

Healthier Delray Beach Impact Report (Mar-Aug 2015)

 healthiertogetherpbc.org/report/healthier-delray-beach-impact-report-mar-aug-2015/

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Submitted By: Lauren Zuchman
Reporting Period: 03/01/2015 to 08/31/2015
Neighborhood: Delray Beach

Summary:

Healthier Delray Beach – look at us now!

Where we started

Healthier Delray Beach (HDB) is a 5-year, community-driven initiative envisioned by Palm Healthcare Foundation and focused on improving the behavioral health and well-being of the Delray Beach community – beginning with the most vulnerable residents living in the 33444 and 33445 zip codes. Since inception in September 2014, important community efforts have followed including: formation of a Steering Committee, identification of a fiscal agent – Achievement Centers for Children and Families, and employment of a Project Director – Lauren Zuchman.

Where we have gone so far

From March through August 2015, a comprehensive assessment of behavioral health needs in Delray Beach was completed through community engagement activities. Focus groups held with diverse populations and key informant interviews provided qualitative data and a story of needs in Delray Beach. Regular community meetings provided opportunities for feedback. A needs survey was released to the community at large. All of this information along with hard data collected from city, county and state agencies will be used for strategic planning in fall 2015.

Preliminary sense-making of data collected through May led to first HDB programmatic steps. One step was to develop an Ambassador Program to support current “champions” in Delray Beach. Ambassadors will engage the community in the HDB initiative and promote behavioral health education. The second step was to create an awareness campaign to destigmatize behavioral health and create a “buzz” about the project. Five workgroups made up of Steering Committee, community members and service providers began convening to turn talk into action.

What we have achieved

The increasing momentum of the HDB initiative has been a testament to success already experienced. A strong base of volunteers from the core Steering Committee Members to the growing circle of residents and professionals attending meetings and workgroups have contributed to progress. Strong collaborative partnerships have developed, leading to HDB's planning for the first two events coming fall 2015. In addition, Ambassador programming conversations have resulted in preliminary measures to fund a community liaison position within a partnering agency.

What we are still figuring out

Healthier Delray Beach is learning from challenges of engagement faced throughout the process thus far. Due to barriers of trust, language and cultural concepts of behavioral health, some populations within Delray Beach are yet to be engaged. Persistence has been necessary to reach the many diverse community groups in Delray Beach, often resulting in multiple forms of contact and the rescheduling of meetings to ensure face-to-face communication. When new members have been engaged, their agendas must be incorporated with already established initiative goals and action steps.

What we are learning from the process

Learning from these experiences, HDB acknowledges the importance of an extensive information-gathering and planning period. The time and energy spent to engage the community and volunteers is vital to the process and requires constant coordination of multiple schedules and the commitment to regularly meet with various groups. Complexities of a community-driven project necessitate continuous management, direction and flexibility to incorporate many individual and agency ideas while staying focused on the existing initiative goals.

Overall, Healthier Delray Beach is excited for the successes and hurdling the challenges to make the community a healthier one!

Key Partners:

Community residents, Achievement Centers for Children and Families, American Medical Response, Boys Town South Florida, The City of Delray Beach, Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), EJS Project, Families First of Palm Beach County, Florida Atlantic University, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), NW/SW Neighborhood Alliance, West Atlantic Redevelopment Coalition (WARC)

New Partners:

More community residents, CaliBrand Consulting, City of Delray Beach Parks and Recreation, Delray Sports Exhibitors, Delray Beach Drug Taskforce, Greater Delray Beach

Chamber of Commerce, Golden Parents Inc., Legacy of Frog Alley Ancestors, Living Skills In The Schools/The Crossroads Club, MorseLife, Palm Beach County Schools, Palm Beach County Youth Services Department, Ruth and Norman Rales Jewish Family Services Inc., South County Community Mental Health Center, The Open Door Foundation, Village Academy

Goals:

1. Engage 500 residents through a data collection process to establish baseline data.
2. Hold community-wide meetings.
3. Create an awareness campaign strategy.
4. Attend and participate in at least three community meetings and events monthly.
5. Develop and initiate a formal Ambassador Program.
6. Produce a community resource guide.
7. Conduct provider meetings.

