

# Reweaving the Social Fabric

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT FOR SOUTH PITTSBURGH



1999

We are pleased to provide an overview of our comprehensive community health assessment for South Pittsburgh for your use. Our intention is that it will serve to inspire and initiate creative and collaborative efforts to promote a healthy quality of life.

**Health-focused** foundations like the Birmingham Foundation have often found it helpful to conduct a community health assessment to focus their grantmaking and related efforts. This assessment was designed to provide relevant, thoughtful information to the foundation as well as community groups, service providers, government representatives, planners and others who share our interest in a healthy community. It is the result of a year-long effort in which many local leaders and residents played an important role.

### Questions Guiding the Assessment Process

How is South Pittsburgh similar to and different from its surrounding community?

What are its assets and challenges?

What can we learn from neighborhood-based data?

- ALLENTOWN
- ARLINGTON
- ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
- BELTZHOVER
- BON AIR
- CARRICK
- DUQUESNE HEIGHTS
- KNOXVILLE
- MT. OLIVER
- MT. WASHINGTON
- OVERBROOK
- SOUTHSIDE FLATS
- SOUTHSIDE SLOPES
- ST. CLAIR

## essential elements *of the Community Health Assessment*

### People

Foundation Board & Staff

Project Director & Research Assistant

Assessment Advisory Committee

Technical Resource Advisors Panel

Focus Groups

### Data

#### Neighborhood Profiles

#### Quantitative Information:

Health Indicators  
Quality of Life Indicators  
Demographic Indicators

#### Qualitative Information:

Assets & Challenges  
Expert Informants (*advisory committee*)  
Health & Community Focus Groups  
(*2 senior groups, teens, 2 neighborhood groups, ecumenical clergy group*)

*Thanks to all for their contribution!!*



BIRMINGHAM  
FOUNDATION

# Demographics of South Pittsburgh Neighborhoods

	Population 1990	Race, % Non-White 1990	Per Capita Income 1990	% Female HH w/ Children 1990	Population Estimate (% Change from 1990) 1998	Age 0 to 18 % of Population 1998	Age 65+ % of Population 1998
Allentown	3,600	8.7%	\$9,226	12.2%	-17.6%	27.4%	17.1%
Arlington	2,210	4.9%	9,181	8.3%	-8.0%	22.3%	18.5%
Arlington Heights	1,497	94.4%	2,178	64.6%	-3.8%	48.8%	2.2%
Beltzhoover	3,338	83.4%	7,944	16.0%	-15.4%	25.4%	18.2%
Bon Air	1,006	2.1%	11,468	5.3%	5.2%	19.8%	21.9%
Carrick	11,625	1.1%	10,657	5.9%	-12.0%	21.2%	20.5%
Duquesne Heights	2,786	1.9%	14,347	5.2%	-3.2%	19.5%	19.7%
Knoxville	4,971	24.0%	9,828	11.8%	17.4%	24.4%	17.1%
Mt. Washington	10,700	4.0%	15,316	6.6%	-6.9%	19.3%	18.4%
Mt. Oliver Brough	4,160	3.8%	9,828	7.4%	NA	NA	NA
Mt. Oliver Neighborhood	620	6.6%	10,872	11.4%	-19.7%	27.9%	14.1%
Overbrook	4,456	1.2%	11,929	5.2%	-16.6%	22.5%	17.3%
South Side Flats	6,177	3.4%	11,148	4.8%	6.8%	12.7%	29.7%
South Side Slopes	5,672	2.2%	10,390	7.2%	-7.8%	19.4%	21.0%
St. Clair	1,960	90.5%	3,157	63.6%	-39.0%	46.1%	2.5%
Area Total	64,778				52,723 (-19.6%)		

