

# HEAL MAPPS

## Healthy Eating & Active Living Mapping Attributes using Participatory Photographic Surveys

HEAL MAPPS™ is an exciting community engagement program that documents people’s experience of place with respect to supports and barriers for habitual healthy eating, food access and physical activity.

Researchers and stakeholders develop a MAPPS™ report to facilitate and guide community efforts to cultivate environments that supports eating healthy, food access, and being physically active most every day for children and families.



"MAPPers" equipped with GPS devices helped identify barriers to healthy food.

### How did you do it?

HEAL MAPPS is a community-based participatory research process that uses photography, GPS and GIS technology, and residents’ voiced perceptions to address food access, healthy eating, and physical activity; coordination involves working with community partners, local Extension offices, and campus faculty to plan, implement, and evaluate HEAL MAPPS.

The HEAL MAPPS methodology also involves conducting focus groups and “Community Conversations” with community members. Over a series of four meetings, over the course of six weeks. During the Community Conversations, in which champions and decision-makers are asked to meet and talk about issues in the community. Polling software is used to determine depth of the issue, as well as involvement.

After the Community Conversations conclude, we analyze the data through NVivo qualitative analysis software to identify recurring themes or issues. The analysis software then allows us to run a query to determine the level of community readiness, supports, barriers, and resident recommendations for change. An Anchored Rating Scale is used to determine the level of community readiness through the “Readiness for Change” node in NVivo. There are 6 categories on which community readiness is determined, and a score is given for each subcategory (Existing Community Efforts to Address Food Insecurity, Community Knowledge of Efforts to Address Food Insecurity, Leadership, Community Climate (around food insecurity), Knowledge about the Issue (food insecurity, the community environment, and the link between local environment and local food access), and Resources Related to the Issue (people, money, time, space, etc.) to help a variety of community members to be food secure. All of these items are analyzed and put into a community report.

The Community Report functions as an evidence-based document that can drive decision-making in the community. The report is a tool designed to drive policies surrounding healthy eating, food access, and active living.



Scan this QR Code or visit [goo.gl/oki6Et](http://goo.gl/oki6Et) to view our Butler County Story Map

### Results

Our research team is still in the final stages of analysis and development of community report (set to be completed by mid-September). So far we have recognized an undeniable presence of suburban food insecurity in the West Chester community. In addition, there are many issues surrounding transportation and food access as it relates to locations of stores, and presence of sidewalks in the community. All of these are recognized as barriers to food access. The nature of HEAL MAPPS is to involve the community members and stakeholders to address food insecurity. In Butler County, we had outstanding presence of school, city, and local officials all committed to the cause. In addition, we had the investment of an OSU Extension 4H educator, Kevin Harris, who is motivated to see the issues addressed. Already there is activity in the community to establish a community garden in the apartment complex. We have a “Next Steps” meeting scheduled with the community to discuss some issues further.



### Conclusions

We plan to reconvene stakeholders to hold a “Next Steps” meeting. During this meeting we will present the community report and story map, and develop a task force. OSU Extension in Butler County will provide leadership to this effort.

**Short-term:** Youth learned leadership, public speaking, presentation, as well as STEM-based skills related to mapping (GPS, GIS). An evaluation was completed by community conversation participants who included stakeholders, residents, and mappers. In summary, following the community conversations, participants rated themselves significantly more aware of environmental features, programs, and leaders in the community that might influence one’s ability to access nutritious foods in socially acceptable ways.

**Medium-term:** There have already been some preliminary discussions between Butler Co. Extension and Meadow Ridge Apartments about starting a neighborhood community garden, and 4-H clubs. SNAPed has already held classes in the community following this program.

For more information about HEAL MAPPS at The Ohio State University, please contact:

Daniel T. Remley, MSPH, PhD, Assistant Professor, Field Specialist Food, Nutrition, and Wellness Ohio State University Extension (740) 289-2071 ext 241

Karima Samadi, MPH, CHES HEAL MAPPS Research and Extension Coordinator OSU Extension / The Kirwan Institute The Ohio State University (614) 292-1378 | [samadi.2@osu.edu](mailto:samadi.2@osu.edu)

