**Study Circles on 5 Social Determinants of Health (5SDoH)**

**What is a Study Circle** (*Community Toolbox*)?

A study circle is a group of 8 to 12 people who meet regularly over a period of weeks or months to address a critical public issue in a democratic, collaborative way. Participants examine the issue from many points of view and identify areas of common ground. They emerge with recommendations for action that will benefit the community.

A study circle is led by a trained facilitator whose job is to keep the discussion flowing around a specific issue.

In general, a study circle will progress from a session on personal experience ("How does the issue affect me?") to sessions providing a broader perspective ("What are others saying about this issue?") to a session on action ("What can we do about this issue right now?"). Study circles produce good ideas and plans for action which can draw the neighborhood community together and improve everyone's quality of life.

Study circles have the greatest reach and impact when organizations across a community work together to hold multiple study circles as part of a large-scale program. These community-wide programs engage large numbers of citizens -- in some cases thousands -- in study circles on a public issue such as race relations, crime and violence, or education. Broad sponsoring coalitions create strong, diverse community participation.

**The approach**

Study Circles will be organized around the specific issues being addressed in the community. Study circles participants will come from the community and engage those with lived experiences. We will:

* Partner with community organizations to organize the study circles around the 5 SDoH [Food Insecurity, Housing, Education, Jobs/ Workforce Development, Health/Wellness].
* The housing study circle will be the first conducted. It may consist of two or more sessions depending on what the group decides and what additional information they need to know.
* A kick-off event will announce the study circle project to the whole community (since we will be using a bottoms-up approach, this kick off announcement should come from a community resident participant or someone on the advisory board).
* Facilitators will be recruited and trained. Facilitators will be the Advisory Board members and other community members interested in facilitating.
* Plan sites and other details.
* Recruit people to join the study circles*.*
* Study circles begin with focus on protecting, preserving and producing affordable housing.
* Plan the action forum which takes place at the end of the study circles.
* Policy recommendations will be presented.

**Timeline:**

February – Housing Roundtable is held

March – Kick-off event, Facilitators recruited and trained, sites planned

March – Education Roundtable

April -- Jobs & Workforce Development Roundtable begins

May - Health and Wellness

June – Food Insecurity