

PUBLIC HEALTH *and* GREEN BUILDING

Partnership Opportunities for Childhood Obesity Prevention

Public health and the green building industry share a goal of providing healthy places to live, work, and play for all. This common focus on improving the design of our built environments offers an important opportunity to promote positive behaviors like physical activity and healthy eating to help address childhood obesity.

Here are seven recommendations presented in a recent research article¹ to foster collaborative research and practice between public health and the green building industry.

1 INTEGRATE HEALTH WITHIN GREEN BUILDING CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Green building certification systems, such as the LEED rating scales developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, promote environmental sustainability by encouraging adoption of recommended design and building practices. These same systems can be used to promote healthy places.



2 FOCUS ON CREATING GREEN AND HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Schools are critical community resources and ideal environments to advance public health and sustainability goals. How we design our schools has a big impact.

GREEN BUILDING PRACTICES

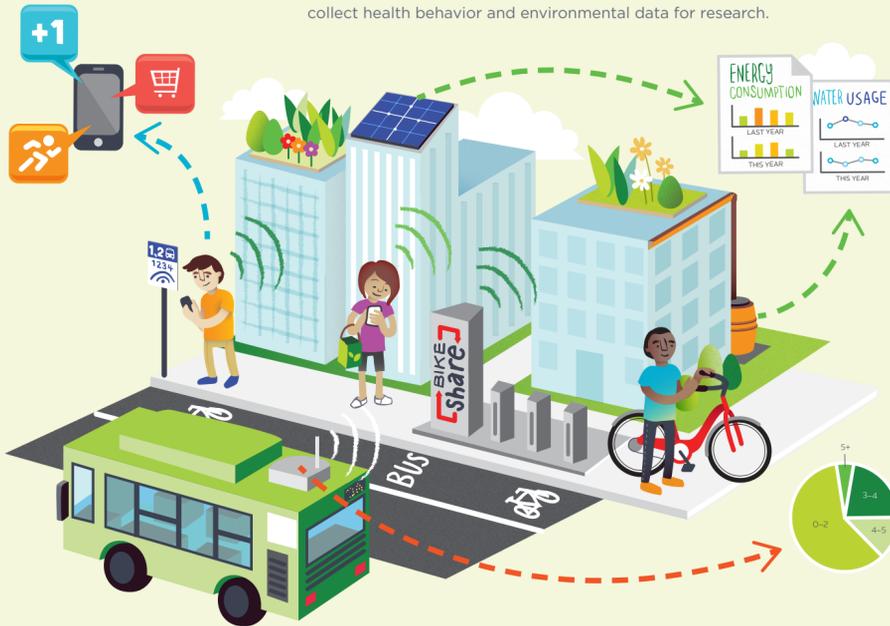


3 INVESTIGATE HEALTH IMPACTS OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AT MULTIPLE SPATIAL SCALES

The built environment that affects our health operates at many different levels, from rooms to buildings to outside landscapes to neighborhoods and even beyond, to cities and regions. More research is needed at each of these spatial scales.

4 USE MOBILE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH

New technologies and tools that use social media, mobile devices, and sensors offer valuable, cost-effective ways to collect health behavior and environmental data for research.

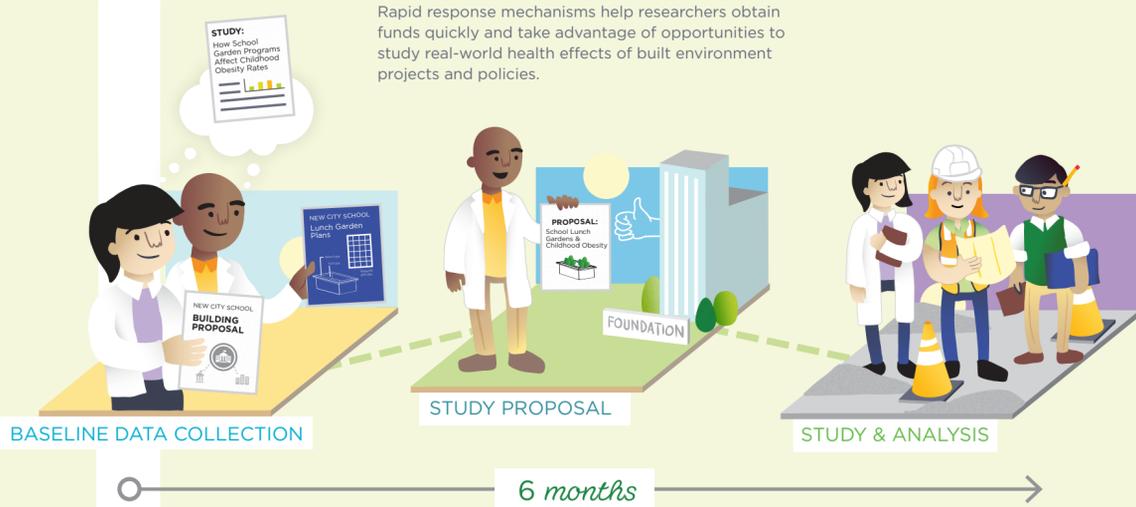


5 APPLY SYSTEMS SCIENCE TOOLS TO UNDERSTAND HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT DECISION-MAKING

Systems science, which integrates various types of data at multiple scales, can help answer complex questions about how health behaviors and the built environment interact.

6 INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF RAPID RESPONSE RESEARCH FUNDING

Rapid response mechanisms help researchers obtain funds quickly and take advantage of opportunities to study real-world health effects of built environment projects and policies.



7 FOSTER CROSS-DISCIPLINARY TRAINING BETWEEN PUBLIC HEALTH, URBAN PLANNING, AND OTHER DESIGN DISCIPLINES

Cross-disciplinary training fosters effective collaboration among the diverse disciplines that contribute to creating healthy places to live, work, learn, and play.

