

HEALTHY PARKS, HEALTHY PEOPLE

Improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities through regular use and enjoyment of parks



The Institute at the Golden Gate is a program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy a non-profit partner of the National Park Service. Our mission is to harness the power of parks and public lands to advance environmental stewardship and human wellbeing. We recognize the valuable role parks and public lands can play in solving many of society's biggest challenges and how to leverage this value to

forward healthy living and education. We currently have programs focused on how parks can contribute to broader challenges in health, food systems, climate change education, and urban development.

To bring about positive change in these areas, we build on the remarkable work of the Parks Conservancy and National Park Service here in the Bay Area, taking best practices and

innovative policy ideas to the national and even international levels. We pilot test locally to see if they're scalable, develop best practices, and make policy change actually happen.

Since 2009, the Institute has been building partnerships and moving ideas to action to make the idea of Healthy Parks, Healthy People mainstream. To this point, the Institute has built a national movement by telling the stories of successful "park prescriptions" programs around the country and inspiring leaders in the parks and health fields to take up the charge. Now that we've gotten leaders like Jon Jarvis (National Park Service Director), Michele Obama's Let's Move, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others behind the movement, there's a readiness across the country to act.



Healthy Parks Healthy People: BAYVIEW HUNTERS POINT



Through a Community Benefit grant from Kaiser Permanente we have been able to take the best practices from around the country and implement them in a pilot project in our own backyard. Through community engagement and close collaboration with the Southeast Health Center, a clinic of the San Francisco Department of Public Health, we have built a health intervention fit for the Bayview Hunters Point community. The program will officially launch in April 2013 after a specially designed training is conducted for all health center staff. This training will take place in a park in the community and will connect the clinic staff to local parks staff. Once this training is completed the health center will begin prescribing time in nature to patients of all ages with the help of locally specific and culturally appropriate outreach materials.

The clinic staff will then have the tools needed to motivate and empower their patients to get outside to better their physical and mental wellbeing, and ultimately create long term behavioral change. All tools and materials that will benefit the health center staff and patients have gone through an extensive review process to meet the unique needs of the community. To ensure the success and sustainability of this initiative we will be tracking the prescriptions filled, monitoring the improvement in health of the patients and observing new users to parks in the community. Extensive process and outcome evaluations will enable us to pull together best practices and create a toolkit so the program can be easily replicated and implemented in communities across the country.

Healthy Parks Healthy People: BAY AREA

As the idea of *Healthy Parks, Healthy People* has been elevated; parks and health agencies from around the Bay Area began to express interest in coming together to coordinate their efforts for maximum impact. In response, the Institute is facilitating a partnership between Golden Gate National Recreation Area, East Bay Regional Park District, Bay Area Open Space Council, San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, the San Francisco Department of Public Health, and a dozen other parks and health agencies from six Bay Area counties. In June 2013 we will launch a coordinated effort to provide approachable, culturally relevant park programming for communities with high health needs that diverse health partners can prescribe and promote. The initiative includes seasonal “train-the-trainer” curricula to ensure consistency and effective implementation among all participating agencies. This program also has rigorous evaluations built in to validate the collaboration between local agencies, as well as measure the long-term impact on engagement and support for our parks and public spaces.

Healthy Parks Healthy People: UNITED STATES

On an even larger scale, we are in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Recreation and Park Association to compare data and best practices from park prescription pilots around the country. Between now and fall 2013 we will work together to reach out to experts and those already implementing park prescriptions in order to set national standards for programming. These experts and implementers will gather for an in-person convening in October 2013 to set the agenda and vision for park prescriptions moving forward. We hope this will further solidify *Healthy Parks, Healthy People* as a policy practice, and provide the evidence and rigor it needs to survive beyond any one administration or individual champion.

