

# UNNATURAL CAUSES...is inequality making us sick?

A documentary and public engagement campaign from California Newsreel



## SELECTED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON HEALTH AND PLACE

Available in the *UNNATURAL CAUSES Health Equity Database*,

[www.unnaturalcauses.org/resources.php](http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/resources.php)

### **Why Place Matters: Building a Movement for Healthy Communities**

*J Bell and V Rubin, PolicyLink, 2007*

This report explains the framework of place (economic, social, physical, and service environments) to understand the relationship between community conditions and health, analyzes the connections among all the environmental factors that contribute to a healthy community, and identifies environmental effects on community health.

### **Where We Live Matters for Our Health**

*Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Commission to Build a Healthier America, 2008*

#### ***Neighborhoods and Health***

*C Cubbin, V Pedregon, S Egerter, and P Braveman*

This issues brief examines the current state of knowledge about neighborhoods and their links with health, exploring the following questions:

- How could neighborhoods affect health?
- Are features of places really that important for health, or should we focus primarily on the individuals who live in them?
- Do all Americans have the opportunity to live in a healthy neighborhood?
- Could public and private policies improve neighborhoods in ways likely to improve America's health?

The brief also includes several examples of public, private and joint public-private initiatives intended to make neighborhoods healthier places to live, learn and play.

#### ***The Links Between Housing and Health***

*C Pollack, S Egerter, T Sadegh-Nobari, M Dekker, and P Braveman*

This issue brief focuses on three important and inter-related aspects of residential housing and their links to health: the physical conditions within homes; conditions in the neighborhoods surrounding homes; and housing affordability, which not only shapes home and neighborhood conditions but also affects the overall ability of families to make healthy choices.

### **Promoting Health Equity: A Resource to Help Communities Address Social Determinants of Health**

*L Ramirez, E Baker, and M Metzle, with the Social Determinants of Health Work Group at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008*

A workbook for community-based organizations seeking to affect the social determinants of health through community-based participatory approaches and nontraditional partnerships. Along with an introduction to the concepts of health equity, the workbook presents case studies of communities working at both small and large scales. The authors then provide guidelines for developing your own initiative, from creating partnerships to identifying your approach to assessing and maintaining your progress.

### **Closing the Gap in a Generation**

*Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, World Health Organization, 2008*

A project of the World Health Organization, the Commission supports countries and global health partners to address the social factors leading to ill health and inequities. It draws the attention of society to the social determinants of health that are known to be among the worst causes of poor health and inequalities between and within countries. The determinants include unemployment, unsafe workplaces, urban slums, globalization and lack of access to health systems. The Web site also contains final reports from the different knowledge networks, as well as additional background articles and resources.

### **Reaching for a Healthier Life: Facts of Socioeconomic Status and Health in the U.S.**

*The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Socioeconomic Status and Health, 2007*

An overview of how socioeconomic status affects health, though consideration of neighborhood, employment conditions, personal behaviors, health care, race and stress. The report includes policy implications. The MacArthur Network on SES and Health brings together many of the world's top researchers on socioeconomic factors in health.

### **South Los Angeles Healthy Equity Scorecard**

*A Park, N Watson, and L Galloway-Gilliam, Community Health Councils, Inc., 2008*

To assess the extent to which inequities in the healthcare and physical resource environments determine and shape the health of the South LA community, Community Health Councils collaborated with the Coalition for Health and Justice in a year-long study examining the healthcare and physical environment resources in the area. The resulting Scorecard takes into account multiple public and private policies that influence the resident health through investment—or lack of investment—in economic, education, housing, and healthcare systems. The Scorecard also identifies incremental steps by which South LA can be helped to achieve health equity.

### **Life and Death from Unnatural Causes: Health and Social Inequality in Alameda County**

*Alameda County Public Health Department (CA), 2008*

This report takes an in-depth look at health inequities and underlying social inequities in Alameda County based on local data. Part One describes the nature and magnitude of health inequities in the county. Part Two describes social inequities and proposes policies to address social inequities—the root causes of health inequities. Sections include: segregation, income and employment, education, housing, transportation, air quality, food access and liquor stores, physical activity and neighborhood conditions, criminal justice, access to health care and social relationships and community capacity.

### **Dwelling Disparities: How Poor Housing Leads to Poor Health**

*Environmental Health Perspectives, May 2005*

This article explains how the field of environmental health science has broadened the scope of its inquiries to understand the entire panorama of external factors that may affect people's health, including the built environment: the human-modified places where we live, work, play, shop, and more. The article focuses on research into the contributions of inadequate housing to poor health. Low-income and minority populations are known to be especially at risk for housing-related adverse health effects, but fully elucidating the links between the built environment and health disparities is a huge task, requiring new tools and research methods. Community groups are increasingly being brought into the research loop to ensure that efforts to identify and reduce health problems are appropriately targeted.