Process and Implementation Outcomes:

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

Progress:

Look at what we've done!

- Healthier Delray Beach (HDB) has been invited to neighborhood meetings, church services and agency tables to participate in conversation about behavioral health and wellness (a total of 53 meetings and events over 6 months).
- Community members are sharing personal stories and experiences during focus groups and individual interviews.
- Local groups (i.e. Delray Beach Drug Taskforce, Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Palm Beach County Action Alliance for Mental Health) are granting membership and voting privileges to Healthier Delray Beach.
- Trust is being established among Steering Committee and Workgroup members. The initiative is pulling together people who have not/would not otherwise work together.

Associated Attachments:

[Download File "DelRayCommunity-SD.mp4"](#)

- Outcome: **Quality, meaningful collaboration**

Progress:

Look at how many partners we have!

- So far, more than 300 residents and professionals (and counting!) have participated in regular community meetings, focus groups, interviews and the needs survey to ensure community voice.
- Community and steering committee members (25 total) volunteer their time to attend frequent workgroup meetings and work on first programmatic steps.
- Forty-seven (47) Delray Beach service providers attended the first Community Resource Roundtable Meeting in August to discuss resources needed in Delray Beach.
- HDB is working with 2-1-1 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast to advance resource guide efforts specifically for Delray Beach.
- Healthier Delray Beach has begun planning the first two community events coming in the fall with 7 local organizations serving as partners.
- New relationships have been formed and continue to be formed as a result of HDB.

Associated Attachments:

[Download File "HDB-Community-Activities.png"](#)

- Outcome: **Community-led process**

Progress:

Look what the community is capable of!

- Fifty (50) residents and professionals determined the initiative focus of behavioral health in September 2014.
- A Steering Committee comprised of a diverse group of residents, community leaders and providers was formed.
- The community later added “wellness” to its focus and defined behavioral health and wellness in its own words
- Healthier Delray Beach identified the Achievement Centers for Children and Families as the fiscal agent.
- Extensive data collection efforts (i.e. 8 focus groups, 95 key informant interviews, 7 community and the first of many provider meetings, and the needs survey distributed throughout the Delray Beach community) have been conducted to inform direction of the strategic plan.
- Developed from ideas presented in a HDB community meeting, an Ambassador Programming workgroup has already met 3 times, developed a role description and begun identifying and engaging community “Champions.”
- Feedback forms are offered at the end of every meeting and focus group to encourage community comment. Thus far, 97% of attendees state they “really like” participating and want to remain involved!

Associated Media:

[Achievement Centers Chosen as Fiscal Agent for Healthier Delray Beach](#)

[Post]



Detailed Narrative:

What makes a healthy community?

Healthier Delray Beach (HDB) aims to impact the overall behavioral health and well-being of Delray Beach individuals, families and the community through a grassroots approach to social change.

Objectives of the initiative include:

- 1) Promoting awareness and education of behavioral health
- 2) Improving access to supports and services
- 3) Encouraging promotion of positive personal growth (prevention)

With these objectives in mind, HDB envisions a stronger community with a comprehensive system of care as the ultimate initiative goal. A lot of hard work and a community-owned effort is necessary to meet the goal. From the start of the project, diligence and important decisions made “by Delray Beach, for Delray Beach” have positioned the community to become a healthier one through capacity-building, strong partnerships across populations, visionary leadership and progressive thinking, and supportive decision-making strategies.



To get involved, please call or email the Project Director, Lauren Zuchman, at (561) 203-8491 or lauren.delray@healthiertogetherpb.org

Healthier Delray Beach... Putting the Project Together

A multi-year, community-driven initiative focused on supporting the behavioral health and well-being of Delray Beach residents.

Healthier Delray Beach... Putting the Plan Together

- * Promote **AWARENESS** and education of behavioral health
- * Improve **ACCESS** to behavioral health services and supports
- * Provide **PREVENTION** to promote positive growth

Healthier Delray Beach... Putting the People Together

- Get Involved!
- * Join the email list to learn about upcoming events
 - * Attend community meetings
 - * Participate in focus groups and needs surveys
 - * Volunteer your time
 - * Join the provider resource list

Healthier Delray Beach is a partnership of



Important decision #1:

In September 2014, Delray Beach overwhelmingly agreed on behavioral health as its focus. In the following months, the community would expand the focus to be “behavioral health and well-being” and define the term in their words.



