

Healthier Lake Worth Impact Report (April 1, 2018 – September 30, 2018)

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Neighborhood: Lake Worth

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Summary:

Many Heads, Hearts, and Hands Working Together for a Healthier Lake Worth.

The Healthier Lake Worth Initiative has reached the end of its first year and has seen many successes in laying the foundation for the future of better health for the residents of Lake Worth. In the last few months, we have been very busy creating our Tagline, Vision and Mission Statements, and our Values and Principles, while discussing the Community's Priorities related to our area of focus, Behavioral Health. Because it was a group process, there was a lot of back and forth, with the group coming to a consensus of how HLW's Vision and Mission Statements should be worded. These efforts demonstrated the passion in the group for the community and validated our Tagline. With our clear Vision and Mission Statements now in place, we are very excited to enter our second year and anticipate overcoming some of our most difficult challenges, so we can start achieving some of the "real" changes we want to see.

Our Vision: Lake Worth is a diverse community where healthy residents thrive and differences are celebrated in clean and safe neighborhoods.

Our Mission: To improve the cleanliness, environment, and safety of Lake Worth's neighborhood and to promote healthy behaviors that impact the overall health and well-being of its residents.

Our Values and Principles:

As a community-led initiative, Healthier Lake Worth will achieve its Mission and Vision by:

- Focusing efforts to create unity in our diverse, vulnerable neighborhood;
- Working collectively and collaboratively with local partners and existing community and governmental groups to strengthen our impact;
- Fostering ecologic health and environmental justice in city neighborhoods;
- Supporting Community Initiatives that bring people together, improve the safety in our neighborhoods, and promote Community pride;
- Creating a supportive environment for all ages, including programming that supports thriving youth, active aging, childhood and adult learning, and diversity in our neighborhoods.

Community Voices:

We still face the challenge of engaging the culturally diverse neighborhoods in Lake Worth. We continue striving to engage the Community by promoting awareness of HLW, recruiting volunteers, developing relationships with key Community members, Community groups and organizations, and influencers, sharing the results of data sense-making, listening and documenting Community members' reactions and comments at Community events and Community meetings. In addition, at other organizations' group leadership meetings, we continually ask attendees to share their thoughts on solutions and action steps that they would like to take to address the top five Priorities identified by the Community: Neighborhood Health/Community Environment, Safety, Recreation, Resources, and Community Collaboration/Family Engagement.

As a result of these efforts, we have not only gained consensus on the top five Priorities of Focus, but also have witnessed a lot of excitement and been a part of many discussions that have generated a lot of fresh ideas for action steps, related to the identified Priorities, from various residents and stakeholders, including the youth of Lake Worth. This feedback enabled us to form five Action Workgroups. In addition, Healthier Lake Worth was successful in gaining invitation by Community partners and groups to participate in and contribute to and co-sponsor their events or projects.

The Action Workgroups were formed based on action steps determined necessary to move forward with addressing the needs of the Community. These Action Workgroups are a collaborative effort initiated by the Steering Committee Members based on a general

feeling that the Initiative was not making enough progress and that actions were needed in order to keep momentum and engage and retain more people. Thus, several people stepped in with the skills they felt were appropriate to lead the Action Workgroups listed below:

Governance

Community Engagement – Marketing

Neighborhood Health – Community Environment

Education-Awareness

Advocacy

Each of these Action Workgroups is being led by a chairperson who is a member of the Steering Committee and who has been moving the work of the Initiative forward with the support of the HLW Project Director. The Action Workgroups have been successful in identifying neighborhoods that could benefit from cleanup, coordinating neighborhood cleanups, identifying programs that already exist for youth in the community, identifying what resources are lacking, so that HLW can connect them to resources, identifying who is missing at the table, and brainstorming over how to engage them, connecting with the Lake Worth PBO leadership, in order to build a strong relationship and share information on safety concerns in the community, and building partner relationship to help support and advance our work.

All of these efforts have led to breakthroughs. The efforts of these Action Workgroups led us to finally being able to discuss the change we want to see.

