

Participatory Photo Mapping (PPM)

Our goal is to use PPM to develop and design collaborative projects and networks to improve health and well-being of communities by strengthening health information systems and sharing that information with community stakeholders and public health decision-makers. It's all about reaching the goal of "Healthy People in Healthy Places."

PPM is a tool for exploring the experience of place and for communicating this experience to community stakeholders and decision-makers. Using Participatory Photo Mapping helps uncover supports and barriers to well-being, especially related to the built environment.

The PPM method combines:

1. **photography**
2. **narrative interviews**
3. **mapping**

PPM allows you to:

1. **assess** the community and environmental contributions to health, safety and well-being,
2. **address** peoples' perceptions of their neighborhood environments,
3. **identify environmental factors** that impact health and well-being,
4. **identify community supports and barriers** to health and well-being,
5. **present** this information to stakeholders and decision-makers.



The PPM process has four steps:

Step 1: Provide participants with digital cameras and GPS units and have them photograph their neighborhood, documenting routine use of community and recreation environments.

Step 2: Use photographs to guide narrative interview sessions during which open dialogue reveals emerging themes attached to particular images and places.

Step 3: Map images and narratives as part of a neighborhood-level geographic information system (GIS).

Step 4: Use insights gained to communicate information to community stakeholders and decision-makers in order to prompt action.

Dennis Jr S., Gaulocher S., Carpiano R., Brown D. Participatory photo mapping (PPM): Exploring an integrated method for health and place research with young people Health & Place. 2009;15:466-473.

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