In October 2014, a committed volunteer Steering Committee formed and a Project Director with significant experience in behavioral health services and systems as well as management in community-wide initiatives was hired March 2015. This group of residents and professionals brought expertise in community impact work, behavioral health services, and a deep understanding of the make-up of the Delray Beach community. The Steering Committee made it evident that they value inclusiveness, transparency, and responsiveness as they set a welcoming tone through constant efforts to engage all groups in Delray Beach, to ensure a feedback loop from data collection activities back through community meetings, and to follow the lead of the community during decision-making processes. A governance subcommittee of the Steering Committee met to memorialize these values and create guidelines for future processes.

Important decision #2:



Delray Beach made a second important decision in February 2015 when they chose the Achievement Centers for Children and Families (ACCF) as the fiscal agent for HDB. ACCF brought along strong community partnerships and an energy to innovate. Within 6 months, the agency would become the first to employ a local emerging leader as a community liaison, following community decision at a HDB meeting to support “Ambassadors” already doing the work in Delray Beach. ACCF also strengthened the HDB partnership with Village Academy, a local community-created school serving children from infancy through 12th grade, by initiating restorative practices (a best practice model) within the school.



HDB continued to form strong relationships in the community through data collection efforts. Eight affiliations/churches/parks invited residents representing various populations in Delray Beach to participate in focus groups at their facilities. Participants openly shared their picture of Delray today, their vision for the community in the future and resources/barriers that are helping/hindering forward motion.

Key informant interviews led to offers from local organizations to have HDB present to their groups, participate in their resource fairs, and utilize their space for upcoming community meetings. When the needs survey was released, six community agencies agreed to assist with distribution, and The City of Delray Beach issued a press release to employees and residents, supporting community participation.

Important decision #3:

In June 2015, the community (45 people in attendance) lent their vision and vote at a planning meeting that shaped the first programmatic steps of the initiative and the start of workgroups assembling. Throughout the summer months, four workgroups – Community Engagement, Marketing, Ambassador Programming and Data Collection – met to brainstorm strategies for creating awareness and educational opportunities, supporting emerging leaders, and gathering information to create a baseline and show project impact over time. Most notably, “champions” from different sectors of the community joined the groups and helped the initiative envision a healthier community from their distinct perspectives. These champions became HDB’s first Ambassadors and one of them was hired as the community liaison at ACCF.



At the end of August, HDB held the first Community Resource Roundtable Meeting for service providers – traditional and non-traditional – to enhance communication across organizations, to identify service gaps, and to talk about the makings of a Delray Beach-specific resource directory. The Project Director began meeting with 2-1-1 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast to determine a collaborative directory effort and to begin research on inventive resource guides.

With strong emphasis placed by the Steering Committee and the Project Director to continuously learn not just from Delray Beach but from other successful community projects, members have already attended 3 international conferences and local trainings to bring knowledge of advanced practices back to the initiative and its strategic plan.

Important decision #4:

The workgroups decided to have HDB “hit the ground running” with the planning of the first and second initiative events happening fall 2015. Alliances have been nurtured as five partners (EJS Project, MorseLife, Delray Beach Parks and Recreation, Milagro Center, Achievement Centers for Children and Families, and Legacy of Frog Alley Ancestors) enthusiastically organize the community Family Dinner scheduled for September 2015. HDB is working with Alpert Jewish Family and Childrens Services, the county coordinator for Mental Health First Aid, to hold the training in October 2015, along with Ruth and Norman Rales Jewish Family Services.

Without a doubt, HDB has an exciting road ahead, but achievements already abound and a healthier community is in sight.

What are project milestones?

So let’s review what Healthier Delray Beach has already achieved ...

