CARE: Community Alliance for Research and Engagement

DOCUMENTING THE HEALTH OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

CARE, a partnership between the New Haven community and Yale University, is taking action against chronic disease such as diabetes, cancer, heart and lung disease that affect our health. 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, with other sites in England, Mexico, India and China.
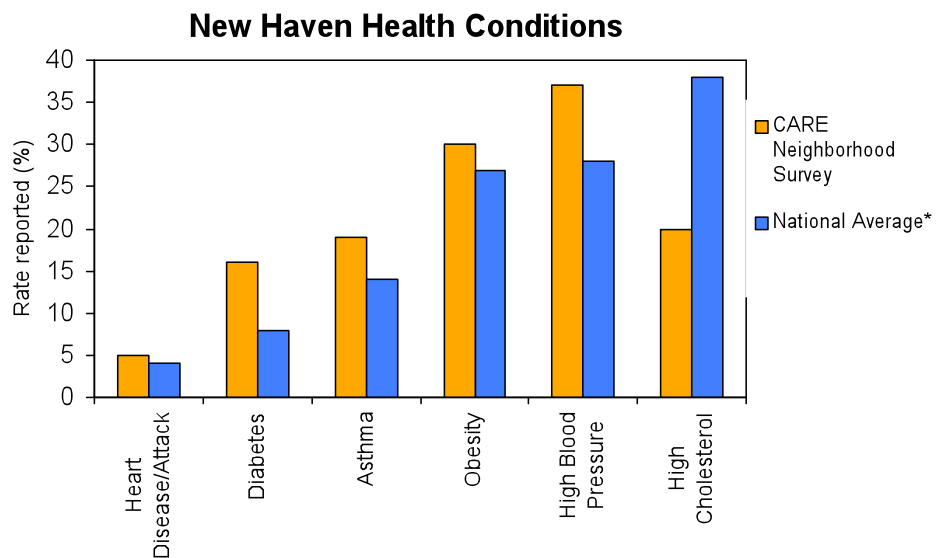
In the fall of 2009, CARE collected health surveys from 1,205 residents in six of our highest-risk neighborhoods. Households were randomly selected from a citywide list of addresses and surveyed in seven weeks by a team of 20 trained interviewers from the New Haven community. Eight-five percent of residents who were approached chose to participate in the survey.

Survey results will guide solutions to help make New Haven healthier!

GENERAL HEALTH AND STRESS

- New Haven residents report poorer health than the national average. Only 16% rate their health as "excellent" – lower than the national rate of 20%. The graph at right shows that residents report more chronic health conditions than others in the US.

- Most residents (87%) report having a regular place to go for health care. However, only 71% report having health insurance, below the national average of 86%.

- Residents report high levels of stress. Over one-quarter report being bothered by feeling down, depressed or hopeless; one in five feel more stress than is usual; and 4% feel "life is almost unbearable."

New Haven Health Conditions

Rate reported (%)

Heart Disease/Attack · Diabetes · Asthma · Obesity · High Blood Pressure · High Cholesterol

CARE Neighborhood Survey

National Average*

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

NUTRITION

- Nearly one in five residents report "food insecurity" – meaning that they or their family did not have enough money to buy food in the past 30 days.

- Thirty-eight percent (38%) report eating **fruit** everyday and 48% report eating **vegetables** everyday. Residents reported eating about four servings of fruits and vegetables per day, which is slightly less than the recommended five a day.

- In contrast, over half report drinking **sugar-sweetened beverages** such as sodas everyday – with almost three-quarters drinking two or more per day. Nearly one-third eat sweets everyday.

EXERCISE

**Common Reasons for Not Exercising**
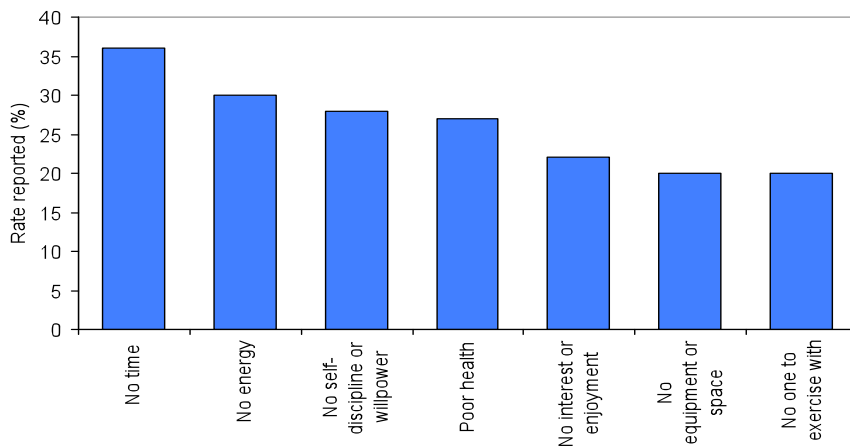
- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of residents report **no regular exercise** in the previous seven days.