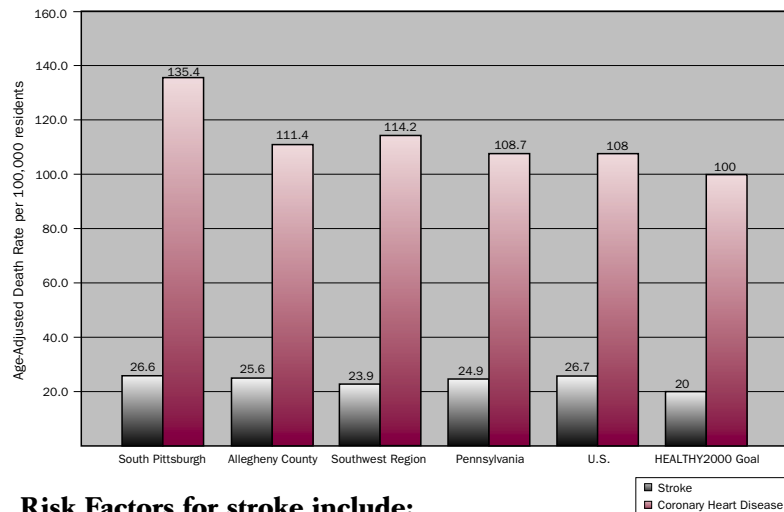
The geographic area covered by the Foundation consists of 15 diverse neighborhoods which are part of three zip codes, 15203, 15210, 15211.

As of the 1990 U.S. Census, South Pittsburgh's fifteen neighborhoods had a population of 64,778. Of this population, 86.42% are white and 46.4% are male. Population estimates and projections show that most of South Pittsburgh's neighborhoods average a 10% decline, like the rest of the City of Pittsburgh.

## Age-Adjusted Death Rates per 100,000 Residents for Stroke and Coronary Heart Disease (1993 through 1997)

The age-adjusted rate of coronary heart disease in South Pittsburgh (135 per 100,000) is higher than the county (111), region (114) or state (109).

Stroke rates are also higher for South Pittsburgh than the county, region or state.



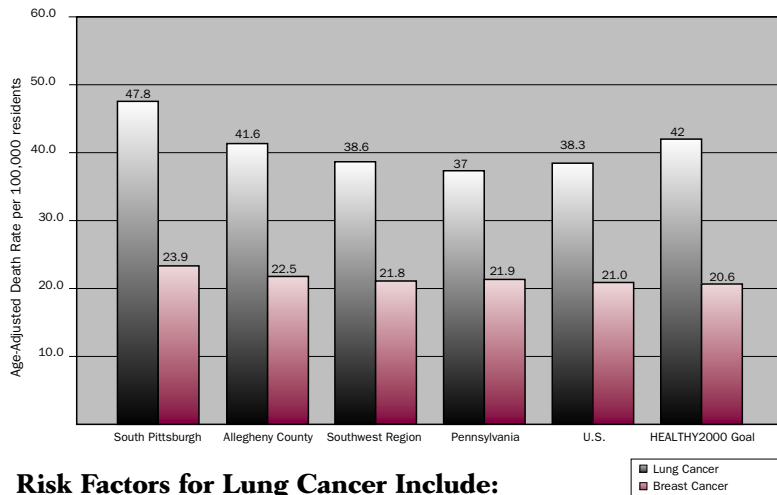
### Risk Factors for stroke include:

- Tobacco Use
- Hypertension
- Age and Race - 58% higher among blacks than whites in 1995

### Risk Factors for coronary heart disease include:

- High Blood Pressure
- High Blood Cholesterol
- Poor Nutrition and Lack of Physical Activity
- Tobacco Use

## Age-Adjusted Death Rates per 100,000 Residents for Lung and Breast Cancer (1993 through 1997)



### Risk Factors for Lung Cancer Include:

- Cigarette Smoking - 36% of South Pittsburgh adults were regular smokers.
- Environmental Factors

### Risk Factors for Breast Cancer include:

- Birth of first Child at a late age
- Family History

The lung cancer death rate for this area is more than 10% higher than the county and 20% more than the region or state rates.

The breast cancer death rate for the area is higher than the county, region or state and 16% higher than the Healthy 2000 goal.

## Diabetes

Two out of three south Pittsburgh zip codes rank among the top 25 zip codes in Allegheny County where diabetes is most prevalent. The Mt. Oliver area (zip code 15210) is 8th in the county for the incidence of diabetes.

