

Unlocking the Power of Data: Tools & Strategies for Impact

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Welcome!

- **Workshop goal: to introduce the use of data for impact**

Note: we will send a document with all URLs

- **Outline**

Telling a story

Data for where?

Data for whom?

Data for what?

What data do YOU need?

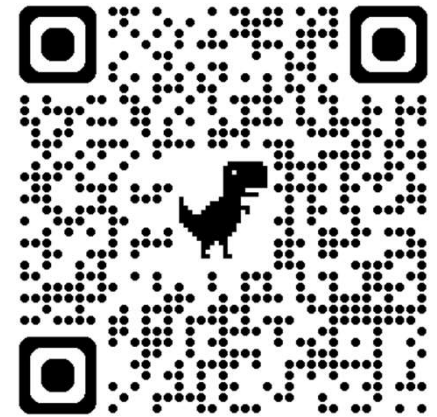
Closing

True/False?

- **Latinos made up ~15-16% of Philadelphians in 2023**
- **In Philadelphia White (non-Hispanic) males smoke at higher rates than Hispanic males**
- **Philadelphia Latinas live longer lives than their white counterparts**

- **Answer here ->**

<https://ars.particify.de/p/58394221/series/TF/1>



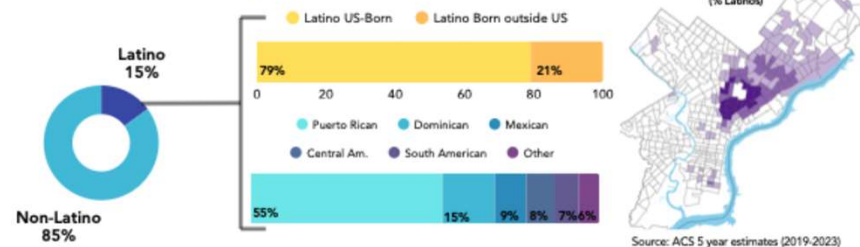
You can find some of this data in the handout

Latinos in Philadelphia



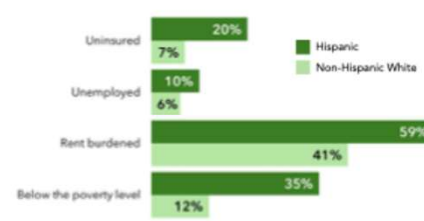
Philadelphia residents who identify as Latino or Hispanic account for 15% of the Philadelphia population. Philadelphia's Latino population roughly doubled in size between 2000 and 2022, increasing from around 130,000 to 252,400.

Distribution of Latinos in Philadelphia (% Latinos)

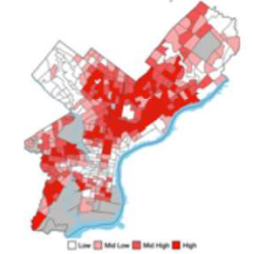


Source: ACS 5 year estimates (2019-2023)

Latinos in Philadelphia face a range of social and economic disparities at the individual level and where they live.

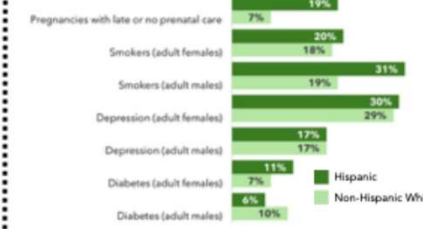
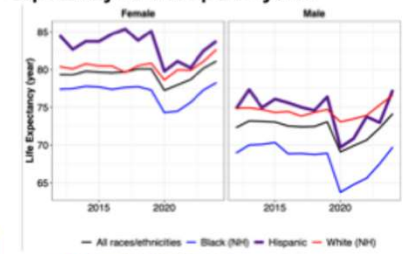


Social Vulnerability Index



Source: ACS 5 year estimates (2019-2023)

Latinos in Philadelphia face a range health disparities and experienced major changes in life expectancy over the past 5 years