- Feelings of safety limit exercise options: 65% said they "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" that it is unsafe to go for walks in their neighborhood at night.

SMOKING

- Thirty-one percent (31%) of residents are **current daily smokers.** This is 50% higher than the national rate of 20%. Twelve percent (12%) are ready to quit now and 15% are thinking about quitting in the next six months.

- Most smokers (75%) said they would be motivated to quit by saving the money they spend on cigarettes.

Common Reasons for Not Quitting Smoking
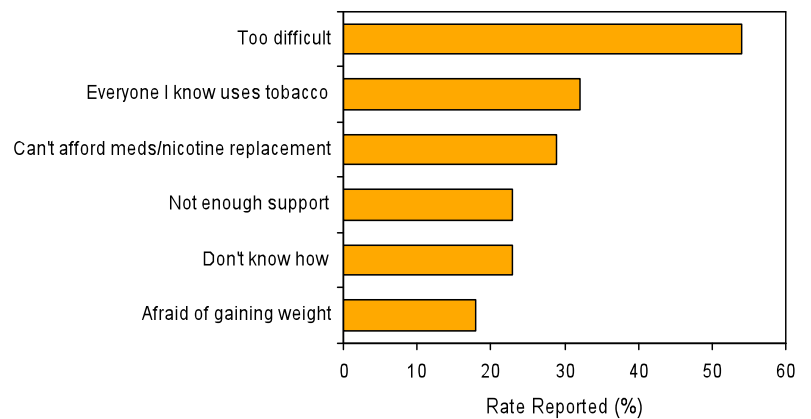
DEMOGRAPHICS

- Sixty-one percent (61%) of participants were female, the average age was 40.3 years, and 79% were between 25 and 54 years old (ranging from 18 to 84 years old). Race/ethnicity: 64% were African American/Black, 21% Hispanic/Latino, 15% white, and 4% other; 17% of participants were born outside of the US. The largest percentage of participants completed a high school degree or its equivalence (43%), followed by some college or an Associate's degree (29%).

ASSET MAPPING – SUMMER 2009

Why we mapped

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. The purpose of asset mapping was to document neighborhood features related to these risk factors in six New Haven neighborhoods – Dixwell, Dwight/West River, Fair Haven, Hill North, Newhallville, and West Rock. Using handheld computers, Youth@Work interns collected data about the stores, restaurants, parks, garden and recreational facilities in these neighborhoods.

Stores

Number of stores	
Fair Haven	36
West River/Dwight	31
Dixwell	10
Newhallville	12
Hill North	13
West Rock	2
TOTAL	104

