

West Oakland Community Health Survey Results

By the Coalition for West Oakland Revitalization, the Prescott Joseph Center, West Oakland Asthma Coalition and the Pacific Institute © November 2004

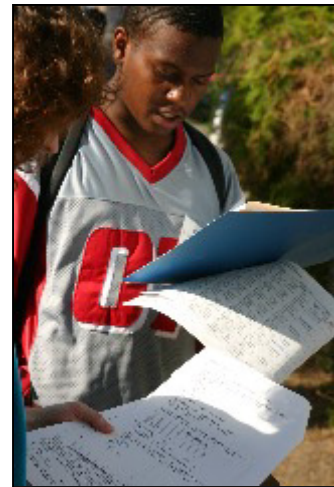
Introduction

Violence, drugs and education were the top three concerns of a small group of West Oakland residents who took part in a pilot health survey conducted by the Coalition for West Oakland Revitalization, Prescott Joseph Center, West Oakland Asthma Coalition and the Pacific Institute.

Because the survey involved a small sample size – 52 households in a one-block area around the Prescott Joseph Center were surveyed – the results are not as definitive as those of a comprehensive survey. Despite these limitations, our initial survey uncovers a variety of health threats and challenges facing some West Oakland residents.

In addition to concerns over violence, drugs, and education, residents surveyed ranked jobs, environmental pollution, and health as other top concerns. The majority of respondents perceived air quality in West Oakland as “poor” or “very poor.”

Air quality is a valid concern for West Oakland residents, who frequently breathe toxic fumes emitted by diesel trucks traveling through the community. According to the City of Oakland, over 20 truck-related businesses operate within the neighborhood, as well as a major U.S. Postal Service distribution center.ⁱ The City also estimated that in 2000, about 2,941 truck trips per day through the neighborhood were from the U.S. Postal Service and other truck-related businesses in West Oakland.ⁱⁱ



Youth surveyor, Kianta, surveys a West Oakland resident with his partner Veronica.

Almost 40 percent of adults surveyed reported no health coverage and an even greater portion (almost 60 percent) lack a regular source of medical care. While children were reported to have higher rates of health coverage than adults (15 percent were not insured), they have less regular medical care, with an alarming 64 percent of children without a regular source of medical care. This is disturbing news for West Oakland, where uncontrolled asthma is a crisis – West Oakland children are seven times more likely to be hospitalized for asthma than the average child in California.ⁱⁱⁱ

Under these circumstances, it is not hard to believe that over 70 percent of the adults surveyed reported experiencing stress.

Recommendations

Given these problems, what are the best solutions? One of the key recommendations from this pilot community health survey is that a more comprehensive health survey of West Oakland is needed. West Oakland bears the brunt of pollution from nearby freeways, industry, and the Port.

As a result, residents are already battling health problems such as asthma and respiratory illnesses. While community members know that their health is being compromised, a large survey of community health has never been completed to confirm what residents are experiencing on a daily basis. A more comprehensive health survey will allow residents, researchers, and government officials to better understand the links between environment and health in West Oakland.

Although a final set of recommendations will be created by community residents, based on this limited, pilot health survey we recommend:

- That a comprehensive, community-driven health survey of West Oakland be undertaken, as it is critical to understanding the true condition of the area and ensuring a healthy community;
- That the lack of insurance coverage among children and adults be remedied with better community health services;
- That West Oakland's poor air quality be addressed more quickly.

Why a Community Health Survey?

