

## **Photovoice: Helping Our Communities Picture Change**

Where people live, work and play has a powerful influence on their health. By increasing opportunities for physical activity and improving access to healthy food, Kaiser Permanente's community health initiatives are delivering powerful community-based prevention. The big idea: improve people's health by making the healthy choice the easy choice.

The idea behind community health initiatives has even found its way into leading proposals for national health reform. Several of the reform bills now being debated on Capitol Hill propose major investments in community-based prevention.

At Kaiser Permanente, a core element of Community Health Initiatives is Photovoice. [Photovoice](#) is a community change strategy in which residents take pictures of barriers to health and safety in their communities. Next, they bring these pictures to school boards, city councils and other decision-makers to advocate for change.

More than 200 people, living in 18 communities across six Kaiser Permanente regions, have used Photovoice since the program launched in 2006. Here are some of the results:

- In Richmond, Calif., residents used Photovoice to help convince city officials to demolish a liquor store that was a magnet for crime and a source of junk food for local school children.
- In Commerce City, Colo., the community used Photovoice images to support changes to the city's General Plan that elevate the importance of biking and walking in key development decisions.
- In Park Hill, Colo., residents used Photovoice to get a local park renovated, making it safer and more welcoming to families

Loel Solomon, PhD., Kaiser Permanente's director of Community Health Initiatives and Evaluation, views Photovoice as a powerful health promotion tool. "Photovoice is about picturing the change we want to see in the world and then working with others to bring that change about," Solomon said. "And it works. This effort has led to important community changes, like healthier food at corner stores and safer streets that promote biking and walking. Now that's powerful prevention."

### **Sharing Photovoice with Others**

Photovoice highlights Kaiser Permanente's commitment to improving the health of our members and the communities we serve. Please use the following talking points as you speak to your friends, families and colleagues about the broad range of Kaiser Permanente's philanthropic investment in our communities. Contact your regional Community Benefit office for more information about Photovoice and other efforts in your area.