The Change We Want to See:

Over the past fifteen months, we have collected information and many ideas and been able to garner possible solutions from the Community via events, meetings, surveys, and open forums addressing the identified Priorities. At the same time, the Healthier Lake Worth team (i.e., Steering Committee, Workgroup Members, the Project Director, and other key members in the Community) participated in “The Change We Want to See,” a three hour open forum discussing change the Community wants to see within each Priority area and what success would look like.

- Neighborhood Health/Community Environment – The residents would feel prouder, experience less crime and generally feel less stress, living in a neighborhood with no trash on street corners or in vacant lots.

- Safety – Residents would feel safer if there were more police visibility and cameras in neighborhoods where crime is prevalent, especially in the Dixie corridor and Osborne, Royal Poinciana, and Tropical Ridge communities, and fewer street peddlers, prostitutes, and drug dealers.
- Recreation – Residents would feel fitter and more socially involved if there were neighborhood walking trails with workout equipment, bike paths for families to use, and more recreational areas to share.
- Community Collaboration and Family Engagement – Residents feel that if there were more free activities, recreation centers, gyms, and workout classes, they would live a healthier life and feel less stressed.
- Resources – Youth feel that they would be better prepared to become productive citizens after they graduate from high school if they were given access to Community organizations and businesses to offer their volunteer services to and get part-time jobs with.

Key Partners:

Palm Healthcare Foundation, Community Partners, Community Residents, BRIDGES at Lake Worth, BRIDGES at Highland, Lake Worth CRA, City of Lake Worth, Adopt-A Family, Salem Haitian Lutheran Church, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Lake Worth Library, Guatemala Mayan Center, Caridad Center, The Zoo Gym, The Florida Food and Farm, Pineapple Neighborhood Association, Chrysalis Health, For the Children, 211, Cross Ministries, Health Council Southeast Florida, Compass, South Grade Elementary, Healthier Boynton Beach, Healthier Delray Beach, Healthier Neighbors, Healthier Jupiter, Healthier Glades, SK-9 Gang Prevention, Center for Child Counseling, Digital VibeZ, More Residents, Fitness by Rosa, PBC Parks and Recreation Department.

New Partners:

Whispering Palms Neighborhood Association, Lake Worth Sheriff's Office, Java Juice Bar, Arms of Hope Community Inc., Lake Worth Kiwanis, Aurora's Voice, New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, Royal Poinciana Neighborhood Association, NAMI, Lake Worth Arts Cultural Council, Friends of Lake Worth Parks and Rec, Starbucks Lake Worth, The Book Cellar

Goals:

1. Increase residents' engagement in Healthier Lake Worth's Community activities, events, and meetings.
2. Create an awareness campaign strategy to increase awareness of the Healthier Lake Worth Initiative in the Community.
3. Develop and initiate a formal Ambassador Program.

4. Hold Community-wide meetings, at least quarterly.
5. Attend, participate in, and partner with at least four Community meetings and events per month.

Process and Implementation Outcomes:

- Outcome: **Trust is built and nurtured**

Progress:

Community Neighborhood Associations are reaching out to invite HLW to participate side-by-side in larger Community events (i.e., the Fourth of July Raft Parade and Race). This has been beneficial in building awareness of our Initiative. For example, HLW was able to bring awareness to over 500 community members by marching in the parade with the Pineapple Beach Neighborhood Association holding the HLW Banner.

City officials are now paying attention to and interacting with HLW.

HLW Clean-Up events are becoming news! (link to press release:

<http://floridafoodandfarm.com/featured/earth-day-events-in-lake-worth-set-for-saturday-april-21>

The Lake Worth Sheriff's Office is now giving HLW access to their monthly Security Liaison Meeting.

HLW's Facebook Page followers have increased from 160 followers and 155 likes to 211 followers and over 200 likes.

HLW Posts reach an average of 800 people because of others sharing.

Other neighborhoods are inviting HLW to their Associations' meetings, in order to discuss transformation they would like to bring to their neighborhoods, and are beginning to request HLW support.