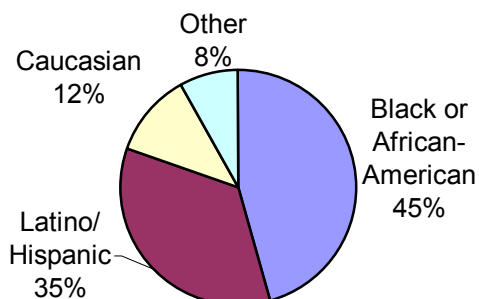
A long-standing community goal, which arose during the planning of the first West Oakland Clean Air Festival in 2001, is to have a comprehensive assessment of community health. CWOR and the Pacific Institute partnered in 2004 to develop a pilot health survey and implement it in a small area. The purpose of the survey was to identify children's health issues and begin to quantify the prevalence of asthma and other environmental health indicators in West Oakland. Over a series of bi-monthly meetings beginning in January 2004, a team of community leaders, health agencies, and health organizations developed a health survey to gain a sense of the state of health in the West Oakland community. On the last Wednesday (28th), Thursday (29th), and Saturday (31st) in July 2004, seven pairs of youth-adult partners knocked on doors in the blocks surrounding the Prescott Joseph Center (12th St., Peralta St., 9th St., and Chester St.) to conduct the health survey. We surveyed the primary caretaker of the household and from a total of approximately 90 residences, 52 households were surveyed.

Key Results

- Who We Talked To – Survey Participants
- Community Concerns
- Perceptions of Air Quality
- Stress
- Adults' Health Coverage and Medical Care
- Children's Health Coverage and Medical Care

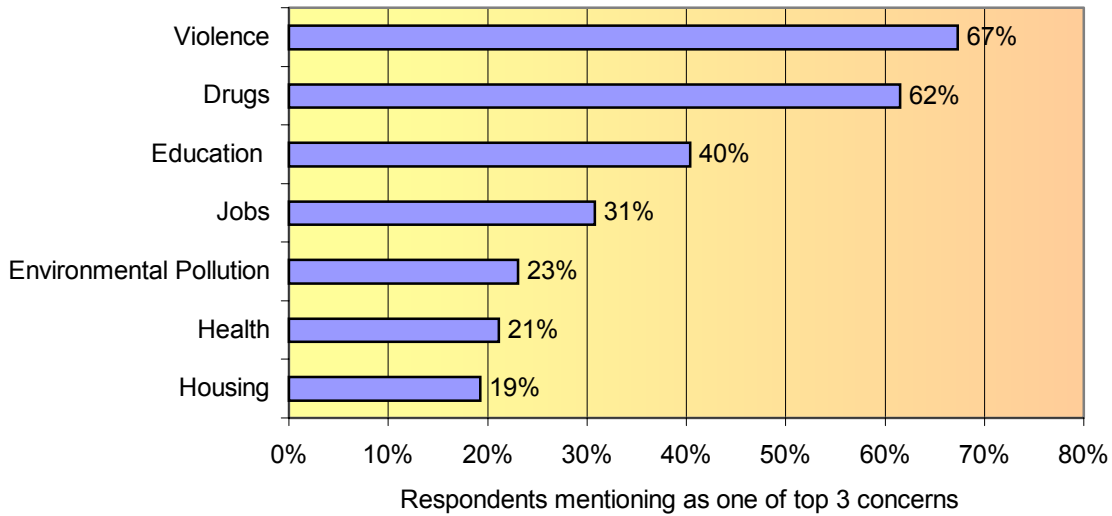
Who We Talked To – Survey Participants

Race/Ethnicity of Survey Participants



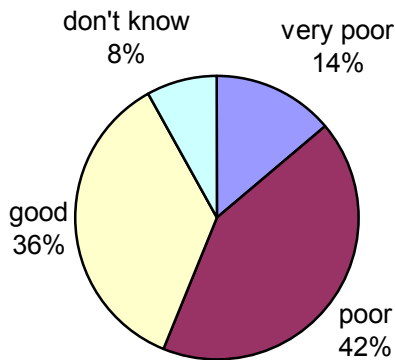
- 45% of the people we talked to were African American, 35% were Latino, and 12% were Caucasian.
- 19% were 18-29 years old, 25% were in their 30s, 31% were in their 40s, and 25% were 50 or older.

Community Concerns



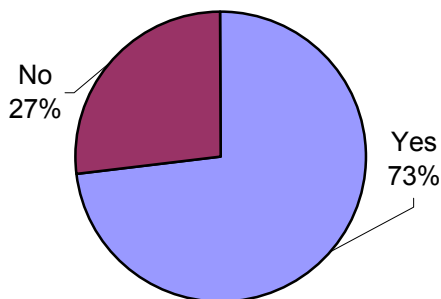
- Residents who were surveyed ranked (1) Violence, (2) Drugs, and (3) Education as the top three concerns in the community.
- Residents were also concerned about (4) Jobs, (5) Environmental Pollution, (6) Health, and (7) Housing.

