

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS



TOBACCO

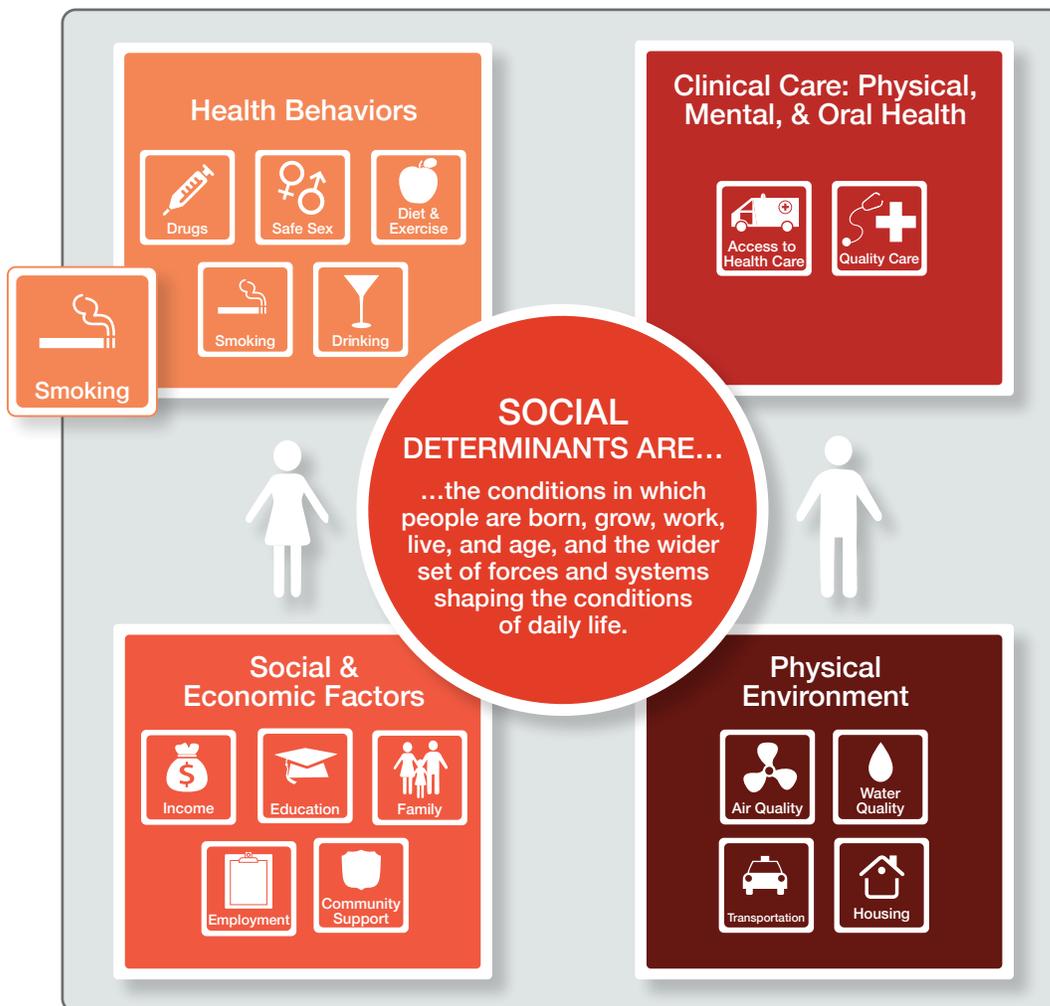


Foundation for a
Healthy St. Petersburg

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The Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg is a new, private health foundation serving South Pinellas County. The Foundation aims to improve the local community’s health through initiatives that create sustainable, effective improvements to quality of life. The Foundation’s commitment is to be accountable and transparent. The Foundation is focused on social factors, which directly impact health outcomes, such as housing, income, education, transit, and many others as listed in the Social Determinants of Health Framework below.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH FRAMEWORK*



* Framework Adapted from the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute Model

HEALTH BEHAVIORS

Tobacco Use

Cigarette smoking harms nearly every organ of the body and reduces the health of smokers in general. Cigarette smoking causes more than 480,000 deaths each year in the United States. This is nearly one in five deaths. Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and lung diseases such as emphysema, bronchitis, and chronic airway obstruction. It can also lead to lung cancer and heart disease in those exposed to secondhand smoke. On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers.

Tobacco use has substantial economic impacts for individuals and communities. It costs the nation about \$133 billion annually to treat tobacco-related illnesses and another \$156 billion in productivity losses. In 2006, over \$5 billion of that lost productivity was due to secondhand smoke.

Smoking causes more deaths each year than the following causes combined:

- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- Illegal drug use
- Alcohol use
- Motor vehicle injuries
- Firearm-related incidents

A large percentage of adults (19.4%) in Pinellas County smoke compared to 17.1% in the state. The percentage of high schoolers who smoke (13.0%) in Pinellas County is also higher than the state percentage (10.1%) and 2.8% percent of middle schoolers in Pinellas who smoked a cigarette in the 30 days prior to being surveyed. Considering nine out of ten smokers start by age 18, it is crucial to prevent kids from using tobacco during these pivotal years.

Cigarettes are not the only harmful form of tobacco. Tobacco smoked in any form is harmful. In recent years, the use of hookah to smoke tobacco has increased. Hookahs are water pipes that are used to smoke specially made tobacco that comes in different flavors, such as apple, mint, cherry, chocolate, coconut, licorice, cappuccino, and watermelon.

Many tobacco users think smoking a hookah is safer than smoking a cigarette. In fact, smoking hookah is just as dangerous. Hookah smoking delivers nicotine, which is the addictive drug found in tobacco products, and because of the way a hookah is used, smokers may absorb more of the toxic substances also found in cigarette smoke than cigarette smokers do. In fact,

the amount of smoke inhaled during a typical hookah session is about 90,000 milliliters (ml), compared with 500–600 ml inhaled when smoking a cigarette.

Second-hand smoke is also harmful. In fact, it harms both children and adults and can worsen asthma and other health issues. The percentage of adults in Pinellas with asthma (9.3) is higher than the percentage of adults in the state with asthma (8.3). In Pinellas, 21.2% of middle school kids and 20.9% of high school kids have asthma.

Smokeless tobacco is also dangerous to use. It can lead to dental problems, cancer, heart problems, and nicotine poisoning (especially among kids).

Tobacco use has a direct impact on population health. Smoking costs the United States billions of dollars each year, including nearly \$170 billion in direct medical care for adults and more than \$156 billion in lost productivity due to premature death and exposure to secondhand smoke. Not only does tobacco use have an economic cost, it has health consequences including cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and lung diseases. On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers. Even those who do not smoke themselves but who are exposed to second hand smoke, can develop lung cancer, heart disease, and asthma as a result of their exposure.

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Tobacco Free Florida- Pinellas. <http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/county/pinellas/>

*Please Note: This series of *Community Highlights* is intended to illustrate the Foundation's definitions of the Social Determinants of Health framework and to provide specific data related to the Foundation's geographic focus area. The data presented is not comprehensive.