Associated Attachments:

- [Download File "20180704_111514.jpg"](#)
- [Download File "20180704_114431.jpg"](#)

- Outcome: **Quality, meaningful collaboration**

Progress:

Neighborhood groups and local organizations are asking HLW to get involved with their events and provide support, including planning and sponsorship or as a vendor (4 groups).

HLW has attended an average of 18 community meetings per month.

HLW has partnered with three neighborhood associations for monthly community cleanups.

HLW has partnered with the Lake Worth Kiwanis for an Intracoastal cleanup (60 Community members, including youth, participated in the Event).

Community residents have provided over 500 hours of volunteer time between neighborhood cleanups and events.

HLW has started receiving in-kind support (i.e., meeting and event space from the city library, local churches, and local organization).

Associated Attachments:

- [Download File "Image-12.jpg"](#)
- [Download File "Image-11.jpg"](#)
- [Download File "20180416_133731.jpg"](#)

- Outcome: **Community-led process**

Progress:

HLW has formalized its first five Action Workgroups (Governance, Community Engagement/Marketing, Neighborhood Health, Education, and Advocacy).

HLW has created its Tagline.

HLW has determined the activities and steps they want to take to impact change they want to see.

HLW has created and formalized its Mission and Vision Statements.

HLW has created and formalized its Value Principles.

HLW has created and formalized its sponsorships guidelines and application.

The Action Workgroups are reaching out to Community groups, programs, and local schools to identify what resources are needed and how HLW can join forces to help build their programs.

Residents are taking the lead on facilitating their own neighborhood cleanups using a collective impact approach (one neighborhood supporting another, and the City's Public Works Dept. churches, SWA and other partners, all working together).

HLW has engaged over 100 residents in three neighborhood cleanups and tree plantings.

Associated Attachments:

- [Download File "IMG_1966.jpg"](#)
- [Download File "20180922_094840.jpg"](#)

Detailed Narrative:



In the last six months, Healthier Lake Worth has been busy meeting and brainstorming over activities and steps that need to happen to make the Community a healthier place, one that residents are proud of, and one that is safe and clean, where youth are thriving and families are engaged in clean and green neighborhoods. With these objectives in mind, Healthier Lake Worth is envisioning stronger neighborhoods where residents are at the forefront, co-creating solutions, and leading activities, they come up with, to improve health in their respective neighborhoods. This is a lot of hard work and cannot be done without engaging each neighborhoods' key leaders and influencers who can incite the residents' own effort. In May, we began to strategically embrace the idea of forming key Action Workgroups that would concentrate on the necessary areas needed to move the work forward and address the Initiative's Priorities. Steering Committee members stepped up and volunteered to chair the Action Workgroup they felt were best suited to their strengths, gifts, and talents. That's how our Governance, Community Engagement/Marketing, Neighborhood Health, Education and Advocacy Action Workgroups were formed. Each one of these Action Workgroups has made some major breakthroughs, especially the Community Engagement and Neighborhood Health. Below are the written reports from the Chairs of these two Action Workgroups:

From: the Community Engagement Workgroup Chair – Linda Roman:

The Community Engagement Committee made some great strides during the past six months. Back in June, we began efforts to engage a group of faith leaders from the Whispering Palms (Osborne) community. We started by reaching out to six local pastors and inviting them to join us for an informal conversation over dinner. We set a tentative date for the dinner, but these things take time, and this effort was no different. In August, HLW was invited to a tent revival, and Project Director Carmelle attended. That evening she spoke to a group of 25 neighbors, including four of the six pastors we'd been working to engage. Other key Community leaders were there as well and told Carmelle they'd been working to bring back their neighborhood association. In August, HLW was invited to the neighborhood association meeting. At that time, we invited the neighbors to partner with HLW for our September cleanup. New Hope Missionary Baptist Church was planning a cleanup for the same weekend, so we partnered and had a great turnout from the neighbors, church members, and HLW Steering Committee members. (A group of youth from For the Children have been very dedicated to HLW. They're a great asset, and they also came out to support the cleanup.) With an understanding of the importance of "place", we moved HLW's October Steering Committee meeting to the Whispering Palms neighborhood, and it was hosted by New Hope Missionary Baptist Church. The meeting was well attended by neighbors and pastors. The neighborhood association, represented by Retha Lowe and Sam Goodwin, told us about their priority projects. HLW hopes to partner with the neighbors to make these projects happen. Among them are neighborhood "welcome" signs, crime watch signs, safety lights, and added trash bins at key locations. Pastor Cato would like to plan a 5k walk, a golf tournament and a tech academy for youth.