Perceptions of Air Quality in West Oakland



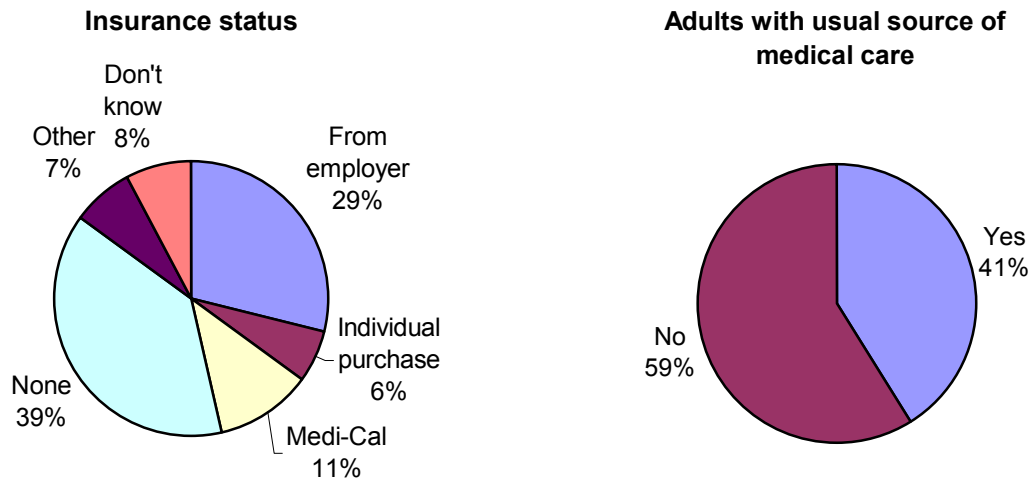
- The majority of people surveyed thought air quality in W. Oakland was “poor” or “very poor.” 36% thought air quality was “good.”
- No one surveyed thought that air quality in West Oakland was “very good.”
- Although only 23% of residents ranked “Environmental Pollution” as a top concern, diesel pollution has been identified as a serious concern by the W. Oakland Environmental Indicators Project.^{iv}

Many Respondents Experience Stress



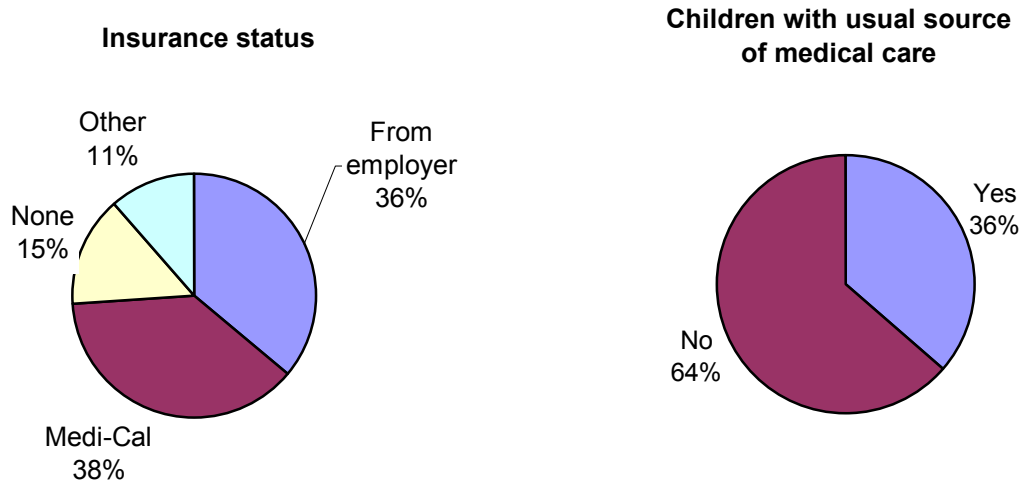
- The majority of respondents reported experiencing stress.
- Of those who experienced stress, 39% said their ability to handle problems was “Excellent” or “Very Good,” 50% said their ability was “Good” or “Fair,” and 11% said it was “Poor.”

