



El Paso, TX

▲ Community Example from Chapter 4 of "Lessons for Leaders:"
Lessons in Advancing Policy/Systems Change

Community Background

El Paso's location, straddling the U.S.–Mexico border, inherently linked the work of its *Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities* (HKHC) partnership to immigration issues. One issue that arose because of its border proximity centered on encouraging the use of parks. New immigrants reportedly avoided their local green space, the Chamizal National Memorial, because the dark green park ranger uniforms bear an unfortunate resemblance to those worn by U.S. Customs and Border Protection Patrol.

Community Action

Although HKHC partners couldn't change federal policy on uniforms, they did partner with the Chamizal National Memorial to increase utilization of the park. Chamizal National Park rangers connected more with the neighboring community by being involved in walkability initiatives and sponsoring the first United States chapter of the international youth EcoClub network to address health inequities.

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The Chamizal National Memorial hosted several HKHC events, and neighbors became more familiar with park rangers. While uniform color may seem insignificant, this example exemplifies how cultural factors can greatly influence how residents perceive their environments.