



Alt text: Community Garden with overlaying text "Chicago Strong: Partnership Action Plan Newsletter, June 2023". Source: Chicago Department of Public Health

A Message from Dr. Ige

Dr. Obasimbo "Simbo" Ige, Commissioner
Chicago Department of Public Health
(CDPH)



Thank you for being a part of our Healthy Chicago 2025 (HC25) Strategic Plan and participating in our bi-monthly meetings! We're grateful for your collaboration, so that we can better serve the health needs of all Chicagoans. With the racial life expectancy gap as our focus, your contributions are essential in meeting the unique needs of your family, friends, and neighbors in Greater Englewood, Greater Garfield Park, and North Lawndale.

Being halfway through the year, we are excited to announce some of the progress made:

- We implemented an Incident Response Structure (IRS) that responds to peaks in overdose 911 calls, offering a tailored mitigation response in collaboration with community.
- Significant progress has been made in Family Connects with an average 5% increase in reach across 5 priority communities since 2024.
- The cumulative coverage rates for influenza and COVID-19 vaccines in the targeted community areas have increased. Although it is not prime vaccine season, CDPH continues to sponsor community vaccination events to increase access and uptake of vaccines.
- We re-examined our impact of our PlayStreets initiative, placing a larger percentage of the events in our priority community areas.
- CDPH is expanding our investment to extend the hours of community Peacekeepers so they can proactively engage more potential victims or perpetrators of violence to prevent violent incidents before they occur.

[Learn more about the Healthy Chicago 2025 Strategic Plan](#)

Community Corner

In case you missed it! Healthy Chicago 2025 May Meeting Recap

In May, CDPH continued to host three community engagement meetings with our partners from the HC25 Strategic Plan's priority areas. The meetings revealed how CDPH is responding to disparities in life expectancy at the hyperlocal level -- specifically for things like chronic disease, opioid overdose, infant mortality, and more. We also held breakout sessions for CDPH and community partners to learn from each other and find opportunities for coordination to the HC25 Strategic Plan.

Thank you to all partner organizations who attended our second round of meetings! And thank you for completing our post-event survey. Your feedback will help shape future meetings and topics.

The meeting recordings can be watched via the following links:

- [May 14, 2025 Greater Englewood](#)
- [May 20, 2025 North Lawndale](#)
- [May 22, 2025 Greater Garfield Park](#)

Looking Ahead: SAVE THE DATE!

We will continue to meet on a bimonthly cadence to share updates from CDPH and create an intentional space to learn about the work of our partners. In July, we'll be bringing together all three priority areas for a combined session.

Save the date: **Wednesday, July 23, 1-3pm**
 • [Registration Required \(Link Below\)](#)

You should have received a calendar invitation for this meeting from cdphcommunityengagement@cityofchicago.org. More details on agenda items and what to expect for this meeting will be forthcoming.

- [Register for July 23 Virtual Meeting](#)
- [Subscribe for Meeting Invites & Newsletters](#)

Community Partner Spotlight: Coach Jason & The G.Olympians - Championing Youth and Community Wellness

This month, we're proud to spotlight Jason Fergy (Coach Jason) and the G.Olympians, a youth training program in Greater Garfield Park. **The G.Olympians isn't just about sports—it's about building confidence, discipline, and a pathway to higher education and elite athletic opportunities**, including college and even the Olympic Games.