Adult Health Coverage and Medical Care



- A large portion (39%) of adults were reported to have no health coverage, 29% were covered by their employer, and 11% were covered by Medi-Cal.
- The majority of adults also did not have a regular place to go for medical care.

Children’s Health Coverage and Medical Care



- Most of the children were reported to have health coverage from Medi-Cal (38%) or from a caretaker’s employer (36%). However, 15% were reported to have no health coverage.
- The majority of children (64%) did not have a regular place to go for medical care.
- This is disturbing news for West Oakland, where uncontrolled asthma is a crisis – West Oakland children are seven times more likely to be hospitalized for asthma than the average child in California.^v

Additional Results

Due to lack of space, the remaining results of this survey are presented in tabular format.

Number of households: 52

82% of respondents were born elsewhere and moved to West Oakland. Of these, their change in health since moving was:

Change In health	Percent %
Better	18
Worse	28
No change	54

Information was gathered on 66 children: 8% aged 1 year or less, 27% aged 1-5, and 65% aged 6-16. Of the children over age 5, 56% had lived in West Oakland more than 5 years.

The reported health of these children was:

Reported Health of Children	Percent
Very Good	23
Good	65
Poor	8
Very Poor	5

Information was gathered on 114 adults. 56% of these had lived in West Oakland 5 years or longer.

The reported health of these adults was (1=very good, 4=very poor):

Reported Health of Adults	Percent
Very Good	22
Good	61
Poor or Very Poor	18

Diagnosed ailments included:

	Percent of children	Percent of adults
Asthma	8	9
Allergies/hayfever	12	16
Emphysema		0
Cancer		3
Diabetes		3
High blood pressure		12
Heart disease/heart attacks & Stroke		3
Miscarriage		4

Frequency of asthma symptoms among children was:

Frequency of asthma symptoms among children	Percent %
None	62
Up to twice per month	9

More than twice/month but not weekly	0
Every week but not daily	0
Every day or nearly so	0

Frequency of asthma symptoms among adults was:

Frequency of asthma symptoms among adults	Percent %
None	64
Up to twice per month	4
More than twice a month but not daily	5
Every day or nearly so	5

24% of children were reported to have been tested for lead, but none reported knowing of any elevated levels.

42% of households had one or more smokers, and 55% of these had one or more indoor smokers.

36% of the children reported a usual source of medical care. These were:

Bayside
 Children's Hospital Oakland
 North Oakland Clinic on 57th & Market
 Clinica de la Raza (Fruitvale)
 Eastmont Mall Clinic (East Oakland)
 Alta Bates (Berkeley)
 Kaiser Permanente (Oakland)
 San Lucas Hospital
 San Pablo Clinic
 Summit Hospital (Oakland)
 West Oakland Health Center

41% of the adults reported a usual source of medical care. These were:

Clinica de la Raza (Fruitvale)
 Eastmont Mall Clinic (East Oakland)
 Family physician
 General practioner, OBGYN
 Highland Hospital (Oakland)
 Kaiser Permanente (Oakland)
 Los Portales Clinic (Mission District, SF)
 Over 60 Clinic (Berkeley)
 Public Health Clinic (27th St. & Broadway, Oakland)
 San Pablo Clinic
 San Antonio Clinic (International Blvd., Oakland)
 Summit Hospital (Oakland)
 Travis Hospital (Travis)
 Veteran's Health Clinic (Oakland Army Base)
 Veteran's Facility (San Francisco)
 West Oakland Health Center

West Oakland Community Health Survey Results

The adult respondents had the following demographic information:

Level of School Completed	Percent
Less than high school	21
High school diploma/GED	27
Associate/technical degree/some college	25
Bachelors degree	15
Graduate degree	12

Total Household Income	Percent
0-14,999	12
15,000-19,999	13
20,000-29,999	10
30,000-49,999	25
50,000-74,999	10
75,000-100,000	6
More than 100,000	6

Resources for Residents:

If families need assistance with filling out applications for program assistance, they can call a Public Health Community Health Worker assigned to the district area. In West Oakland/District 5 the Community Health Outreach Worker (CHOW) is Thornwell Watson (510) 595-6316 or 206-9441.



