

## Active Living Research, 2009

### *Caminando con Fe* (Walking with Faith): *Promotoras* Advocating for Built Environmental Changes to Promote Physical Activity among Churchgoing Latinas

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# Overview of Presentation

- Rationale and study aims
- Research design
- Environmental changes
- Amount of time spent in changing the built environment
- Links between the environment and physical activity
- Program sustainability

# Why churches?

- 68% of Latinos identify as Catholic<sup>1</sup>
- 42% of Latino Catholics attend church weekly<sup>1</sup>
- Effective and culturally appropriate entry portal for prevention activities<sup>2,3</sup>
  - Promote emotional, spiritual, and physical health
  - Social gathering
  - Permanence and prestige

<sup>1</sup> PEW., 2006

<sup>2</sup> Trasher et al., 2004

<sup>3</sup> Bowen et al., 2004

# *Promotoras* (Lay Health Advisors)

- Community leaders
- Health promotion programs identify and train *promotoras* to deliver the intervention.
- *Promotoras* have been involved in a variety of health promotion and disease prevention programs with diverse racial/ethnic groups.<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lacey, 1998

<sup>2</sup> Eng et al., 1997

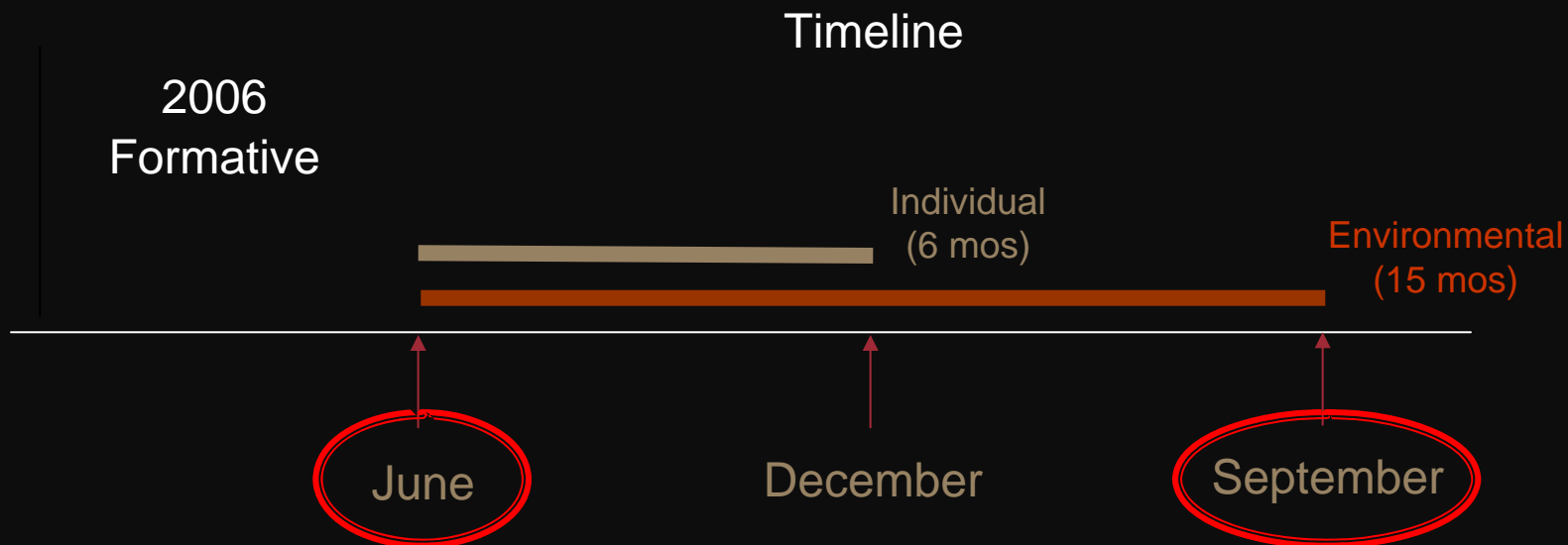
# Study Aims

Provide preliminary evaluation of intervention influences on:

- Physical activity
- Psychosocial correlates of physical activity
- The built environment

# Study Design

- Pre and post one group design, sample size, DV
- Individual level intervention and assessment
- Environmental level intervention and assessment



