

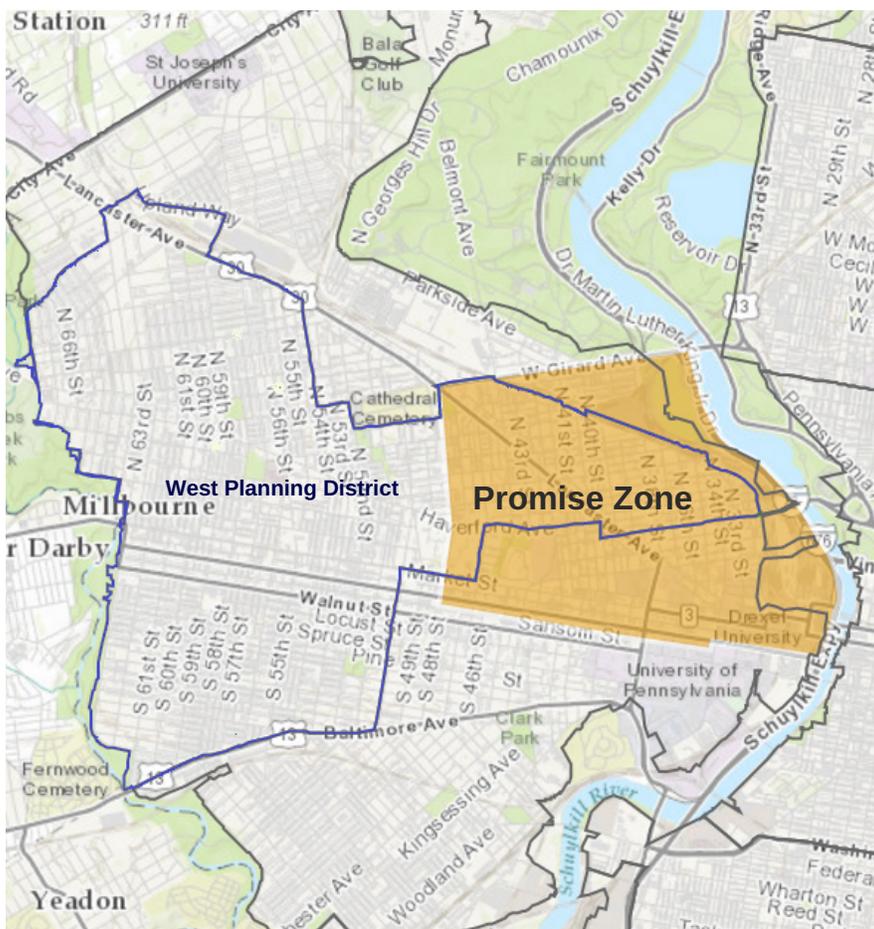
# Community Health Profile: West Philadelphia Promise Zone

## Identifying Opportunities for Community Health Improvement

April 2017

### What is the West Philadelphia Promise Zone?

In 2014, the federal government designated a group of neighborhoods in West Philadelphia as a Promise Zone based on indicators of poverty, unemployment, housing, education, and violence – all factors that influence health – as well as capacity for positive change for its residents. The map below shows the Promise Zone shaded in orange. The Promise Zone is roughly two square miles, includes parts of ten neighborhoods and nine census tracts, and includes 35,315 residents.



### What is a community health profile?

A health profile uses existing data to describe the health of a neighborhood or community. The data used are often called "indicators" of neighborhood health status. The purpose of this health profile is to describe the health and related factors (such as housing, food, etc.) of residents of the Promise Zone, to help residents and health advocates take advantage of resources to plan new programs or services to improve community health. It can also be useful over time to see whether improvement efforts have created positive change. Where possible, we compared what we learned about health in the Promise Zone with all of Philadelphia, or how the Promise Zone compares to the neighborhoods with the highest and lowest of each indicator. Data sources and methods are discussed on Page 4.

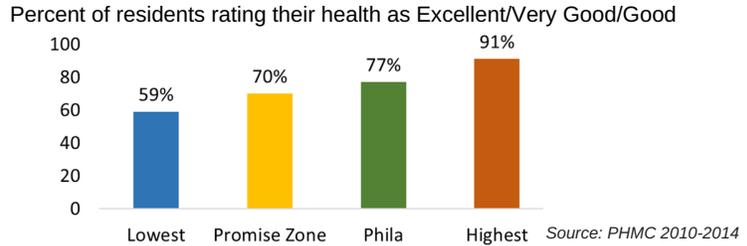
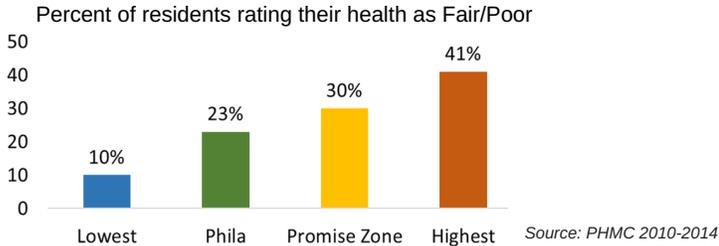
### What do we know about health in the Promise Zone?

