

# Using Photovoice to Understand Perceptions of Cardiovascular Health in Multi-Cultural Settings

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# Objectives of Presentation

- Describe Photovoice
- Explain Context for “Healthy Heart”
- Training
  - Facilitators
  - Participants
- Present Photographic Results
- Provide Photographers’ Descriptions

# What is "Photovoice"

- Originally Developed as a Social Tool
- "Social Change Through Photography"
- Developed by Carolyn C. Wang and Mary Ann Burris
- Enlarges perimeters of health
  - From medical
  - To the psychological, social and economic conditions of a community
- <http://www.photovoice.com>

# Three Goals of Photovoice

- Enables people to record and reflect their community's strengths and problems
- Promotes dialogue about important issues through group discussion and photographs
- Engages policymakers.

# CHIRTN

- Cardiovascular Health Intervention Research and Translation Network
- Funded by CDC (SIP to UW Health Promotion Research Center)
- Six Centers: UW, UNC, UI-Circle, U Rochester, UWV, U Colorado

# CHIRTN Demonstration Project

- Project with participation at all sites
- Perceptions of Cardiovascular Health in Underserved Populations
- Population defined by each center
- Utilize Seattle uniqueness (UW site):  
Non-English speaking Asians

# Healthy Heart Photovoice Project

## Project background and goals

- Understand how risk factors for CVD can be better controlled by persons of our communities (Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese) in Seattle
- This starts with understanding how these are perceived

# Healthy Heart Photovoice Methods

- Identify facilitators and conduct training
- Recruit 7-8 participants for 2 sessions
- 1<sup>st</sup> session = information, provide cameras and instructions
- In interim, participants take photos
- Film returned, we develop and send copies to ppt
- Participants identify 2 favorite photos and prepare thoughts
- 2<sup>nd</sup> session = ppts describe photos to group, discuss



# Train the Facilitators

- Explain the photovoice process/methods
- Explain goals of the Healthy Heart project
- Provide examples
- Provide cameras and instructions for use
- Explain timing
- Answer all questions

# Participant Session 1

- Session 1 (60-75 minutes)
  - Consent forms
  - Goals for Healthy Heart project
  - Introduction to Photovoice
  - Photography Power, Ethics & Legal Issues
  - Documentary Photography for Social Change
  - Camera & Shooting Basics: Photography 101
  - Discussion of Picture ME themes
  - Pass out assignment, camera, and envelopes

# ME with a Healthy Heart Photovoice Project

- Photovoice as a tool to help your voices be heard in your community.
  - This photovoice project focuses on heart health: what supports your heart and what hurts it.
  - You will take photos to share your thoughts about heart health.

# EXAMPLES OF PHOTOVOICE PROJECTS

([www.photovoice.com](http://www.photovoice.com))

## Picture This: A Snapshot of Health in Contra Costa County



“This picture represents my own personal fears. A child died here on Highway 4, going west. This is a single lane highway, a trucking route. People are in a hurry. There are no sidewalks. The truckers are in a big hurry. This cross represents a child that died 5 years ago. I worry about my own children, like I said this picture is really about my own fears.”

– Brenda Dick



“This is my nephew. Doesn't he look terrific? He is on a Pee Wee team. I am very proud of him, and as you can see, he is very proud too. Our kids need more activities like this.” – Traci Powell

## Visual Voices: 100 Photographs of Village China by the Women of Yunnan Province



**HOEING CORN** Li Qiong Fen, age 37

“The village has no kindergarten and at home there are no elderly people to look after the young. Women can only take the children to the field, doing farm work as they look after them.”

# The Power of a Photograph

## Training the Participants

- What is your responsibility when you carry a camera?
  - your picture tells a story, what do you want to say?
  - safety issues
- What does it mean to take someone's picture?
  - privacy, culture, power, storytelling
  - what are the rights of others



# Photography Power & Ethics

## Training the Participants

- What is an acceptable way to approach someone when taking their picture?
- Should someone take pictures of others without their knowledge?
- What would you not want to be photographed doing?
- Photo release: need permission to take someone's photograph

# Photography 101

- Lighting
- Hold camera steady
- Composition

# Themes for Photographs: Heart Health

## ■ Heart Health

- What does it mean to have a healthy heart?
- What does this look like?

## ■ Supports of heart health

- What helps your heart be healthy?
- What hurts your heart?

## ■ Barriers to care and education

- What gets in the way of having a healthy heart?

# Session 2

- Group Discussion of photographs:
  - Selecting
    - Choosing the photographs
  - Contextualizing
    - Telling stories about what the photographs mean
  - Codifying
    - Identifying issues, themes, or theories that emerge

# Korean Heart Photovoice

- Themes Emerged

- Diet
- Exercise
- Smoking
- Stress

# Meat Contains Plenty Fat



67-yr-old male college graduate with HTN: “In US we eat too much meat. Since our ancestors only ate vegetables, our systems have difficulty digesting meat.” Pork has the lowest cholesterol which is measured by amount of time it stays in your system (1 week). Beef stays in your system 2 weeks and chicken 10 days.

# Seafood is Blessed by the Creator



67-yr-old male college graduate with HTN: “There are references to fish throughout the bible. When we eat fish, we don’t feel full. It is healthier.”



# Control Sodium



68-yr-old male college graduate with HTN: “Korean food, like much Asian food, involves eating a lot of side dishes. These are high in sodium which is not good for us.”



# Relax and Exercise



68-yr-old male college graduate with HTN: “In the back you can see two persons in wheelchairs getting exercise. We have two feet – we have no excuse to not do something every day.”

# Stay Away from Medications



70-yr-old female high school graduate with HTN and high cholesterol: “So many older people are taking too many medications. You need to try to be healthy and not need medicine when you are young.”

# Speeding Cars



50-yr-old male high school graduate with high cholesterol: “We all go places too fast. When we drive we become stressed. This puts a huge burden on our heart.”



# Lonely Seagull



50-yr-old male high school graduate with high cholesterol: “I moved to US from Guam so my children would have a good education. But I feel much loneliness for my home. This is not good for my heart.”

# Laughter



65-yr-old female college graduate with HTN and high cholesterol: “This is a drawing by my 6-year old grand-daughter. I have it by my bed so when I wake up in the morning I can see it and it makes me smile. Laughter is good medicine for your health.”

# Lessons Learned

- Concept: amount of time food is in your system affects your health
- Religion may be an important influence for health perceptions
- Newly transplanted immigrants may have issues of loneliness, missing their previous home
- Genetics of Koreans makes them at higher risk with US lifestyles
- Stress reduction and emotional well-being is important for physical as well as mental health

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