## Number of Residents 65 Years of Age or Older Living Alone (1990)

Allentown	301
Arlington	123
Arlington Heights	51
Beltzhoover	157
Bon Air	44
Carrick	865
Duquesne Heights	198
Knoxville	218
Mt. Washington	637
Mt. Oliver Borough	249
Mt. Oliver Neigh.	22
Overbrook	167
South Side Flats	779
South Side Slopes	371
St. Clair	24
<b>South Pittsburgh</b>	<b>4,206</b>

- 34.8% of South Pittsburgh seniors live alone, slightly higher than the national average of 33%.
- Many elderly residents have experienced the loss of a spouse, child, and close friends.
- Single seniors may lack resources to remain active and social in the community.
- The proportion of seniors in the population of South Pittsburgh is expected to remain relatively stable.

Neighborhoods with the largest proportion of elderly who live alone include Allentown (47%), South Side Flats (43%), Duquesne Hts. (38%), and Carrick (37%).

## Death By Suicides, Homicides, and Motor Vehicle Accidents

(1993 through 1997)

AGE	Suicide Total = 36	Homicide Total = 31	Motor Vehicle Accidents Total = 22
0 to 14	0%	3%	4%
15 to 24	22%	55%	27%
25 to 34	22%	19%	18%
35 to 44	25%	16%	9%
45 to 64	11%	6%	18%
65+	20%	0%	23%

South Pittsburgh's motor vehicle accident death rate was only slightly higher than the county (6.7 compared to 6.1 per 100,000) but is much lower than the region (10.3), state (12.1) or country (15.9).

The area's suicide rate (10.6 per 100,000) is slightly higher than the county (9.6) and similar to the region (11) and state (10.7).

The area's homicide rate (11.9 per 100,000) is higher than the county (8.2), region (4.7) and state (6.8).

The 353 cases of chlamydia reported from South Pittsburgh are higher than the county average and twice the rate of the region.

### Risk Factors for Suicide include:

- Age - Young adults between the ages of 25 and 44 have highest rate.
- Gender - Suicides by men are 5 times higher than by women.
- Race - Whites have a 50% higher risk than African Americans.

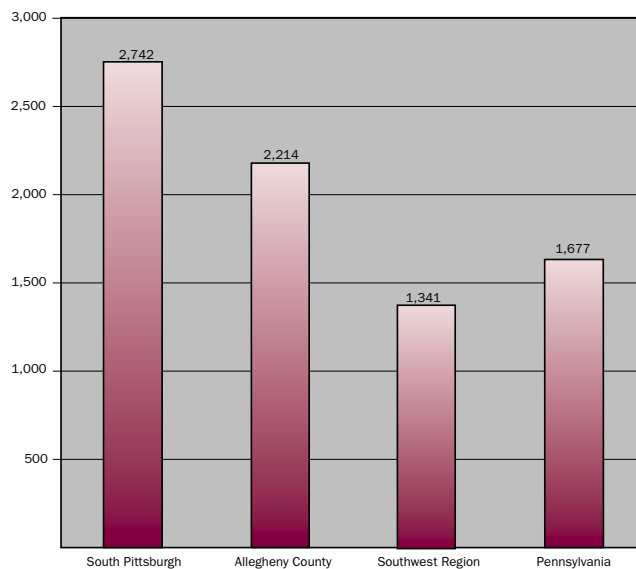
### Risk Factors for Homicide include:

- Age - Young adults are at the highest risk for homicide.
- Race - 43 times higher rate among African American than white males.
- Gender - The male to female homicide ratio is approximately 5:1.

### Risk Factors for Motor Vehicle Accident include:

- Age - Young adults and seniors are at the greatest risk.
- Alcohol - 47% tested positive for alcohol or drugs.

## Sexually Transmitted Disease - Chlamydia Incidence Rate per 100,000 females age 15 to 24 (1996 to 1998)



### Chlamydia:

- One of the most common infectious diseases in the United States.
- May lead to infertility in women if untreated.
- Teenage girls are at the highest risk of infection.

## Family Stress Indicators

296 families (554 children) in Children Youth & Families caseload due to abuse and neglect.

412 youths referred to juvenile court in 1998 (440 in 1997).

644 births (1992-1996), or 15% of all births, were to teen mothers (county average is 9%). Risks include low weight babies and 1 in 5 chance of infant death.