This community health profile contains information about a variety of health and quality of life indicators – data on how residents rate their own health, health behaviors, access to health care, and neighborhood characteristics that influence health. The data in this profile generally shows that the Promise Zone neighborhoods perform worse in most health indicators than Philadelphia as a whole and closer to the neighborhoods at the bottom of the range than those at the top. This shows that significant public health challenges and health disparities exist in the Promise Zone.

# HEALTH DATA

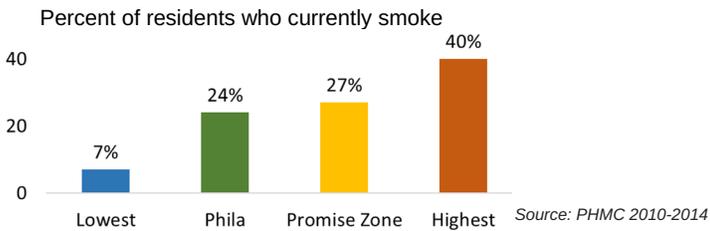
We compared health data in the **Promise Zone** with **Philadelphia overall**, and/or we compared the **Promise Zone** to the **Philadelphia neighborhoods with the highest and lowest** for each data point.

## Self-Rated Health

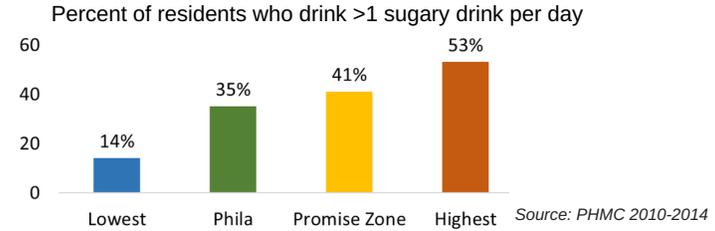


When residents from the Promise Zone were asked to rate their own health, more people reported that they have fair or poor health and fewer people reported that their health is excellent, very good, or good, compared to Philadelphia as a whole. Although it is a simple question, self-rated health is both an important measure of overall physical and mental health and wellbeing.

## Current Smokers



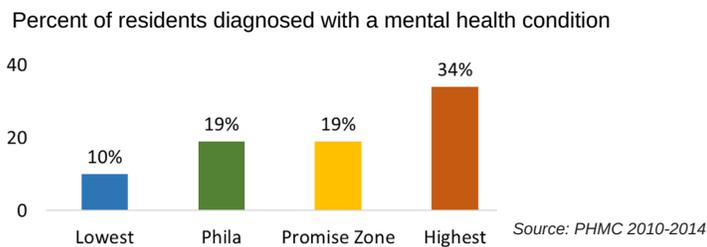
## People Who Drink >1 Sugary Drink Per Day



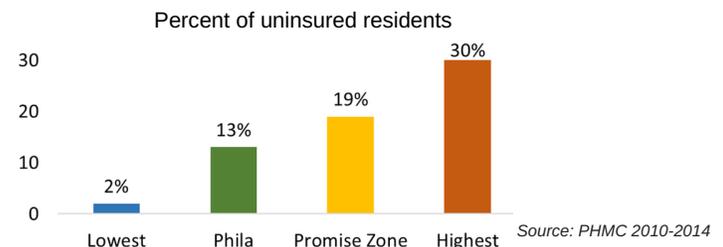
Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States. Beyond the harmful effects for the smoker, secondhand smoke causes heart disease, lung cancer, and stroke in adults; and can cause respiratory infections, ear infections, and more severe asthma attacks in children. More than one-quarter of adults in the Promise Zone smoke, causing firsthand and secondhand impacts.

What people eat and drink plays a major role in their health. The development of obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and cancer are largely dependent on a person's diet, particularly regular consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables and avoidance of sugar-sweetened beverages. The percentage of adults who drink more than one sugary drink daily is higher in the Promise Zone than Philadelphia as a whole.