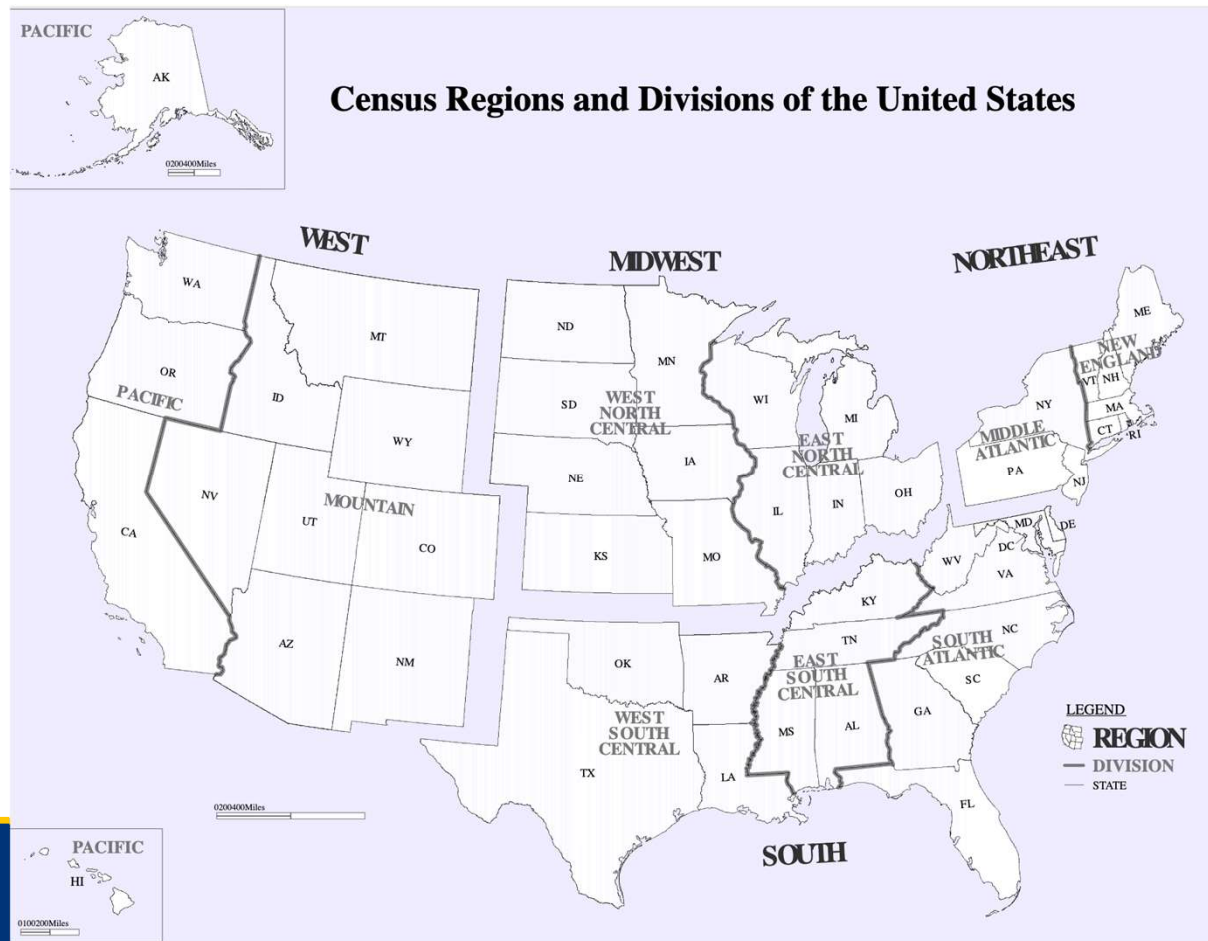


Indicators Tell a Story

- **Start with a clear message/motivation**
 - Who is your audience? (funders, clients, community members, etc.)
 - Why/what do you need the data for? (grants, advocacy, etc.)
- **Find 1–3 indicators that support it. What types? (not exclusive!)**
 - Spatial: something about a specific geographic area
 - Demographic: something about a specific group of people
 - Temporal: something that changes over time
- **Contextualize: compare to overall, another specific group, or another area, another time**