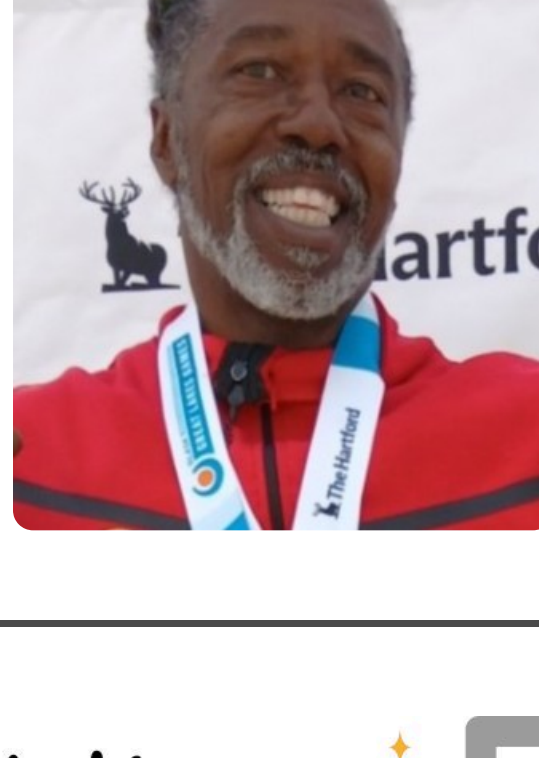
In May, Coach Jason kicked off track practices at Marshall High School and led inspiring after-school sports clinics with the students at All About Kids, creating safe, energetic spaces for learning and growth. He also spoke at a Men's Health Month event on June 7 hosted by State Rep. Jawaharial Williams, sharing his message of health and empowerment.

And Coach Jason doesn't just talk the talk—he walks (and runs and jumps) the walk! At the GLASA Games (June 12-15), Coach Jason brought home an impressive haul:

- **Gold medals** in Archery, Long Jump, High Jump, and Triple Jump
- **Bronze medal** in the 200-meter dash

But he's not done yet! **This July**, catch Coach Jason representing our community at the **National Senior Olympics in Des Moines, Iowa**, where he'll compete in seven track and field events. Let's cheer him on as he continues to lead by example --on and off the field!

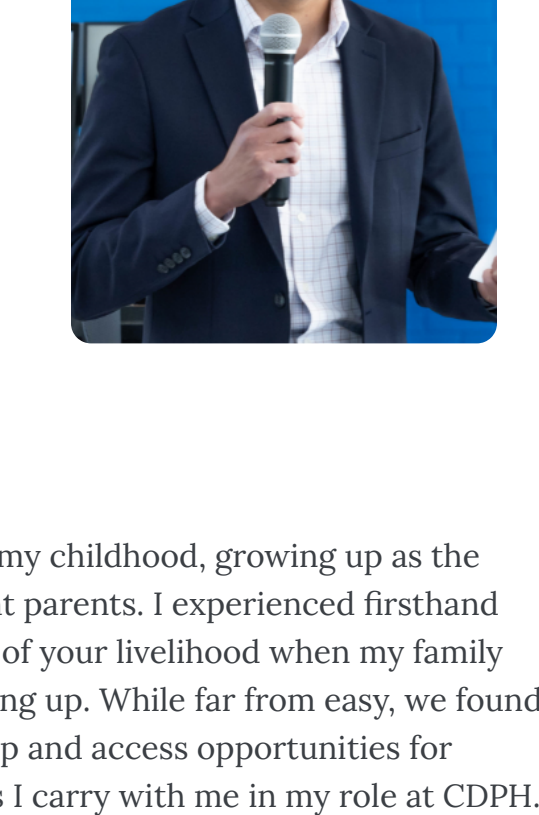
To learn more about Coach Jason and The G.Olympians, email jason.fergy@yahoo.com



Straight from CDPH

CDPH Staff Highlight

Mervin Dino
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA)
Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH)



My story in public health began during my childhood, growing up as the youngest child of two Filipino immigrant parents. I experienced firsthand what it felt like to lose a home and part of your livelihood when my family and I faced eviction several times growing up. While far from easy, we found our way to overcome economic hardship and access opportunities for upward mobility. These are experiences I carry with me in my role at CDPH.

Lifting as we climb – a beautiful phrase from Mary Church Terrell, a civil rights activist – is one that has guided my leadership at CDPH.

