

# Using Health Literacy Outreach and Education to Improve Utilization and Health Outcomes in West Louisville

## Project Summary & Goals

Our research team and an advisory group of community members, health professionals, and academics worked together to develop resources to improve the health behaviors literacy of West Louisville residents. We used Boot Camp Translation (BCT), a community-based participatory research method, to develop culturally-tailored and context-specific health literacy materials. We chose three health conditions on which to focus – depression, childhood asthma, and HIV – and translated medical jargon into locally relevant and engaging messages that community members can understand.

The overall goals of the project were:

- To improve health literacy regarding three specific health issues among West Louisville residents;
- To improve health outcomes for residents living with the targeted health issues; and
- To disseminate the development process and the resulting health literacy materials to similar settings and populations.

Campaign 1: “Depression is Real”

We partnered with Metro 2-1-1 to refer West Louisville residents to several culturally-affirming behavioral health providers. The depression campaign messaging was featured in TARC buses, public places such as health and community centers, and in radio ads. Community members and psychologists also appeared together on local radio shows to reduce depression stigma.

Campaign 2: “Every Child with Asthma Needs an Asthma Action Plan”

The childhood asthma campaign aimed to increase utilization of asthma action plans (AAPs). Campaign materials were disseminated through social media and in print throughout West Louisville and messages were supplemented through appearances on local radio. The research team partnered with pediatricians to give AAPs to West Louisville children. Partner practices were incentivized with culturally affirming children’s books.

Campaign 3: “We’re in Control Now”

The HIV campaign, focused on reducing HIV stigma and increasing testing, was launched to coincide with National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Campaign posters were featured in TARC buses, on social media, and in public places. The materials referred the public to Louisville Metro Public Health & Wellness and Volunteers of America for confidential HIV counseling and testing.

## Project Dates

10/1/2015-4/30/2018

## Principal Investigator(s)

Ryan Combs, Ph.D.  
Monica Wendel, Ph.D.

## Communities and Partners Involved

Medical Experts

Monnica Williams, Ph.D.  
Jennifer Porter, M.D.  
Karen Krigger, M.D.

Thirteen (13) West Louisville Community Members  
Louisville Metro Public Health & Wellness  
Volunteers of America  
University of Louisville Physicians  
Shawnee Christian Healthcare Centers  
Park DuValle Community Health Center  
Family Health Centers  
Passport Health Plan  
Metro United Way 2-1-1

## Funders

Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence

## Key Findings

- BCT offers an effective, time-constrained process for engaging stakeholders in the development of culturally-tailored communication campaigns on topics of great import.
- West Louisville residents care very much about their health and the health of their families; however, addressing individual health conditions often gets pushed down the priority list due to more pressing unmet needs such as safety and financial security.
- Many West Louisville residents are ready, willing, and able to participate in advisory groups on specific health issues affecting the community.
- BCT participants expressed personal satisfaction about, and gratitude for, the opportunity to take part in developing of culturally-tailored health communications campaigns.