



DOCUMENTING THE HEALTH OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS • WEST ROCK •

CARE, a partnership between the New Haven community and Yale University, is taking action against chronic disease. To improve the health of our residents, CARE promotes a healthy lifestyle by focusing on three risk factors: diet, exercise, and tobacco use. New Haven is the first US city to join one of the world's largest community-based research studies on chronic disease - with other sites in England, Mexico, India and China.

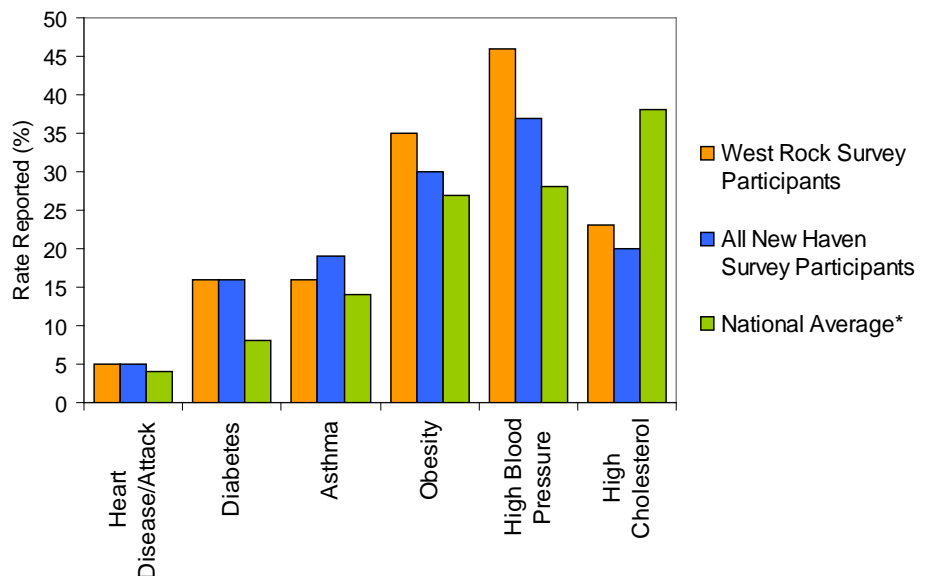
In the summer of 2009, Youth@Work interns created an “asset map” of six New Haven neighborhoods, including the West Rock neighborhood. The asset maps document neighborhood features related to diet, exercise, and tobacco use. In the fall, 1,205 New Haven residents in the same six neighborhoods – including 164 in West Rock – participated in a survey about health and their own habits around these same three risk factors.

WEST ROCK'S ASSET MAP

- In West Rock, CARE documented two stores, no restaurants, no recreational facilities, three parks, and no community gardens.
- The two stores in West Rock were convenience stores that mostly sold junk food.

SURVEY RESULTS – GENERAL HEALTH AND STRESS

- Eighteen percent (18%) of West Rock residents report “excellent” health – slightly higher than all six neighborhoods (16%), but lower than the national average (20%).
- Most West Rock residents have a regular place to go for health care (86%). However, only 71% have health insurance - well below the national average of 86%.
- Like those in all six neighborhoods, West Rock residents report high levels of stress – over one-half have some level of tension, stress or pressure and one in four feel down, depressed or hopeless.



*Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2008 (Centers for Disease Control)

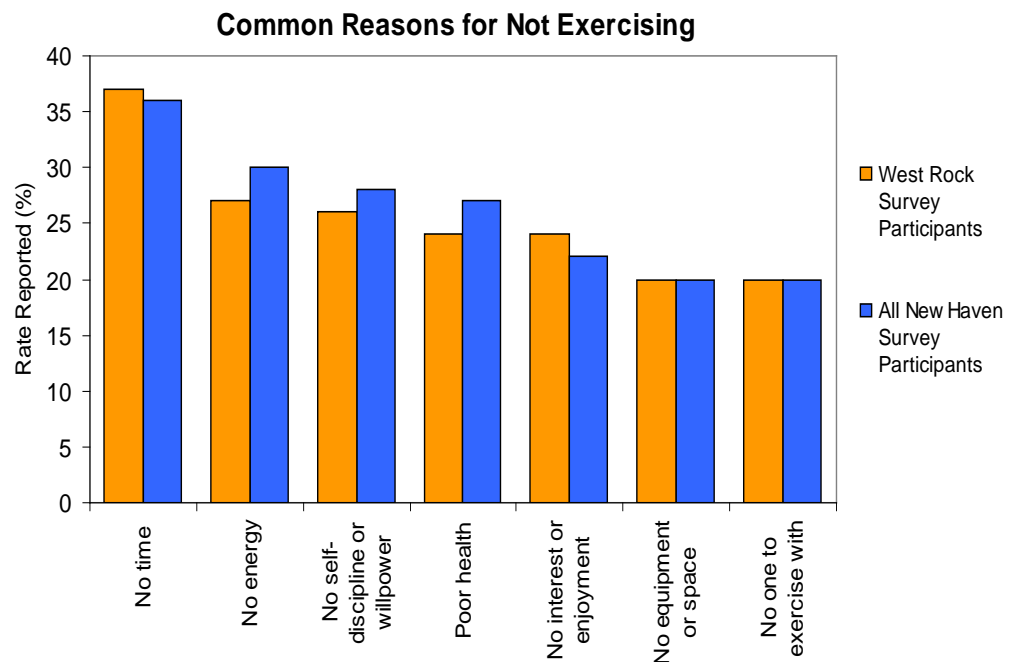
- West Rock residents reported higher rates of high blood pressure and obesity than those in all six neighborhoods. Rates of other chronic diseases in West Rock are similar to all six New Haven neighborhoods and are higher than the national average.

NUTRITION

- Fifteen percent (15%) of West Rock residents report **“food insecurity”** – meaning that they or their family did not have enough food (or money to buy food) in the past 30 days. This was similar to all six neighborhoods (18%) but higher than the national average (11%).
- Forty-eight percent (48%) of West Rock residents eat **vegetables** every day and 41% eat **fruit** every day – similar to all six neighborhoods. West Rock residents were more likely than those in all six neighborhoods to have the recommended five servings of fruit and vegetables per day (39% vs. 29%).
- As in all six neighborhoods, West Rock residents report drinking many **sugar-sweetened beverages** – 49% drink sugar-sweetened beverages every day, with 70% of those drinking two or more per day.

EXERCISE

- Fifty-two percent (52%) of West Rock residents **do not exercise** regularly – less than in all six neighborhoods (58%) and similar to the national average (51%).
- As in all six neighborhoods, West Rock residents describe several **challenges to regular exercise**, including lack of time, energy, willpower, and equipment or space.
- About one in four West Rock residents do not exercise because of poor health.
- Feelings of safety can limit exercise options. Sixty-two percent (62%) of West Rock residents agreed that it was **unsafe to go for walks** in their neighborhood at night.



SMOKING

- Twenty-three percent (23%) of West Rock residents are **current daily smokers** – lower than in all six neighborhoods (31%) but higher than the national average (13%).
- Forty-three percent (43%) of West Rock smokers said they were ready to quit and another 38% were thinking of quitting in the next six months.
- As in all six neighborhoods, most West Rock smokers (74%) said they would be motivated to quit by saving the money they spend on cigarettes.

For more information about CARE and this project:
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