

UNITED STATES



THE NEED

The U.S./Mexico border region is home to over 12 million people and is characterized by rapid growth and a highly mobile population. Urbanization on both sides of the border has far outpaced the ability of government services to provide necessary physical and service infrastructures. Extremely low insurance coverage and accelerating rates of chronic diseases, particularly among the significant immigrant and minority populations in San Diego County, spell the need for a dramatic expansion in preventive services and targeted, culturally appropriate outreach. Furthermore, the border region is impacted by criminal networks and individual traffickers on both sides of the border who recruit people for labor or sexual exploitation. Sex trafficking is San Diego's second largest underground economy after drug trafficking, representing an estimated \$810 million in annual revenue.

OVERVIEW

PCI was founded in the U.S./Mexico border region in 1961 by a young doctor from San Diego who saved the lives of two small children that were dying of pneumonia in a Tijuana clinic. This experience led Dr. James Turpin to found PCI and forever change the lives of millions of children and families around the world by providing health, opportunity, and support to those most in need. Since its inception, PCI has been implementing a diverse portfolio of programming in the U.S./Mexico border region that focuses on reaching vulnerable, minority and other hard-to-reach populations with critically needed preventive health services and education.

PREGNANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT

PCI wants every child to have a strong start in life. Funded by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, PCI's Healthy Start San Diego project is taking a person-centered approach to reducing infant mortality and improving family health. PCI provides free prenatal and childbirth education, postpartum and breastfeeding support, with a focus on Black families and immigrants in San Diego County. The project seeks to improve birth outcomes and support early child development through healthy and nurturing parent-child interactions. Through the Healthy Start project, PCI is leading a Community Action Network of more than 30 agencies dedicated to transforming the delivery of quality perinatal (period before and after birth) health care. This work includes supporting and strengthening key partners including midwives, doulas, lactation educators, community clinics, and others to maximize support for underserved and underrepresented communities.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



REGIONAL FOCUS:

San Diego County
U.S. /Mexico Border States (Arizona,
California, New Mexico and Texas)

PCI's Healthy Start project increased early entry into prenatal care by 24% and improved mental health by 40-60% among vulnerable pregnant and inter-conceptual women participants.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT ALONG THE U.S./MEXICO BORDER

With funding from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, PCI is leading the Border States Collaborative Improvement and Innovation (CoIIN) initiative to reduce infant mortality. CoIIN is an innovative, regional approach to addressing maternal and child health disparities along the U.S./Mexico border region of the United States. By convening stakeholders across Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas, PCI is facilitating the development of innovative, place-based strategies to increase early and ongoing prenatal care utilization using strategies of design thinking, collaborative learning, and quality improvement. Each state team has developed and tested a unique prototype and is working with their respective state departments of health to measure impact in real time. Successful prototypes will be recommended for scaling across the region and beyond.



Project ROOTS! is building positive self-esteem among at-risk girls and is equipping them with tools to build resiliency and reduce their vulnerability to sex trafficking.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

Approximately 3,500 people are victims of sex trafficking in San Diego County each year. The average age of entry into child commercial sexual exploitation is 16, with significant recruitment happening on high school and middle school campuses. PCI's **Human Trafficking Prevention Initiative** addresses the problem of human trafficking through raising awareness, building coalitions and empowering youth to prevent the problem before it begins. Through Project ROOTS, PCI educates and empowers at-risk youth ages 8-13 and addresses the root causes of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and unhealthy relationships. Project ROOTS is one of the three interventions in the San Diego Trafficking Prevention Collective, an initiative to bring human trafficking awareness and prevention education to every school district across the county.

PCI also conducts "Human Trafficking 101" trainings to broaden community awareness about the issue and increase the number of victims who are identified and referred to local service providers. PCI's Employers Ending Exploitation (E3) Alliance is a newly formed coalition that will leverage the collective power of the local business community to diminish human trafficking in San Diego.

ABOUT PCI

PCI (Project Concern International), a Global Communities Partner, is a global development organization that drives innovation from the ground up to enhance health, end hunger, overcome hardship, and advance women and girls—resulting in meaningful and measurable change in people's lives. Founded in 1961, PCI impacted more than 21 million lives in fiscal year 2019 through programs in 13 countries spanning Asia, Africa and the Americas.

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PCI/U.S. & BORDER PROGRAMS

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RECENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Supporting Women Entrepreneurs:** PCI's "Women Empowered" model promotes the economic and social empowerment of women through the formation of savings groups, leadership, and business development support. Aspiring entrepreneurs gained valuable experience through PCI's hands-on approach, which included mentoring through a collective retail space.
- **Health Education:** For over a decade, PCI and the Mexican Consulate of San Diego served over 265,000 individuals through the Ventanilla de Salud (Window of Health) program. Because of health education and clinic referrals provided by the program, nearly 8,000 visitors to the consulate went on to access a regular source of care (a medical home) and over 5,500 children were enrolled in health insurance.
- **Mobile Health:** PCI's mobile health van brought health information and referrals to vulnerable populations to improve their access to preventive health care, including issues related to chronic disease, substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence.
- **Chronic Disease Prevention:** Through its CLIMB and ALCANCE programs, PCI offered a 10-week Community Health Worker Leadership Academy to increase awareness of chronic disease prevention and management and increase access to clinical care among San Diego's communities with the highest rates of poverty and chronic disease burdens. In addition to increasing access to culturally competent health education, the programs provided career pathways for individuals seeking to advance their career goals.