17.4% of households are female-headed; 10% of all households have a single parent.

## Education

Drop-out Rates and Plans of H.S. Graduates for 1997-1998 Academic Year

	Annual	Cumulative
Brashear	8.7%	19.8%
Carrick	6.8%	14.1%
South Vo-Tech	5.0%	21.2%
All Pittsburgh H.S.	6.2%	14.1%

School	College or University	Other Post-Secondary Schools	Military Service	Finding Employment	Undetermined
Brashear	32.0%	12.1%	2.3%	3.4%	18.2%
Carrick	46.0%	11.1%	6.2%	7.7%	9.0%
S. Vo-Tech	19.0%	24.5%	5.3%	21.3%	8.5%
All Pittsburgh High Schools	55.0%	11.7%	2.9%	7.7%	5.8%

South Pittsburgh graduates are less likely to apply to a college or university than other Pittsburgh School District graduates.

Highest number of dropouts occurs in 10th grade

## Free or Reduced School Lunch Program for 1997-1998

Elementary Schools	% of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch	% of Eligible Students Who Apply for Free or Reduced Lunch
Arlington	88.3	43.1
Beltzhoover	88.5	54.3
Bon Air	49.7	74.6
Concord	40.0	68.4
Grandview	75.7	49.8
Murray	77.9	40.3
Overbrook	71.1	50.9
Phillips	67.2	47.8
Roosevelt	67.6	60.0
Whittier	68.5	68.4
All Pittsburgh Elementary Schools	72.1	48.0

Most South Pittsburgh elementary schools are near the 72% Pittsburgh School District average. Arlington and Beltzhoover elementary schools exceed 88%.

14,873 students at the 11 South Pittsburgh elementary schools were eligible for free or reduced lunches.

Students are eligible for free lunches if their family income is less than 130% of the Federal poverty guidelines and are eligible for reduced price lunches if their family income is less than 185% of the Federal poverty guidelines.

# South Pittsburgh

has many strengths, particularly its people. But it also faces and shares the challenges of other urban communities. An opportunity exists for local organizations and individuals to reweave the social fabric of South Pittsburgh to meet these challenges.

We believe strengthening the fabric of community is truly possible, as evidenced by the large number of residents, community leaders and professionals who lent their voice and view to create this report and who truly care about the future of South Pittsburgh. Our special thanks to all who participated and to all of you who might choose to join us in these challenges. We welcome your thoughts and ideas—our communities deserve our very best.

**Are you interested in the full 90-page report?**

**Fax** your request including mailing address and phone number to us at **412-481-2727**

Or **mail** to:  
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## Perceptions of South Pittsburgh

### STRENGTHS

#### HEALTH

- Community hospital and proximity to other health facilities
- Comprehensive mental health services
- Senior centers offer programs

#### SOCIAL

- Neighborhood identification, pride
- Strong organizations, churches
- Ethnic traditions, history, culture
- Friendly & safe “urban village” attracts younger residents

#### ECONOMIC

- Revitalization, redevelopment
- Strong business districts
- Attracts outsiders (S.Side)
- Accessible to jobs & education sites

#### RESOURCES

- Community based organizations
- Public transit in many areas
- Birmingham Foundation

#### SCHOOLS

- Parent/school councils
- Proximity to higher education, training

### CHALLENGES

- Access problems: transportation, insurance, attitudes/beliefs
- Teen pregnancy
- Substance abuse
- Senior health problems and isolation

- “Turfism”, resistance to change
- Races geographically separate
- Lack affordable & elderly housing
- Population loss; including young families & relocation of public housing residents
- Safety concerns in some areas

- Development in limited areas
- Single parent families
- “Hidden poverty”, low income
- Need for job training, childcare, family support for welfare-to-work

- Need for young adult services
- Public transit limited in some areas
- Need for maintenance services (streets, step repair, garbage)
- Decline in resources linked to population loss
- Disparities of services among neighborhoods

- Safety concerns, attendance
- Need for afterschool programs
- Drugs, alcohol, teen pregnancy
- Low college-bound rate

Sources: Key Community Informants and Focus Groups