Data for WHERE? Geographies

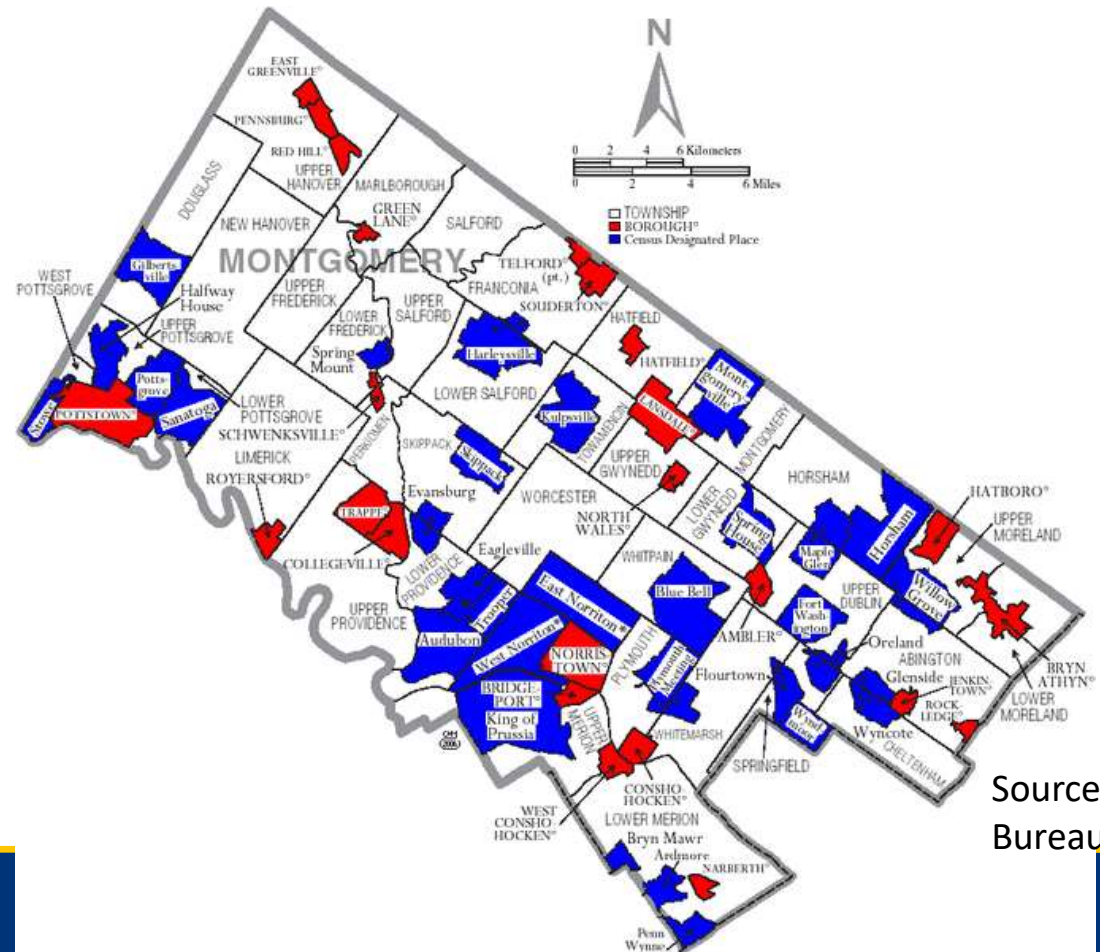
- National (whole country)
- Region: Northeast
- State: PA



Source: Census Bureau

Data for WHERE? Geographies

- Local areas: County = City in the case of Philadelphia
- But suburban counties around Philadelphia have townships/boroughs (e.g., can get data for Montgomery County or for Norristown)
 - Commonly referred to as “places” in datasets



