Communities of Focus is Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department’s effort to improve health in areas with some of the poorest health outcomes in the county. South Tacoma is 1 of 6 Communities of Focus.

Help share South Tacoma’s story.
You are the experts on your community. What matters to you may make a difference in your community’s health.

First people
The first inhabitants of Pierce County were the ancestors of present-day Puyallup, Nisqually, Steilacoom, Squaxin and Muckleshoot tribes.

Who lives here?
South Tacoma is a vibrant community of 24,000 people in zip code 98409. It has an active business district and the neighborhoods of Madrona (Oakland), Manitou, Meadow Park, Monta Vista, Monte Vista, Apex and South Tacoma.
The people of South Tacoma work in many different jobs. They are more racially diverse than Pierce County. Families are about half the residents and many speak languages besides English and are foreign-born.

Local leaders
Many community organizations provide services and leadership. Some of these are Safe Streets, Asian Pacific Cultural Center, Tacoma Parks and Recreation, Tacoma Police Department and Tacoma Business District.

Strengths and assets
South Tacoma has places to gather and enjoy activities, like Wapato Hills Park, South Park Community Center and Rigney State Park. It has more than 15 schools and more than 10 churches.
South Tacoma residents value safe neighborhoods, access to healthcare and affordable housing.

Health starts where we live, learn, work, play and pray.
- What makes South Tacoma a good place to live?
- What would make South Tacoma a better place to live?
Together we can make South Tacoma the best place to live!

What do the data say?
While many people have great quality of life, not everyone has the same opportunity to be healthy.
- South Tacoma’s poverty rate is 18%, higher than Washington’s 11% poverty rate.
- South Tacoma residents tend to live 6 years less than Pierce County residents—74 years compared to 80 years.
- 25% of South Tacoma adults smoke, while less than 15% of Washington adults smoke.
- South Tacoma’s adult obesity rate is 29%. Washington’s is 27%.
- HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis rates are higher in South Tacoma than Pierce County as a whole.

Many poor health outcomes follow patterns also seen in poverty rates, low education status and race.

Learn more at tpchd.org/southtacoma. Email us at healthequity@tpchd.org.