Community resident, Margaret Gordon, acted as a team leader for the surveyors

FOOD & NUTRITION

- WIC (Women Infant & Children's Program for low income pregnant and/or with children under 5 years of age). Provides supplemental food including milk, cheese and other products. 1-888-942-9675
- Alameda County Community Food Bank- Will provide assistance with emergency food needs, WIC sign up and school lunch program information for children. 1-800-870-3663
- Food Stamp Program, Families and individuals can sign up either at the Alameda County Social Services Agency located in North Oakland-45th and Broadway. Families and individuals can also sign up for cash assistance including General Assistance, Cal-Works and Refugee/Immigrant programs at county SSA offices as well.
- West Oakland Mandela Farmers Market, Mandela Parkway at 7th Street (near West Oakland BART Station), Saturdays, 10-4 pm.

PARENTING SKILLS/RESOURCES

- Alameda County Healthcare Services Agency/Behavioral Healthcare, (ACCESS referral and appointment) 1-800-491-9099
- Parents Helping Parents, (510) 276-9479

IMMIGRANT CITIZENSHIP SERVICES

- Spanish Speaking Unity Council, (Oakland), (510) 535-6900

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SERVICES

- Oakland Private Industry Council/WIB, (510) 891-9393
- Youth Employment Partnership, (510) 533-3447

LEGAL SERVICES

- Law Center for Families (Oakland), (510) 451-9261
- Centro Legal de la Raza (Oakland), (510) 437-1554
- Alameda County Bar Association (Oakland), (510) 893-1031
- Money Management International/Consumer Credit Counseling Services of the East Bay (Oakland), (510) 729-6966

HEALTH SERVICES

- Medi-Cal, (800) 880-5305 for information and service location.
- Healthy Families Program, (888) 747-1222 for information and service location
- Child Health & Disability Prevention Program, (888) 604-4636 for information and service location
- Kaiser California Kids Program, (818) 755-9700
- CLINICS: West Oakland residents, West Oakland Health Center, 700 Adeline Street

Families and individuals needing health insurance/Med-Cal can also sign up in any Alameda County Social Services Office near them: West Oakland, at the North Oakland Social Services Agency Office.

CHILD CARE SERVICES

- Bananas (Oakland, Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville), (510) 658-0381

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

- Family Violence Law Center, (510) 540-5354
- A Safe Place (Oakland), (510) 536-7233

Acknowledgements:

Youth surveyors & Adult survey volunteers:

Lisa Cardinas, Marilou Duran, Carrie Wong, Joanna Walker, Kianta Adams, Jamika Wallace, Alisha Chambers.

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We list the agencies for identification purposes only; this does not entail any endorsement of the final results by any of the agencies listed here. Any errors in the final health survey and in this document are ours alone.

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CWOR



ⁱ Harding ESE. 2001. *West Oakland Particulate Emissions Study, Oakland, California*. Harding ESE Project No. 48168 005, Prepared for the City of Oakland Environmental Services Division. September 24, 2001. Novato, CA.

ⁱⁱ Of those 2,491 truck trips per day, 947 were from the U.S. Postal Service Distribution Center, generating 65 of 171.6 pounds of DPM per day. Source: Harding ESE. 2001. *West Oakland Particulate Emissions Study, Oakland, California*. Harding ESE Project No. 48168 005, Prepared for the City of Oakland Environmental Services Division. September 24, 2001. Novato, CA. Table 2.

ⁱⁱⁱ Pacific Institute and 7th Street McClymonds Corridor. 2002. *Neighborhood Knowledge for Change: The West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project*. Oakland, CA: Pacific Institute.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v Ibid