in order to walk or ride a bike.