- A total of 104 stores were mapped. Almost two-thirds were **convenience stores** such as corner stores or mini-marts. One in five were **package stores**. West River/Dwight and Fair Haven had the largest number of convenience and package stores.
- There was a striking lack of **grocery stores and supermarkets** – only one supermarket and eight small grocery stores. Fair Haven had the largest number of grocery stores.
- Many of the stores sold mostly junk food (63%) or mostly alcohol (19%). Only one store sold *mostly* fresh fruits and vegetables, although 32% sold fresh fruits and 38% sold fresh vegetables, as well as other things.
- Only 2 stores sold products used for quitting tobacco use, such as the patch.
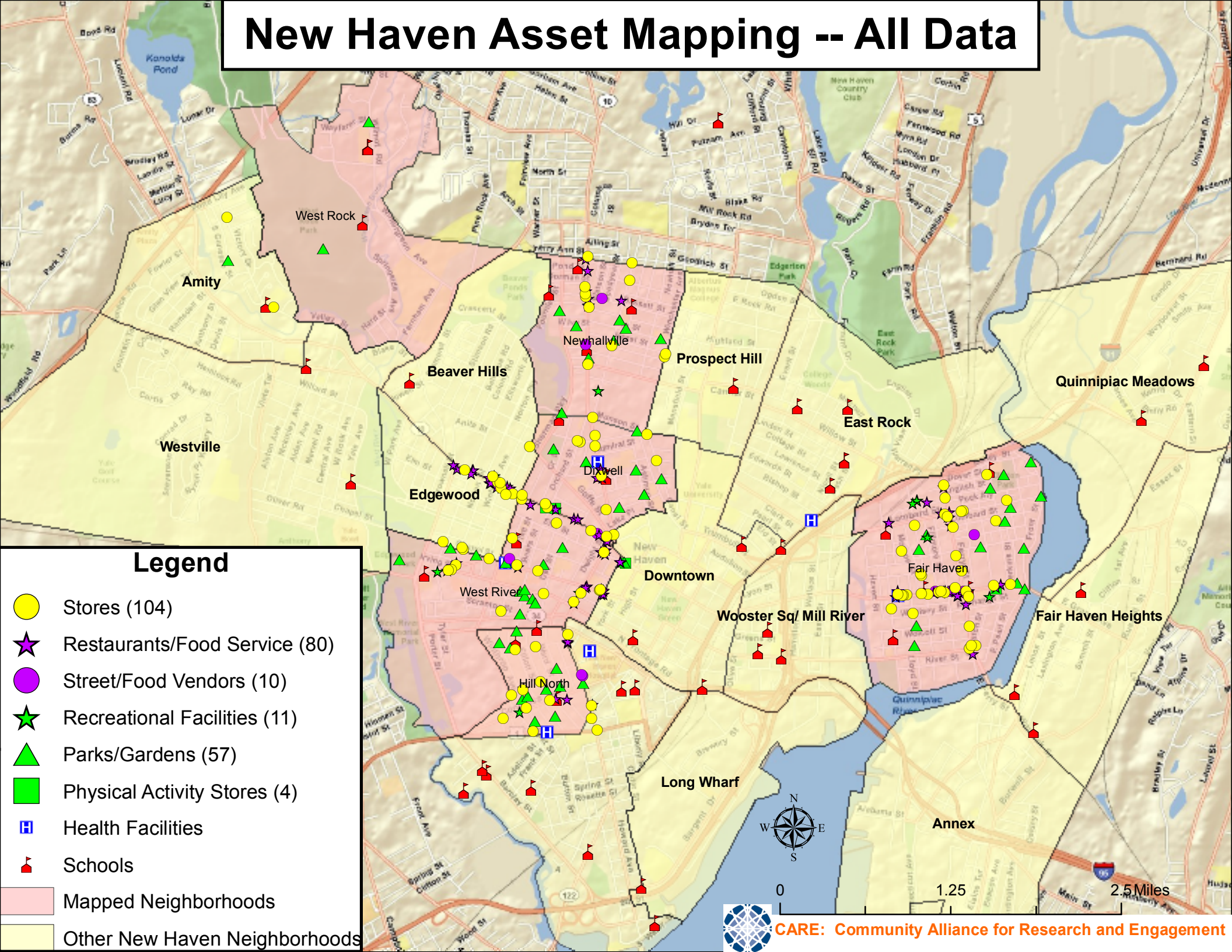
Restaurants

- A total of 80 restaurants were mapped.
  Three-quarters (76%) were fast food restaurants.
- Nineteen percent (19%) promoted healthy choices.
- Only 3 restaurants (4%) had nutrition information posted on menus or menu boards.
- No restaurants in Dixwell, Hill North, or Newhallville promoted healthy choices or had nutrition information posted.

Recreational Facilities, Parks and Gardens

- A total of 11 recreational facilities were mapped (facilities that offer exercise classes, dance, swimming, martial arts, etc). None were free. Five were in Fair Haven, three in West River/Dwight, two in Newhallville, and one in Hill North.
- **One of New Haven's assets is a lot of green space.** Thirty-eight (38) parks and 15 gardens were mapped. Almost all are free for use by the public. Almost three-quarters of parks have enough space for physical activity.

New Haven Asset Mapping -- All Data

West Rock

Amity

Beaver Hills

Westville

Edgewood

Newhallville

Prospect Hill

Dixwell

East Rock

Quinnipiac Meadows

West River

Downtown

Fair Haven

Wooster Sq/ Mill River

Fair Haven Heights

Hill North

Long Wharf

Annex

Legend

- ⬤ Stores (104)
- ✮ Restaurants/Food Service (80)
- ⬤ Street/Food Vendors (10)
- ✮ Recreational Facilities (11)
- ▲ Parks/Gardens (57)
- ⬛ Physical Activity Stores (4)
- Ⓗ Health Facilities
- ⚑ Schools
- ▨ Mapped Neighborhoods
- ▨ Other New Haven Neighborhoods

0   1.25   2.5 Miles

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