From: the Neighborhood Health Workgroup Chair – John Burns:

The neighborhood health initiative sprang from Healthier Lake Worth's Community outreach over the past year and a half. A consistent complaint voiced by Lake Worth residents was neighborhood cleanliness. Out of HLW members' energy and desire to do good emerged the Community cleanup campaign.

The first cleanup was hosted by HLW members in partnership with Bridges of Lake Worth and focused on the area between Dixie Hwy. and the FEC railroad tracks, from 6th Avenue South down to 10th Avenue South. We went where the trash is, a blighted, overlooked and underserved area mainly consisting of low-income housing and light industrial uses. Carmelle worked with PBC Solid Waste Authority to secure materials for the cleanup. The number of volunteers was in the mid-teens and consisted of members of Healthier Lake Worth as well as a substantial number of people from the recovery community. Not only did we kick off the cleanup campaign, but we also picked up many hundreds of pounds of refuse. Success.

The second cleanup occurred on April 21st and was hosted by For the Children. The

cleanup focused on a portion of the Whispering Palms neighborhood, located between the FEC railroad tracks and Wingfield Street, south of 12th Avenue South in Lake Worth's southern end. We had a great turnout of approximately 25 volunteers, the majority being teens associated with For The Children, who filled at least five large recycle bins as well as innumerable trash bags. The event not only forged new relationships but resulted in a terrific looking neighborhood.

The success of that second cleanup led us back to Whispering Palms on July 28th. In anticipation of the cleanup, For The Children, volunteers prepared street signs and went door to door handing out flyers advertising the event. The bulk of the volunteers were young adults associated with For The Children; however, this event was marked by the participation of new volunteers outside of HLW and included several residents of the local Osbourne Community. The cleanup was capped by a tree planting and dedication on the For The Children property. The event was a successful merger of short-term neighborhood maintenance and longer-term investment in a tree canopy. The following weeks of bucket borne tree irrigation and additional trash pickup demonstrate HLW's commitment to the cause. (Link to Food and Farm Featured Article on April 21, 2018 Clean-Up: <http://floridafoodandfarm.com/featured/untrashed-streets-make-for-a-healthier-lake-worth>)

Months of Community outreach yielded the best event yet on Saturday, September 22nd. The neighborhood health initiative took a significant step forward by allowing HLW to step back. The cleanup was organized and led by residents of the local area who are in the midst of organizing their neighborhood association. With HLW providing support, approximately 60 people from across the City representing the entire socio-economic spectrum of Lake Worth turned out to beautify Whispering Palms. The results – less trash, more trees, new partnerships. A template for introducing the neighborhood health initiative across the City emerged.

We've had four cleanups thus far. The scope, community participation and overall effectiveness of each have steadily increased. From humble beginnings, the cleanups are now significant community events.

Governance:

The Governance team worked diligently to provide guidance to the Steering Committee as they developed and formalized HLW's Vision and Mission statements and its Value Principles. There were many discussions between the Action

Workgroup members and the Steering Committee members that enabled everyone to share their views about how the Vision and Mission Statements should be worded, considering the Community's identified Priorities.

In July, the Governance Action Workgroup facilitated the final discussions about the Vision and Mission Statements with the Steering Committee and the members voted to accept both.

Meanwhile, the Governance Action Workgroup continued to work on developing HLW's Value Principles; they presented their recommendations at the August Steering Committee Meeting and the members voted to adopt the Value Principles.

After a nearly three-month process working on the Sponsorship Guidelines and the Sponsorship Application, the Governance team presented the documents at the October Steering Committee meeting for final discussion; a vote was taken.