# Region/Border Context

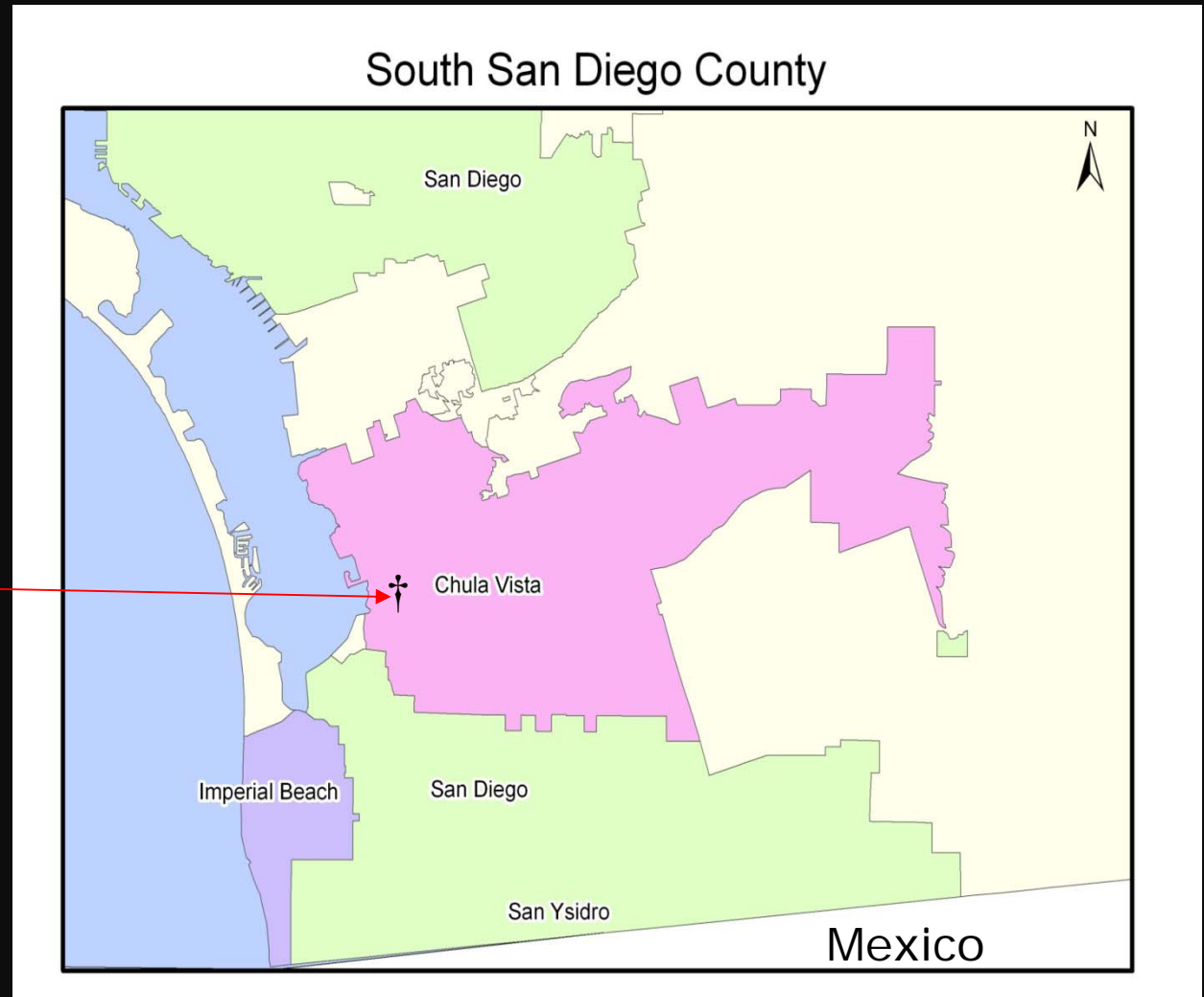
## Population

53% Latinos in Chula Vista

West with a medium income of \$29,535

Intervention church

Approximately 6 miles from the border



# Intervention Church

- ❑ Established in 1957
- ❑ 1800 parishioners
- ❑ 3 Spanish services
- ❑ 47% Hispanic





# Promotoras training

- ❑ **Recruitment:** individual (3) and environmental (3)
- ❑ **Duration:** 2 mos; 2x/week; 2 hrs each
- ❑ **Training:** Individual and environmental; CPR trained
- ❑ Met weekly (initially) then bimonthly (after 2 mos)
- ❑ WalkSanDiego training