Every day, whether on my way to work at the health department, working in communities, or even going for a run near 63rd Street and the lakefront, **I always find inspiration in knowing that the people I see walking on the streets, and the people in their lives are, indeed, public health.** I am especially inspired by organizations like our HCEZ Regional Leads, who have powerfully led public health change at the neighborhood level since the City's COVID-19 response. This is what lifting and climbing looks like.

As Assistant Commissioner, I'm grateful to work with our CDPH teams and partners to advance the Healthy Chicago 2025 Strategic Plan. I lead our bureau's operations, guide strategies for health care access and coverage, and help bring sectors together to address the root causes of the Black/non-Black life expectancy gap.

This year has brought immense and tumultuous challenges so far this year – in Chicago, the country, and the world. While there isn't a single sentence that can get us through these tough moments, coming together and building unity where we can is an act of resilience. It truly is a time to lean into community, our own wisdom and calls to courage – and steady the course for a healthier, stronger, and more resilient City.

CDPH Program Highlight: Office of Substance Use – Community Kit Builds



Alt text: Collage of photos of community members participating in a Community Kit Build with NARCAN and other resources

Want to make a direct impact in your neighborhood? Partner with CDPH's Office of Substance Use and Recovery Services to host a community kit build!

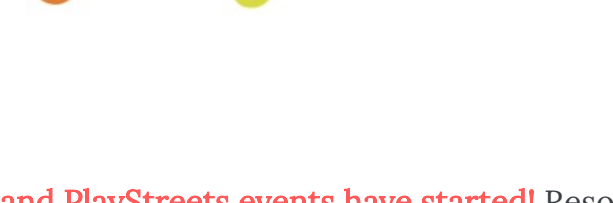
During these events, you and your community will:

- **Learn how to use naloxone (NARCAN)** to reverse opioid overdoses
- **Get hands-on training with drug testing kits** to better understand what's in the local drug supply
- **Receive free harm reduction kits** tailored to current drug trends in Chicago

Every kit built stays in your community—empowering residents with knowledge and tools to stay safer.

Ready to get involved? **Fill out the request form below to host a kit build in your area.**

[Sign up here](#)



Summer is here and PlayStreets events have started! Resources, health information and fun activities for all will continue to be organized through CDPH partners.

In July, six PlayStreets events will take place throughout Chicago, Roseland, and more.

- 7/12: 123rd & Normal, 12-3pm (hosted by Pitalans Family Services)
- 7/17: time and location pending (Westside Empowerment Center)
- 7/19: 69th & Sangamon, 3-6pm (City Motivators)
- 7/25: 68th & Ada, 12-4pm (Lifescore Foundation)
- 7/25: 3151 W. Walnut, 4-8pm (Breakthrough)
- 7/26: 199th & State St., 11am-2pm (Calumet Area Industrial Commission)

We hope to see you there! For any questions or ideas, reach out to CDPHcommunityengagement@cityofchicago.org

Funding Opportunities Alert

As a department, we are committed to uplifting our community partners – people with lived experience, doing the vital work every day to grow and nurture their surroundings. We believe in the power of community-led solutions and encourage proposals that share this commitment.

Community Development Grants

The City of Chicago helps support **business and neighborhood vitality** through **Small, Medium and Large Community Development Grant (CDG) awards**. CDGs use proceeds from the **2024 Housing and Development Bond** and other funding sources to support a variety of quality-of-life-related investments that create and maintain jobs and quality-of-life improvements for local residents.

Funding Levels

- Small: Up to \$250k
- Medium: \$300k - \$5 million
- Large: \$5 million and up

All applications are due **August 15, 2025**.

Resources are available to assist with applications, including a **recording of an informational webinar held in April 2025**. Also **view a recording of an online informational session** for both Medium and Large grants.

[Learn more and apply here](#)

Liberated Capital: Decolonizing Wealth Project (DWP) Youth Mental Health Fund

In partnership with youth leaders and mental health experts, DWP is launching the Youth Mental Health Fund (YMHF) to **expand access to culturally affirming, community-based mental health care for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth ages 12-24**. YMHF will support programs that center the unique needs of marginalized youth, shift narratives around care, and promote culturally grounded healing. In addition to grantmaking, DWP will invest in grantee capacity-building and elevate key issues through communications and field-building efforts.