Source: Census Bureau

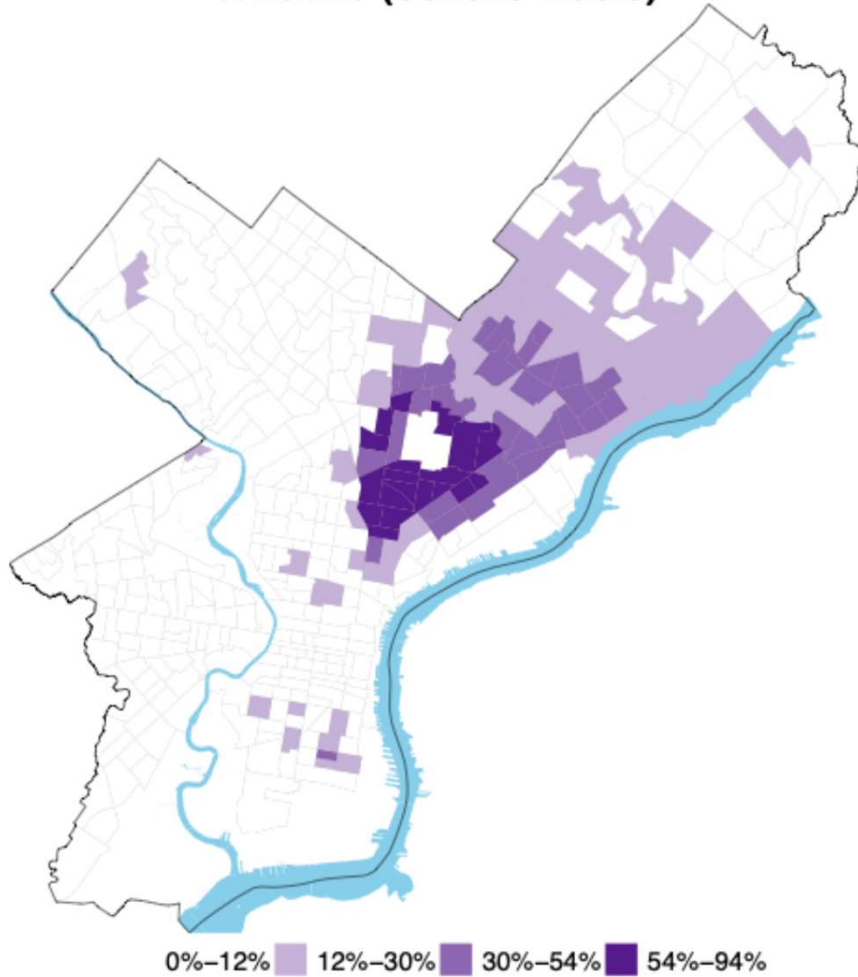
Data for WHERE? Geographies

“Neighborhoods” — defined by whom? (media, planning, community)

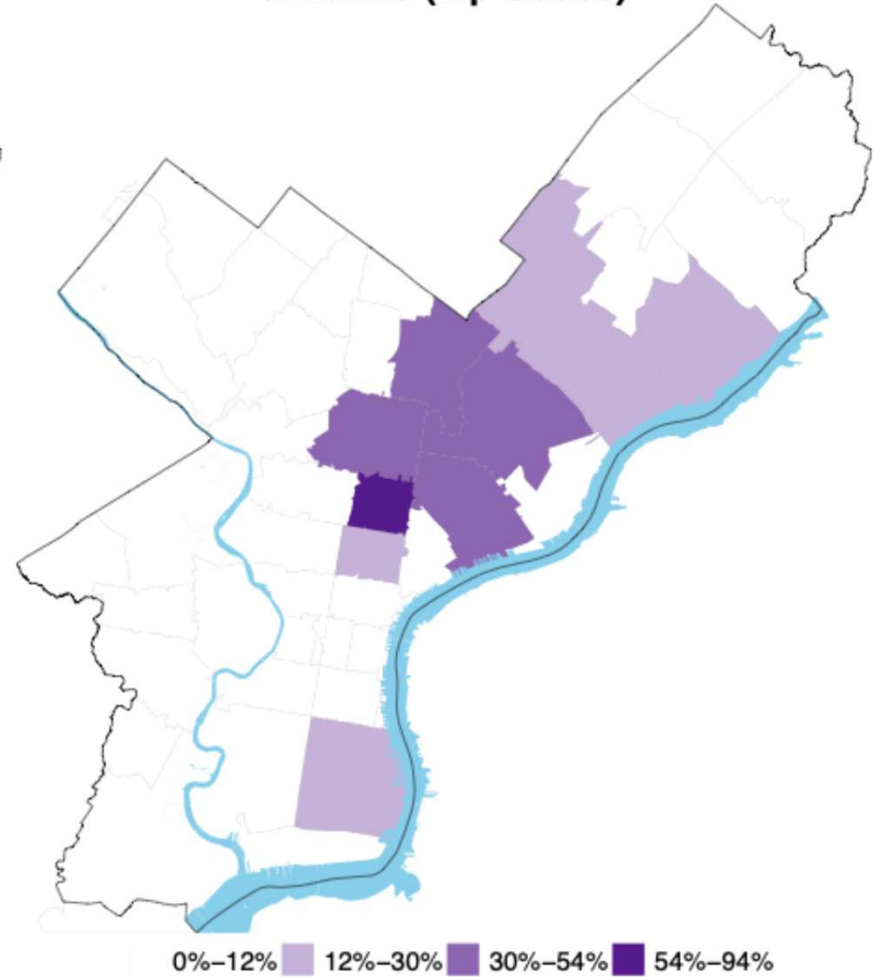
“Official”:

- *Census tracts*: a few thousand residents, somewhat homogeneous
- *ZIP codes* (or zip code tabulation areas): convenient to collect but areas are relatively large and very heterogeneous (they are for mail delivery, not for describing neighborhoods!)

% Latino (Census Tracts)



% Latino (Zip Codes)





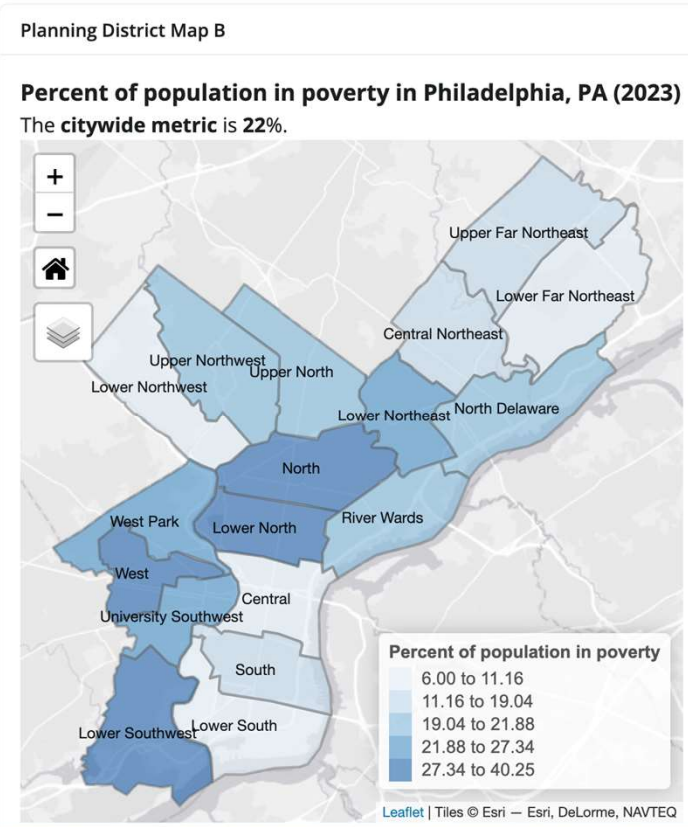
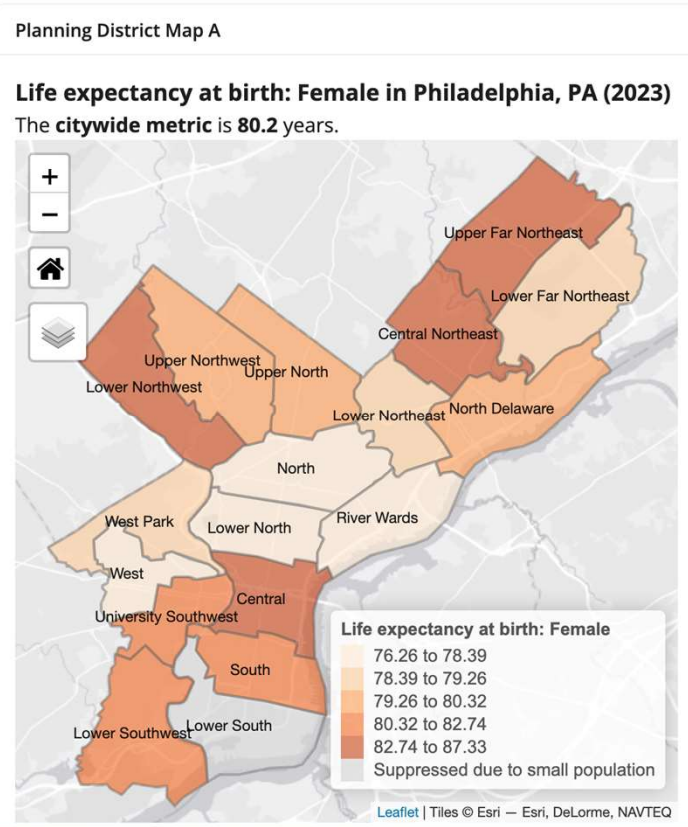
Data for WHERE? Geographies

