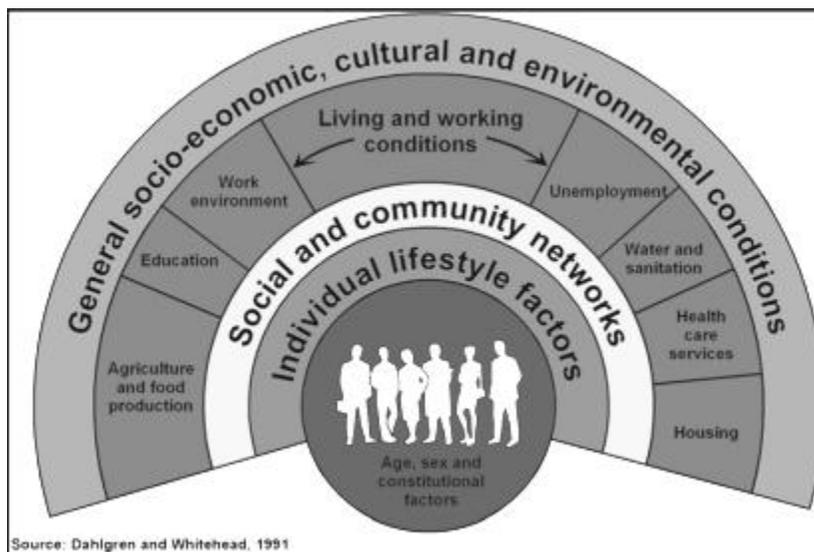


# Community Engagement & Volunteerism: A Promising Practice

Lisa Santora, MD, MPH

- Volunteerism is an integral component of a healthy community because volunteers knit the community together, develop necessary services that are overlooked by other institutions, and provide needed services that otherwise could not be afforded
- Volunteering may take two forms: formal—service provided to a public organization, or informal—usually spontaneous and private
- Early Boomer women (born between 1946 and 1954) are the first generation of women to extensively seek paid employment outside the home (Dailey, 1998) and therefore are the first to extensively retire.
- Volunteer participation of Boomers has remained constant (slightly over 26%)
- Many retirees will be seeking leisure opportunities or providing care to family members (informal volunteer work), not joining the formal volunteer workforce
- Motivations: (a) It will be done for personal rather than altruistic reasons; (b) low commitment; and (c) direct service.
  - The women were analyzing, in very rational ways, the personal benefits and costs of volunteering as they planned how they will take control of their lives. Volunteering must meet their psychological and spiritual needs; otherwise they will feel overwhelmed with the responsibilities and expectations.
- Determinants of health
- Broadened definition of health behavior (Social engagement, Social activity, Civic participation, Volunteering)
- Purpose: What is purpose? It's when our gifts, passions and values align and are expressed.



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*Creating a healthy beach community.*