Funding Approach

Grants will have a term of one year, with projects starting in November 2025 and ending in October 2026.

There are two grant types organizations can apply for:

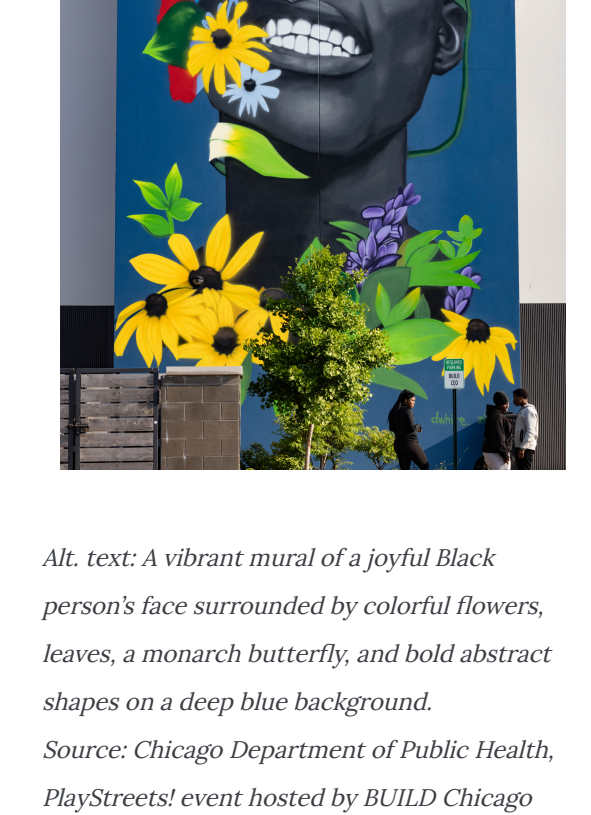
- **Anchor Grants:** General operating support grants ranging from \$100,000-\$250,000 for youth mental health organizations or projects that have been operating for 5 years or more with organizational budgets over \$2,000,000.

- **Opportunity Grants:**
 - General operating support grants ranging from \$30,000-\$100,000 for organizations or projects that have been operating for less than 5 years and/or have budgets under \$2M; or
 - Project-specific grants for new innovative solutions, pilots, convenings, one-time special opportunities, etc. *Any organization, regardless of budget size or length of operation, is eligible for a project-specific grant.*

Proposal Submission Deadline: **July 10**

[Learn more and apply here](#)

Until Next Time



Alt text: A vibrant mural of a joyful Black person's face surrounded by colorful flowers. Above, a sunburst bursts, and below, abstract shapes on a deep blue background.

Source: Chicago Department of Public Health
PlayStreets event hosted by BIILD Chicago

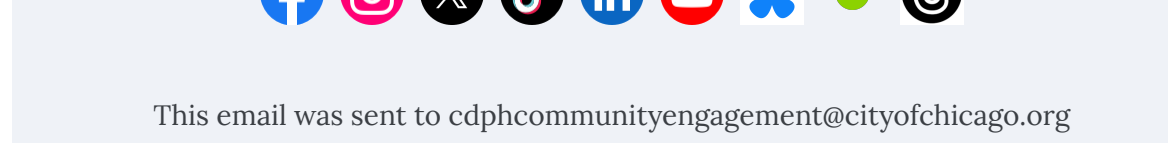
We hope you enjoyed this month's newsletter. **Remember to join us at our upcoming community partnership meeting on July 23**, where your insights and ideas can help shape the future of health and wellbeing in both your community and across our city.

Questions or ideas? Reach out to CDPHcommunityengagement@cityofchicago.org

See you all soon,
CDPH

Like this newsletter? [Share with a friend and/or like-minded organization!](#)

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