“Neighborhoods” — defined by whom? (media, planning, community)

Philadelphia Specific

- Planning districts

(PhilaStats example)



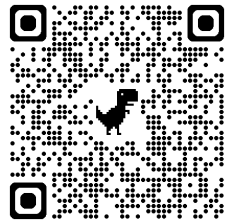
Data for WHERE? Geographies

“Neighborhoods” — defined by whom? (media, planning, community)

Philadelphia Specific

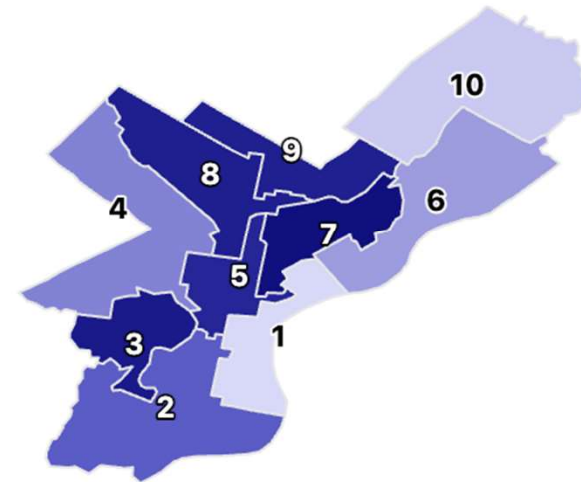
- Council districts: useful for advocacy to City Council

Data from
**Philadelphia Council
District Health
Dashboard**



Heat Vulnerability Index

The Heat Vulnerability Index (HVI) is a composite measure that summarizes key indicators associated with negative health outcomes due to extreme heat exposure. The HVI scale ranges from negative to positive values, which represent areas of very low to very high vulnerability.



Heat Vulnerability Index



Low

High

Source: Open Data Philly (Department of Public Health) (2018)

Data for WHERE? Summary of Geographies

- Large scale: national, regional, state
 - Useful as a reference “26% of children live in poverty in Philadelphia vs 16% in PA”
- Local areas: county/city of Philadelphia, boroughs or townships in the suburbs
- Neighborhoods
 - Tracts are more granular than zipcodes, but zip codes are easier to collect
 - City-specific units may be useful for some purposes: e.g., advocacy to city council members

Data for WHOM? Groups & Definitions

- Data by demographic subgroups: race/ethnicity, age, sex, and their intersections (e.g., Latina women ≥ 65 years)
- Census race/ethnicity questions have changed across years
 - In general, it's pretty common to separate race (white, black, Asian, ...) from ethnicity (Latino or not), so you usually see “non-Hispanic White” vs “Hispanic”
 - Note this has changed in 2020, so things may evolve