## Mental Health Diagnoses



## Access to Care: Percent Uninsured



Mental health is an essential part of overall well-being, affecting one's ability to lead a productive and enjoyable life. The stress and costs associated with mental health issues not only affect the person diagnosed, but also their families and communities. When asked if they had ever been diagnosed with any mental health condition (including depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder), 19% of Promise Zone residents said they had, similar to Philadelphia as a whole.

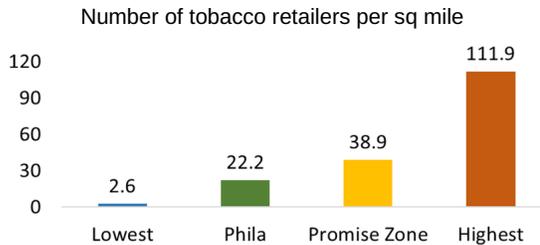
Access to and use of health care services is important for the prevention and early treatment of disease and illness. Health insurance is an important measure of access, as individuals and families without health insurance are much less likely to seek prevention services or other health care until they experience injury or symptoms. There are more uninsured adults in the Promise Zone than Philadelphia as a whole.

Although this is likely a low estimate since this only captures those with an official diagnosis, the fact that around 1 in 5 people report a diagnosis demonstrates that mental health is a challenge for the Promise Zone and all of Philadelphia.

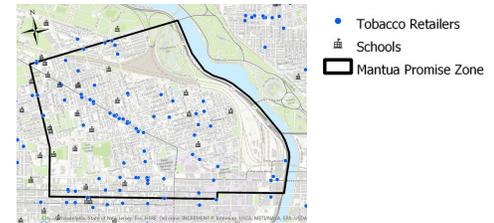
# NEIGHBORHOOD DATA

Where people live affects their physical and mental health and quality of life. A neighborhood can be detrimental to health, with high levels of pollution or violence, or lacking acceptable places to be active. A neighborhood can also motivate good health, with healthy homes, access to fresh-healthy food, and high levels of community cohesion and civic engagement.

## Presence of Tobacco Retailers

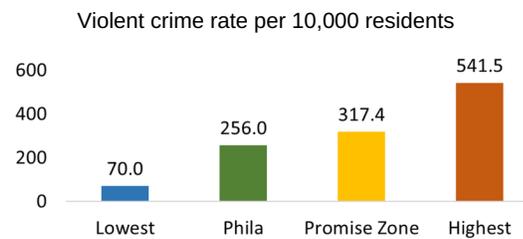
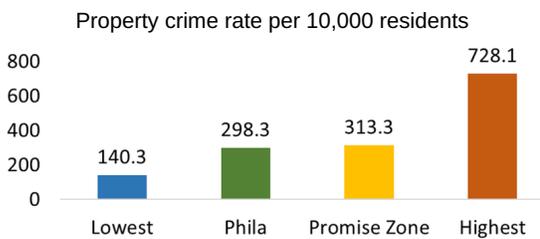


Access to tobacco products increases smoking behaviors. There are more tobacco retailers in the Promise Zone than Philadelphia as a whole, which may play a role in the larger number of smokers in the Promise Zone.



Source: Department of Public Health 2015

## Crime Rate



Source: OpenDataPhilly 2015

Crime affects the safety and health of individuals and also has a community-level impact. Property crimes such as theft and vandalism negatively impact residents' quality of life. Exposure to violent and nonviolent crime can increase individual stress and even causes whole communities to experience stress and trauma. The rates of property crime and violent crime in the Promise Zone are both slightly higher than that of Philadelphia as a whole. Although the Promise Zone has somewhat higher violent crime rates than Philadelphia as a whole, the difference is relatively small, especially when compared to the neighborhood with the most alarming crime statistics.

## Housing Distress (%)

	All Philadelphia	Promise Zone
Distressed	8	19
Most Distressed	6	24

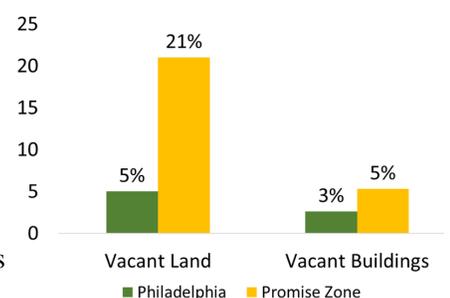
Source: Reinvestment Fund 2015

Families who live in good quality and stable housing are much more likely to be healthy, experience less stress, and experience fewer home-related accidents or illnesses (such as falls, allergies and asthma). Using a basic measure of real estate market value - the percent of distressed homes [very low home values, low level of home ownership, high

vacancy rates, and high level of publicly assisted rentals] – we compared the Promise Zone to Philadelphia as a whole. Housing in the Promise Zone is over four times more likely to be categorized as the worst level of housing distress, “most distressed,” and two and a half times more likely to be categorized in the second worst category of “distressed.” Besides the impact of housing distress on individuals and families, neighborhoods with low quality housing are burdened by pressures from developers looking to profit, and thus also experience the double burden of housing distress and displacement and gentrification.