1. A committed Steering Committee and Project Director are supporting the community voice.



2. Achievement Centers for Children and Families has embraced the role as fiscal agent and already has hired the first fulltime Ambassador.
3. Village Academy has sent a letter of support for HDB.
4. HDB has been busy leading community engagement activities every month.
5. Delray Beach residents and professionals are participating and sharing openly in focus groups, interviews, and community and provider meetings on a regular basis.
6. An organic process has resulted in a growing base of community volunteers doing the work in workgroups and between meetings to drive the initiative steps forward.
7. Ambassadors are being identified and supported to continue their work in the community while also promoting the efforts of the initiative.
8. The first two HDB events – the Family Dinner Event and Mental Health First Aid training – are scheduled for early fall 2015.



How does this support the larger Healthier Together initiative goals?

Healthier Together imagines communities with increased capacity for change, long-term improved health outcomes and an established framework to continually evaluate impact of the initiative’s work. Employing collective impact methods, Healthier Delray Beach is starting with important beginning tasks to ensure measurable, sustainable change.

Healthier Delray Beach is ...

... building community involvement across all populations.

... committed to including residents, professionals, providers and leaders at all levels.

... creating awareness of behavioral health in an effort to de-mystify this health and social problem.

... utilizing different avenues to reach the community (i.e. presentations, resource fairs, social and local media)

... bringing trainings and best practices to Delray Beach

... handing out feedback forms at all meetings and focus groups.

... collecting data to help determine overall impact throughout the initiative process.

HDB has aligned its actions with community-identified outcomes, while being led by stakeholders of the impact area of the initiative and committing to shared, measurable results to ensure that together the community is on the path towards behavioral health success.

Lessons Learned:

Healthier Delray Beach is learning so much!

From recent successes and challenges, HDB is looking at these experiences as guidelines for how to proceed. HDB recognizes that to have a true community-driven, fruitful strategic plan, practice must include forward thinking, extensive data collection and planning, and ample time. More specifically, lessons learned include:

- 1) Strong, diverse leadership willing to give of their energy and talents is needed.
- 2) Volunteers will come naturally in time, and they will bring fresh ideas and value. Be patient!
- 3) Organization, persistence and the ability to coordinate schedules with multiple groups simultaneously will result in more information-gathering opportunities.
- 4) Compromise is key – unless it steers away from the community-selected vision.
- 5) Enjoy the process and the people and keep learning!

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

1. **Community engagement:** An ever-growing number of passionate community volunteers are participating and contributing on a regular basis.
2. **Community voice and choice:** Significant progress has been made through multiple means of data collection to ensure a community-driven strategic plan.
3. **Forward momentum:** The first two Healthier Delray Beach events are scheduled for September and October 2015 and a supported fulltime Ambassador position exists at ACCF.

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

1. **Community engagement:** Delray Beach is a diverse community, lending to continued efforts by Healthier Delray Beach to engage all the different populations in the city.
2. **Community voice and choice:** Language barriers and cultural beliefs concerning behavioral health lend to more work needed to allow flow of communication and education around a historically stigmatized health and social issue.
3. **Forward momentum:** With community enthusiasm comes a flow of ideas that can veer from the intended focus of the initiative. Honoring the vision while incorporating new approaches is potentially a harrowing yet exciting challenge to have.

Next Steps:

Look at what we have coming up!

September 2015:

Family Dinner Event– Delray Beach families are invited to celebrate family togetherness as they sit around the (community) dinner table, eat great food, and reap the behavioral health benefits of conversation and facetime.

Community Liaison Program – Healthier Delray Beach considers supporting the Achievement Centers for Children and Families to employ the Ambassador and develop advanced practices at Village Academy.

October 2015:

Strategic Planning – Community members and the Steering Committee will participate in 2 workshops, resulting in the Healthier Delray Beach blueprint for action and measurable impact.

Mental Health First Aid Training – Healthier Delray Beach hosts this international training to encourage understanding of behavioral health and to teach how to respond to someone in crisis.

November 2015:

Community Meeting – The strategic plan will be presented, discussed and approved by the community.

December 2015:

Resource Roundtable Meeting – The meeting will convene Delray Beach service providers to encourage networking, collaboration and filling in gaps in services.

Throughout the fall 2015:

Healthier Delray Beach Workgroups – Groups will meet regularly to move the strategic plan forward.

Resource Fairs/Presentations/Events – Healthier Delray Beach will participate in an array of community and county events to get the word out about the initiative!

Additional Attachments:

[Download File "Healthier-Delray-Beach-Intro.pptx"](#)