Getting the data: options (in order of difficulty)

- **Obtain single indicators (e.g., % Latino in Philadelphia in 2023) or multiple indicators (e.g., % Latino in Philadelphia each year from 2013 to 2023) in a ready-made table or graph**
- Download single or multiple indicators and plot them yourself (e.g., in Excel or Google Sheets, or more complex tools such as Tableau)
- *Download “raw data” and do your own analysis/visualizations*
- *Collect your own data and do your own analysis/visualizations*

Some examples of Types of indicators

- Counts: 'How many people?' (tricky when populations differ)
 - E.g., in 2014 there were ~33400 Latino adults without health insurance in Philadelphia vs ~33800 non-Hispanic White adults.
 - But useful to know how many people need something!
- Proportions/percentages: 'How much of the group has X?'
 - From above: 24.6% of Latino adults in 2014 didn't have health insurance vs 7.3% of non-Hispanic Whites in Philadelphia
- Averages/Mean vs medians: e.g., median household income. Medians used when data is very skewed (people with super high or low values)
 - E.g., in 2023 median household income was ~\$86,000 for non-Hispanic Whites and ~\$47,000 for Latinos in Philadelphia

Health Data Sources (Philadelphia)

- Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH)
 - Health of the City Report: <https://philadelphiapublichealth.shinyapps.io/health-of-the-city/>
 - PhilaStats: <https://philadelphiapublichealth.shinyapps.io/philastats/>
 - PDPH Chart: <https://www.phila.gov/departments/departments-of-public-health/data/chart/>
- OpenDataPhilly — city datasets across many topics. Sometimes requires handling the data yourself
 - <https://opendataphilly.org/>

Health Data Sources (Philadelphia & Beyond)

- Big Cities Health Inventory (comparisons to other big cities)
 - <https://bigcitieshealthdata.org/>
- City Health Dashboard (comparisons to other cities)
 - <https://www.cityhealthdashboard.com/>
- County Health Rankings (comparisons to other counties)
 - <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

Social & Demographic Data

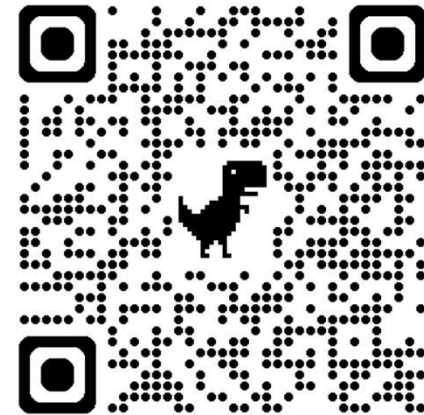
- Census / American Community Survey (ACS):
 - Census mostly counts people by age, sex, and race/ethnicity
 - ACS gives us more detailed data (poverty, education, insurance, etc.)
 - Careful with small and undercounted groups
- Ways to get census data:
 - Dashboards in prior slides usually have many census indicators
 - Official interface: <https://data.census.gov/> Clunky...
 - Data USA: <https://datausa.io/>
 - Latino Data Hub (UCLA): <https://latinodatahub.org/>

Others

- Pew Research Center: National data, very good reports
 - <https://www.pewresearch.org/topic/race-ethnicity/racial-ethnic-groups/hispanics-latinos/>
- Pew State of the City of Philadelphia 2025
 - <https://www.pew.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2025/04/philadelphia-2025>
- Pew Philadelphia's Immigrants
 - <https://www.pew.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2024/06/13/philadelphias-immigrants>

Mini Exercise

- Pick ONE or TWO words to describe a data point to describe your community's/clients/etc. needs.
- Examples: “%Latinos” or “Poverty” or “diabetes”
- 5 minutes to think and submit; then 3–4 volunteers share (organization + indicator + why)
 - <https://ars.particify.de/p/58394221/series/Data/1> or



Closing — 3 Takeaways

- Have a clear message and audience
- Choose an appropriate indicator (and define it clearly)
- Add context with comparisons (citywide, group, area, time...)

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Gracias!

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