

November 2025

Allston Brighton Connectors **Final Report**

BIDMC Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative
Cohort 3

Allston Brighton Connectors and residents at the Participatory
Budgeting Forum that took place in Brighton in October 2025
Photo credit: Evan Kuras



About Allston Brighton Connectors

- ❖ **Overview:** Allston Brighton Health Collaborative (ABHC) supported a cohort of community members called Allston Brighton Connectors (ABCs). This group was paid and trained to **connect and educate** fellow residents to resources and programming, **understand** information and service gaps, and work with residents to **advocate** for missing resources and programming to meet identified community needs. ABCs met monthly in-person and were led by the ABC team coordinator.
- ❖ **Origins:** In 2023, ABHC led an inclusive, community-driven process to identify the neighborhood's top health priorities and concerns. The Planning Committee included 10 community members who spoke six languages, lived and worked in the neighborhood, and ranged from 16 to 73 years old. The committee collected feedback from hundreds of people through surveys, at community parties and events, at the bus stop and the gym. The committee used this process and information to design an initiative called the ABCs.
- ❖ **About ABHC:** ABHC convenes a network of dozens of local and regional organizations who share information and resources with each other and work together to improve community health. For more information, visit <https://abhealthcollaborative.org/>

Instagram post from Boston City Councilor Henry Santana, showing ABCs Jose and Liv at the Taste of Allston in September 2025



About the funded project

The funded project addressed community needs identified during the Planning Phase.

Short-term goals:

More residents know about neighborhood resources and programming, feel confident using those services, and actually use them.

More neighborhood organizations will offer services that ABCs have identified as missing and needed.

Residents will feel their voice can make a difference.

Long-term goals:

Increased access to resources and increased advocacy will improve mental health, employment skills and employment, sidewalk comfort, and resident power and social capital.

A more socially connected, resilient and resource-rich neighborhood.

Note: These goals arose from the original SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound) goals articulated in the grant proposal (see [appendix](#)).

Connect, Serve, Advocate

Example: *Liv helped register people to vote at a tabling event in September, 2024.*

Build capacity and skills

Example: *Jose now serves on the SPARK Boston Council where he learns about city departments and connects with city staff.*

Understand gaps

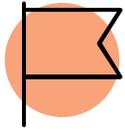
Example: *ABCs regularly share what they learn about resources with each other, so they can share these with residents.*



Allston Brighton neighbors getting to know each other at an ABC community day creating Vision Boards Sept 2025 **Photo credit:** Elaine McCauley Meehan

Summary of Evaluation Findings (Jan 24 - Sep 25)

Project Outcomes



The Allston Brighton Connectors (ABC) project developed a cohort of influential resident leaders with deep knowledge of neighborhood needs and resources and the drive to connect residents with those resources and empower civic participation. ABCs directly connected with over 1,000 residents and distributed \$36,500 in emergency financial assistance. Thanks to the ABCs, residents learned about resources, actually used those resources, and started becoming connectors themselves. Importantly, 82% of surveyed residents said ABCs helped them feel like part of the community. At the project's end, ABCs and residents shared intentions for continuing to work toward a more connected Allston Brighton.

Community Voice



ABCs, as representatives of community voice, expressed mixed satisfaction with project implementation. ABCs were proud of their impact on residents and the neighborhood; however, many felt that they could have done more, especially by addressing higher priority needs at a larger scale and with an eye toward longer-lasting systemic change.

Collective Practices



ABCs felt supported by ABHC, their formal titles, trainings, and the mutual encouragement within the group. ABCs shared recommendations, especially around stronger structures and clearer goals rooted in priority neighborhood needs. ABCs also recommended closer integration with ABHC and to provide more guidance around role boundaries, expectations, and best practices.