Education Awareness & Marketing:

The Education and Marketing Action Workgroups teamed up during various Action Workgroup meetings to brainstorm over the existing programs and school gardens that were available in the Lake Worth area for youth. Their intent was to identify opportunities for HLW to partner with and support. In addition, they also have been doing their best to find key contacts at the Middle and High Schools in Lake Worth to discuss various program opportunities to connect the schools' students with. A prime example of this is the Living Skills in schools Program.

At the same time, the Marketing Action Workgroup engaged HLW to partner with a very popular and important event, the 2nd Annual Art of Recovery Film Festival in Lake Worth hosted by For Reel Recovery. This was a three-day long weekend event that brought great awareness to HLW through the introduction of the Initiative and a presentation about HLW, at the grand opening night, an Outreach table with HLW's collateral marketing materials displayed. The Event was held at the Hatch, where several activities such as art exhibits and musical performances took place. This well-attended, and very talked-about Event brought increased awareness to HLW community-wide and on Social Media.

Lessons Learned:

In that spirit of a "Community-Driven," "Resident-Led," "Nothing About Us Without Us" approach, which requires many "Heads, Hearts and Hands Working Together for a Healthier Lake Worth" concept, it's a constant learning process. Some of the important lessons learned are as follow:

- Be willing to embrace messiness. When we engage Community members, who are donating their time and have their own ideas about how things should work, the result can be messy and unexpected. That is a good thing, as long as we are willing to roll with it.
- Having the trust of those that we work with and reciprocating this trust is incredibly important to accomplish anything, as a group. Maintaining trust between HLW, and those we work with, will not only encourage everyone to work harder, but it will also give us a chance to best utilize our gifts and talents to collectively create lasting change in the Community.
- Accepting that there will be progress and “wins” that may not be immediately seen, because so much of the work is about the process that leads to action, and it often takes time to see measurable results. However, we must realize that though we may not see the result of our hard work instantly, we may see it in the form of an increased number of people wanting to get involved and additional support from the Community, as a whole. The important thing to keep in mind is to trust the process and accept that we are making a difference, whether it feels like it or not.

Listen closely and authentically and be open to story ideas and a real-world perspective. Though our agenda may differ, when it comes to the health and wellness of the Community, everyone wants the same.

Top three things you are proud to have accomplished through your work with Healthier Together:

1. I am proud to lead side-by-side with the Community. Not only did I learn to deal with the different dynamics and personalities of the residents of Lake Worth, I grew tremendously by pushing myself to work outside of my comfort zone.
2. Guiding the Action Workgroups through strategic thinking and making strategic decisions that paid off later (various neighborhoods are taking notice and beginning to act).
3. Branding the Healthier Lake Worth name and growing greater awareness in the Community. When something is going on in the Community, my face is now recognized as Healthier Lake Worth.

Top three challenges you have faced with your work with Healthier Together:

1. Overcoming differences between members and engaging a Community where there are cultural, educational, and socioeconomic differences within the Community as well as between the Communities. HLW will continue its efforts to draw out and acknowledge the voices of all participants in the initiative.

2. Keeping our members focused and engaged and moving in unison in the direction that we need to go. Sharing too many ideas can tend to lead us in engaging too many issues, which could lead to minimal results.
3. Member retention in the Steering Committee. Over time, we've noticed a continual decline in the attendance of Steering Committee members at meetings just when we are gearing up our efforts and need them most. Steering Committee members who have great talents and committed. HLW will sit down with our leadership team and see what's happening on their end. Also we will poll members for their opinions, including the ones that stopped being active, in order to stem the decline in attendance.

Next Steps:

Healthier Lake Worth is entering into its second year with a lot of excitement and looking forward to working on:

1. Strategic Plan
2. Developing metrics to measure success.
3. Recruiting Ambassadors.
4. Continuing to build capacity and organizational skills for participants.
5. Creating collateral marketing brochures.
6. Finalizing the Sponsorship application process
7. Partnering and supporting neighborhoods who are working on improving their environmental health.
8. Ensuring Racial Equity.
9. Continuing to work on strategies to engage the multi-lingual population