# Environmental Level Targets

Tier 1 (red)  
Church parcel

Tier 2 (yellow)  
Block

Tier 3  
1/2 mile  
around the  
church



# Environmental Assessment Tier 1 (church premises)



Graffiti



Pedestrian signage  
on the ground



Unkept  
basketball hoop



Garbage

# Environmental Assessment— Tier 2 (block/park) and Tier 3 (1/2 mile)



Lauderbach  
park

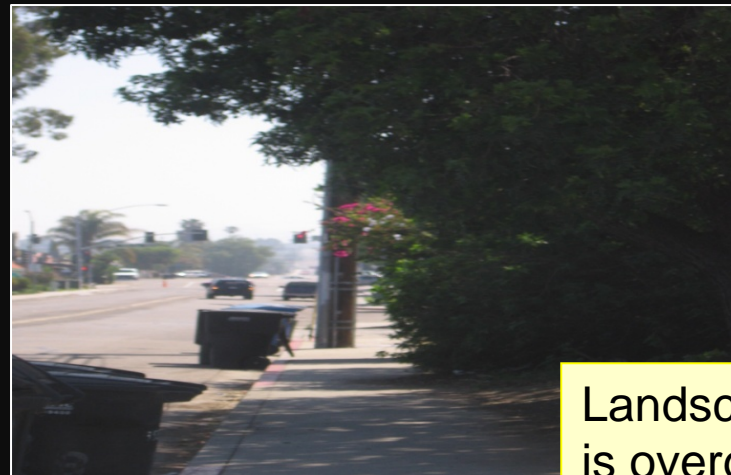
Open  
drainage



Falling fence



Missing/broken  
sidewalks



Landscape  
is overgrown

# Advocating for Environmental Changes (Tier 2)

City council presentation



Meeting with city officials at the park



# Making changes (Tier 1 – church)



Renovation of basketball court



Making aesthetic changes

# Environmental Successes

## Tier 1 changes to date

- Renovated and inaugurated basketball court
- Improved landscaping
- Decreased trash
- Decreased graffiti
- Increased security

## Tier 2 changes to date

- Increased park security
- Improved park safety
- Enhanced park amenities
- Improved pedestrian safety in park
- Improved children's play area
- Removed trash around the block
- Improved pedestrian safety



# Celebrating changes (Tier 1)



Basketball court





# Celebrating changes (Tier 2) Lauderbach Park grand re-opening

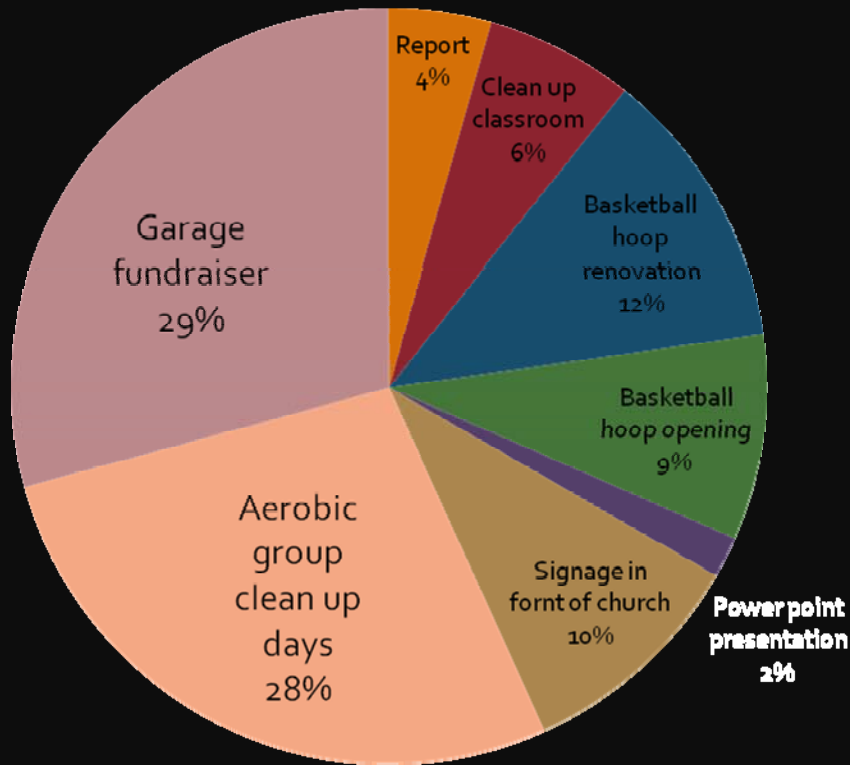
Community organizations information  
booths



Physical activity demonstrations



# Promotoras' time spent in making environmental changes



Tier 1 = 283 Total hours



Tier 2 = 186 Total hours

# Perceived environment

Demographic	Total (n=97)
% Married	70
% Drive	84
% Employed	51
% $\leq$ HS	67
% Born in Mexico	93
% $\leq$ \$2,000/month	51
Mean age (SD)	42 (10)
Mean # of yrs. in US (SD)	17 (13)

100% Latina sample; 82% cohort maintenance post-intervention

# Pre and post intervention results: Environmental changes and link to PA

## *Changes in perceived environment*

- No changes in perceived built environment
- Significant increase in neighborhood cohesion

## *Linking PA with perceived environment*

- Neighborhood cohesion led to higher leisure time physical activity.<sup>1</sup>
- Environmental changes (safety and recreational features) noticed to the park was associated with intention to use the park for exercise.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Martinez, S., Manuscript in prep.

<sup>2</sup> Hoos, T., MPH thesis

# Program sustainability



Physical activity programs  
have continued

## Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

- Five churches
- “Adopt a park” program
- Create wellness programs
- Implement policies in faith based organizations that increase PA programs and access to healthier food options

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- Doctoral student-Suzanna Martinez, MA (HP doctoral student)
- Individual and environmental level *Promotoras*
- Church leaders
- WalkSanDiego
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- Study participants
- Community partners