

During my participation in the West Side Photovoice Project, I came to understand the multitude of ways one's community impacts an individual physically and emotionally for years to come. On the first day of the project we were asked to identify significant places from our childhood years; despite the geographic and generational variances, me and my group members came up with a list of similar places -community swimming pools, playgrounds, and neighbor's homes. Although some of the details of these places were forgotten, most of us were able to vividly remember the feeling and sense of comfort those places provided us. We all could attest to how our immediate, local environments played a huge role in the quality of our childhoods. It was evident our communities helped us to stay physically active and socially engaged with others in our local environment, providing us with a safe and healthy place to grow.

After reflecting on my own childhood and the role the community I grew up in played in my development as an adult, I am now more aware of the environmental and social factors that affect my patients. Consequently, I will be more cognizant of how these factors may either help or impede their access to resources and adopting healthy habits. With this information I will be more sensitive to the social aspects affecting population health, and this will help me tailor my plans for patients accordingly.