

NEIGHBORHOODS PROJECT: a Summary

The Search for the Cause campaign is completing its initial phase of scientific research with partner Dr. Linda Remy, who has led this work since 2003 with UCSF's Family Health Outcomes Project.

As we embark on our next phase of searching for the cause, we will focus on the Neighborhoods Project and work in collaboration with students, teachers and adults with specific expertise and skills to support and guide our work.

Modeled after the success of the Teens for Safe Cosmetics Campaign, we will engage high school students in hands on research, investigation, oral history, plotting, mapping and filming, using the skills that they are honing in school to seek answers to the question, "Why Us Why Here," relating to the high cancer rates in Marin County. The goal is to assess, address and, wherever possible, correct any potential health risks in our communities and in our lives, which may lead to mitigating risk and reversing the cancer trends that continue to elevate.

Phase 1: Enlist Partnering Schools (June - August)

- Identify schools, teachers and students to work on this project.
- Begin to work on establishing the research protocol which would have to be approved by the state for the work to be scientifically significant and usable

Phase 2: Assessment Phase (a work in progress that will be decided collaboratively)

- We will ask each of the high schools to be the central point in their city or town. They will each be asked to GIS map the potential environmental risk factors in their area for example; high tension power lines, cell phone towers, parks and fields that are sprayed, gas stations, dry cleaners, land use etc.
- To do that they will have to think They will need to consider;
 - what might be considered a risk factor
 - seek out historical data on land use to try and understand any potential health impact
 - gather oral history from people who have lived in this county for a lifetime.

Once we have done the assessment in each city and town, we will map the information over our cancer maps to see if it looks like there might be any potential correlation.

Phase 3: Correct the Problem

- We will identify one or two risk factors that should be studied in each community, address them and work to acquire the expertise to set about correcting the problem.
 - Example: In the case of Corte Madera, the Styrofoam Cup Factory might be one that we would seek more information about. With expertise and guidance we would ask questions, seek answers and figure out ways to remediate along with the help of town councils, County Supervisors and state leaders. There are many aspects of this project that will incorporate academic skills.

From here, we will continue to build out next steps. The opportunities to involve many disciplines in our high schools are boundless from:

- Science (investigating)
- Math (statistical analysis)
- English (oral history and interviewing)
- History (historical land use and history of our county and impact on health)
- Technology (GIS, mapping)
- Filmmaking (documenting all of the work)
- Photography (documentation)

We are looking forward to working with a cross section of teachers and experts from our community to create a dynamic model and seek to get actionable results from our work.