

Healthy in the City:

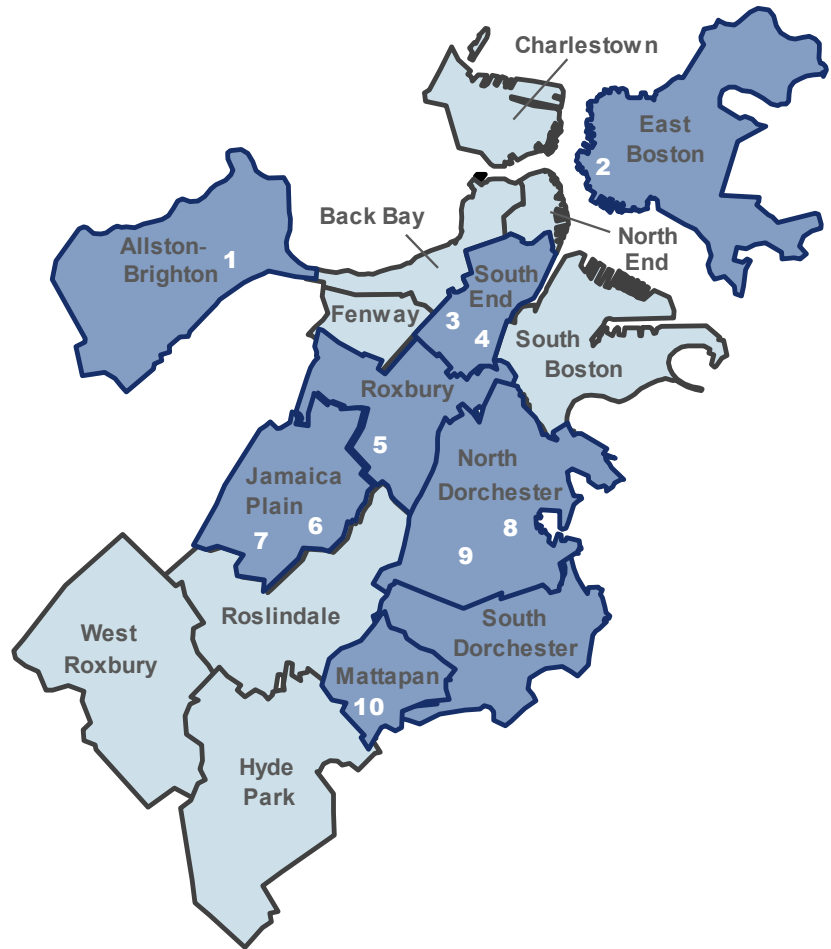
A community-based program to address childhood obesity in Boston



Boston Children's Hospital
Office of Community Health

Healthy in the City

- For more than 15 years, Boston Children's Hospital has partnered with 10 community health centers across 7 Boston neighborhoods to implement our Healthy in the City program



Healthy in the City

- Each year 1,000 children participate in the program, allowing them to receive case management and resources for nutrition and physical activity, such as:
 - Health education
 - Cooking classes and nutrition education workshops
 - Food distribution and food security resources
 - Fitness classes and gym memberships
 - Connections to community organizations





“At the start of each cooking class, we do a ‘Water is Best’ activity, where we discuss the sugar content of popular sugar-sweetened beverages and identify the maximum quantity recommended for daily consumption. To supplement this activity, each class begins with a demonstration of how to make flavored water using various fruits and/or herbs.”

- Case Manager

“At the end of each Karate and Zumba class that we offer, we have a nutritionist come talk to the children about the importance of healthy eating.”

- Case Manager



Program Effectiveness


- Two-thirds of program participants decrease their Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Children have demonstrated statistically significant behavior changes to maintain healthy weight
 - Decreased consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and fast food
 - Increased consumption of fruits and vegetables
 - Greater time spent exercising
 - Less sedentary screen time





*“It’s easy for us to say what people ‘need’ to do to be healthy. It’s often harder for them to actually implement those changes. Community health centers can help by providing **education and resources**, without being rigid in the approach.”*

- Evaluation Manager



“Positive changes in individual behavior related to diet and exercise can reduce the risk of developing a chronic disease. It is important, however, to acknowledge that individual behaviors are inextricably linked to the social and economic context of an individual's life.”

- Boston Public Health Commission



bostonchildrens.org/community



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