

Bringing Wellness

HOME



Soon after I took office as mayor, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health issued a report showing the Antelope Valley as being ranked number one in several areas we'd just as soon not be. We ranked top in the county in preventable diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and lung cancer. Our rates for suicide, depression and infant mortality were far too high, and obesity among teens and children was running rampant. This was a wake-up call. We could just sit idly by and watch our community succumb to this epidemic of morbid behavior or use it as a rallying cry to take action to improve health and wellness throughout the community. We chose the latter.

Through the efforts of such organizations as Antelope Valley Partners for Health and a number of faith-based groups, today we are far better equipped to deal with the issues of community health and well-being. The City of Lancaster is

proud to have partnered with these groups to create a three-pronged approach to bring healthy lifestyles home through our Wellness Homes, Community Houses and Community Gardens.

These remarkable neighborhood-based initiatives are helping people of all ages improve both their health and outlook on life by taking control of the issues at hand and dealing with them head-on.

Today, you'll find one or more of these homes and gardens in eight neighborhoods throughout the City, where they are having a huge impact on the quality of life in our community.

We encourage you to learn more about these remarkable community efforts and take time to improve the well-being of yourself and your neighbors. It's not only good for you, but for everyone here in Lancaster.

R. Rex Parris, Mayor

Neighborhood Homes Take Holistic Approach to Addressing Community Needs

Multi-faceted program makes essential services available



In challenging times, it takes the concerted effort of many to make progress. But by working together, real progress can be made.

In the year since the first community home was opened in Lancaster, more than 2,500 people of all ages have been served in simple and profound ways.

Latchkey kids now have a place to go after school. Teens have a positive outlet for their boundless energy via sports. Those struggling financially have learned to better manage their money. The overweight have discovered new healthy eating habits and effective exercise techniques. Troubled families have been counseled. New families have gained parenting skills. Those afflicted with chronic illness have learned how to manage their disease. In countless ways, Lancaster's neighborhood homes are touching the lives of individual families every day.



Wellness Homes Put Healthy Habits Close at Hand

Neighborhood locales offer proactive, preventative care

Among the programs being offered by the Wellness Homes are regular classes in diabetes management, exercise and nutrition. The homes also offer prenatal and parenting classes, as well as sessions focusing on cancer care and dealing with obesity, a growing problem among both youth and adults.

"We encourage people to get up and move," notes Jennone Marshall, Program Coordinator with AVPH. "By creating fun and engaging activities for all ages, we help get the conversation started on things people can do to improve their own health and well-being. It's an empowering experience."

Each Wellness Home is run by AVPH staff and sponsored by one or more community partners who help provide funding and volunteers for the many activities. The houses themselves are reclaimed foreclosures that the City's Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Department have rehabilitated and refurbished to help fill needs within the community.

For more information on the Wellness Homes, visit the Antelope Valley Partners for Health website at avph.org.

Despite its close proximity to Antelope Valley Hospital, many residents within Lancaster's Lowtree neighborhoods do not have a regular physician. Some haven't seen a doctor in years. But Lowtree residents aren't alone. According to Los Angeles County statistics, nearly 22% of adults in the Antelope Valley have no health insurance and more than 16% don't have a regular source of health care.

Overcoming this lack of access to basic health and wellness information is one of the primary goals of Lancaster's five (soon to be seven) Wellness Homes. According to Michelle Kiefer, Executive Director of Antelope Valley Partners for Health (AVPH), "these homes have become the foundation of improving community health."

"Because they are located within neighborhoods with the greatest needs, we can be proactive, going door-to-door, identifying specific issues which need to be addressed," says Kiefer.



TUTORING
SPORTS
HEALTH
MONITORING
BUDGETING
WEIGHT LOSS
EXERCISE
LIFE
SKILLS



Community Gardens Offer Fresh Approach to Healthy Eating

“Grassroots” has taken on a whole new meaning as neighbors have come together to plant, cultivate and harvest fresh fruits and vegetables through a series of Community Gardens located in several City neighborhoods.

Among the first was the Trend Community Garden where according to Neighborhood Impact Coordinator Dave Prather, “the program is going incredibly well. It’s prolific and a brand new experience for all our families.”

The long term goal is to have a Community Garden in every neighborhood to help promote and encourage healthy food choices among Lancaster residents.

Community Houses Have Real Impact on Neighborhoods

New faith-based initiatives are bringing neighbors together

It all started as a project to help spruce up neighborhoods in need, but it has grown into something far greater. “This is all about strengthening the social fabric within our community,” states Mayor R. Rex Parris.

Based from Community Houses located in eight areas of Lancaster, Neighborhood Impact is indeed influencing lives for the better. “We strive to build relationships as we work to make life in Lancaster better,” says Grace Chapel Pastor Chris Johnson who along with Central Christian Church’s Dave Prather spearheaded the program. Today, it continues as a collaboration between local nonprofits and the City. Churches run the homes and pay for their use, while the City owns and maintains the properties.

While many of the activities revolve around youth with sports leagues, after school activities and enrichment programs, the entire family is encouraged to participate in programs at the Community Houses.

“These homes have become focal points within the neighborhoods, a place where people can go and find common ground,” says Elizabeth Brubaker, Director of the Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Department. “By working proactively with the City’s Code Enforcement office to solve problems, Neighborhood Impact is making a real difference in the neighborhoods they serve.”

Simply put, Neighborhood Impact uses a 2,000-year-old adage to good effect: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

FAMILY
COUNSELING
PARENTING
MULTI-
GENERATIONAL
SELF-ESTEEM
SOCIAL
SKILLS



Trend Community Garden

Working Together, We're Making a Difference

The efforts of any one organization or individual simply can't accomplish all that must be done to address the overwhelming issues of poverty, disease and social decay. However, we have found strength in numbers. Our gratitude goes out to the many community organizations and individuals who continue to make Lancaster a better place for all who live here.

Wellness Homes

Antelope Valley Community Clinic
 Antelope Valley Hospital
 Antelope Valley Partners for Health
 Greater Antelope Valley Association of REALTORS®
 High Desert Medical Group
 Kaiser Permanente
 The Lane Family
 R. Rex and Carrol Parris

Community Houses

Antelope Valley Christian Center (Mariposa)
 Central Christian Church (Trend)
 Grace Chapel (Piute, Desert View North, Desert View South, Lowtree)
 Living Stone Cathedral of Worship (Linda Verde)

Add your name to this list. Volunteer to participate in one of the many neighborhood based programs that are making a real difference, every day. Call Neighborhood Impact at 661-948-0855 or AVPH at 661-942-4719, to find out how you too can join in and help Lancaster better itself.



www.cityoflancasterca.org



Community Houses and Wellness Homes

Desert View Community Houses	45740 Kingtree Avenue 1338 Indian Sage Road
Desert View Community Garden	1102 West Avenue H-5
El Dorado Community House	350 East Nugent Street
Joshua Community House	302 East Avenue J-12
Joshua Wellness Home	44381 Stanridge Avenue
Linda Verde Community House	422 East Landsford Street
Linda Verde Wellness Home	44848 Rodin Avenue
Lowtree Community House	43745 12th Street West
Lowtree Wellness Home/Garden	1038 West Avenue J-5
Mariposa Community House	809 West Avenue H-8
Mariposa Wellness Home/Garden	45534 Gadsden Avenue
Piute Community House	45304 5th Street East
Piute Wellness Home	45534 5th Street East
Trend Community House	43028 Guyman Avenue
Trend Wellness Home	43057 39th Street West
Trend Community Garden	38th Street West and Alexo Drive