## Vacant Land and Buildings

Vacant land and property has been linked with destabilized neighborhoods, illegal activity, and environmental contamination, and increased health and safety risks such as heart disease and mental health issues. There is a higher percentage of vacant land and vacant buildings in the Promise Zone than Philadelphia as a whole. In response, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) LandCare program has cleaned, greened and stabilized 593 vacant lots in the Promise Zone. Another 187 lots are maintained through PHS's work with 18 community organizations in its Community LandCare initiative. Together these programs have improved about 36% of the over 2000 vacant lots in the Promise Zone.



Source: OpenDataPhilly 2014

## Types of Calls to 311 (%)

	Philadelphia	Promise Zone
Maintenance Residential/Commercial	14	15
Street Defect	8	10
Vacant Lot Clean-Up	4	9
Vacant House or Commercial	4	5
Building Dangerous	2	3

Source: OpenDataPhilly 2014-2016

Philadelphians use the 311 line to report quality of life issues in their neighborhood. During a two-year period from 2014-2016, the average number of requests from the Promise Zone was higher in these five categories than the citywide average, showing that there are real concerns in this area, and that residents are speaking up. This makes sense given the higher rate of vacant lots and buildings and housing distress described above.

## STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THESE DATA

Currently, there is no health data that has been collected or can be examined at the neighborhood level in West Philadelphia. Thus for this profile, existing health and related data at the zip code level was used to create estimates for the Promise Zone boundaries. The data from the household health survey used samples from large areas, is done by phone, and combines 3 sets of data spanning 6 years to create good estimates. This means some programs (e.g. Medicaid expansion) may have changed during the time period, which can impact the data. Also, like any survey data, this may not be fully representative of all Promise Zone residents. However, this is the best health data that currently exists, and can still help us understand important information about resident health and identify additional health data needed to help community improvement efforts. The data used in this profile is good for monitoring change over time because it is routinely collected, and will likely continue to be in the future. If you have any questions about how we used these data or created Promise Zone estimates, please contact us using the information below.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Health data is needed that is representative of Promise Zone resident experiences, both as a whole and within each of the ten Promise Zone neighborhoods. These data will help pinpoint areas for needed services and programs, and capture neighborhood-level change over time. Research that is conducted in partnership with Promise Zone neighborhoods will be most effective at capturing data about community health. Qualitative data would be useful to understand residents' experiences with health and priorities for improvement. Quantitative data would allow for continued comparisons to the rest of the city and show changes over time.
- There are significant areas for improvement in self-rated overall health, access to health care, and important health behaviors (e.g. diet, smoking).
- Housing distress and vacant lots and buildings are significantly worse in the Promise Zone than the city as a whole. Improvements in these areas will improve health and quality of life for residents.
- Although violence and property crime are challenges in the Promise Zone, there are recognizable improvements when compared to other communities with high poverty rates, and the sources of these improvements should be supported.
- Solutions should focus on health equity - improving health while addressing the underlying social and economic inequities that cause poor health.

## What health data went into creating this health profile?

Data Source	Description	Date
1. <a href="#">Public Health Management Corporation's Southeastern Pennsylvania Household Health Survey</a>	Conducted by phone every two years and focuses on health	2010 - 2014
2. <a href="#">US Census American Community Survey</a>	Provides information about jobs, education, and home ownership, among other topics	2007 - 2011
3. <a href="#">Philadelphia Department of Public Health</a>	Provided the location of tobacco retailers	2015
4. <a href="#">OpenDataPhilly</a>	Catalog of open data in the Philadelphia region, the official repository for the city, including data from many organizations	2014-2016
5. <a href="#">The Reinvestment Fund Market Value Analysis</a>	Describes the characteristics of the block groups within a study area	2015

**Contact us:** For more information about the Urban Health Collaborative, visit [drexel.edu/dornsife/UrbanHealthCollaborative](http://drexel.edu/dornsife/UrbanHealthCollaborative) or email [uhc@drexel.edu](mailto:uhc@drexel.edu)  
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