

Healthier Glades (October 2018 – March 2019)

 healthiertogtherpbc.org/report/healthier-glades-october-2018-march-2019/



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Neighborhood: The Glades

Keywords: Collective Impact, Community Assets, Community Capacity, community engagement, grassroots engagement, re-writing the narrative, resident engagement, Social Capital

Summary:

Vision:

The Glades is a community where all residents are thriving physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Summary:

Healthier Glades (HG) – “taking a Deeper Dive” during this reporting period. In order to ensure the needs of the residents were understood, Healthier Glades convened its Steering members in addition to inviting residents to participate in reflecting on what Glades residents have shared through Individual Stakeholder Interviews, Forced Field Analysis, Focus Groups and “Let’s Talk” Community Conversations. It was important to make sure everyone at the table reviewing the data shared their impressions, thoughts and views with regards to how Glades residents connected the broader community issues/challenges to “Behavioral Health”. Listed below are the categories Glades residents referenced throughout the course of HG Sense Making activities.

- Lack of Opportunities: Industry, business, resources, community needs, job opportunities, health care, employment, affordable housing and residents moving away from the community.
- Lack of Healthy Activities: Park quality and accessibility, lack of healthy and safe activities for residents, lack of recreational outlets.
- Mindsets: Fixed habits football over education, unhealthy eating, obesity, conflicting young versus old mindsets, generational cycles of poverty, youth not attending church, and overall pessimism.

Based on the data shared by Glades residents, HG Steering members decided to convene the following short-term exploratory “Action” workgroups to better understand the issues/root causes specific to ***Housing and Employment***. Throughout the course of engaging both content experts (residents) and context experts (agency partners) in this discussion, an HG learning community naturally formed. The community took a step back to unpack the two larger system issues (***Housing & Employment***), providing to be of great value to the residents and to the volunteers attending the exploratory “Action” workgroup meetings.

The need to move quickly, take action and “fix” the problem is an innate and instinctive response. However, to fully understand the complexity of the ***Housing*** issue, HG adopted a strategic approach that ensured everyone at the table understood the residents’ expressed needs correctly before drilling down – clarifying the “root cause(s)”. Major themes emerging from this exploration process were poverty, isolation/access, along with the need for organized communication channels.

This approach and method brought forward insights specific to testing assumptions held about community issues/problems. HG Steering members and residents participating in the process were able to share knowledge gained from this engagement. Having the facts resulted in a shift in long held assumptions about housing issues in the Glades, changing the ***Housing*** narrative. Within three months (December 2018 – February 2019), the ***Housing*** exploration process created space for learning to occur, resulting in an invitation to Community Partners of South Florida – Housing Division to lead this effort while continuing to engage Glades residents in the discussions and planning with regards to ***Housing***.

As HG continued to unpack all information and insights shared by Glades residents, a deeper understanding of the larger community landscape emerged with respect to learning about grassroots and system engagement efforts in the community. This helped with strategically planning next steps, in addition to connecting with Glades residents embarking upon unique entrepreneurial endeavors, showcasing their talent. There are many efforts underway at the grassroots level, and employing this method provided HG a snapshot of where the energy and synergy is occurring – with Glades residents leading the way.

The time spent canvassing the larger community landscape provided HG with information in real time with community updates and activities that would otherwise go unnoticed, and/or unrecognized. As a result of this process, HG will take this opportunity to share its accomplishments for this reporting period highlighting successes resulting from the method used to engage in the exploratory “Action” workgroups: HG accomplishments:

- ***HG engaged all sectors (residents, county government, nonprofit organizations, federal government) in the discussion related to Housing;***
- ***HG residents identified Community Partners of South Florida in leading the next level of engagement discussions/activities specific to Housing;***
- ***Housing Partnership of South Florida agreed to take the lead and work with HG residents in this effort, determining with residents the best way to build their capacity and the tools needed to begin changing the trajectory where residents can measure and speak to how this effort improved overall their quality of life (e.g., reducing stress);***
- ***Context experts dispelled many of the rumors, myths and misinformation regarding long-held beliefs about public housing and its eligibility and policies, changing the Housing narrative;***
- ***HG was made aware of numerous efforts led by residents during its canvassing and meetings with residents throughout the Glades;***
- ***HG was engaged with ensuring that residents interested in learning more about the issues specific to Housing insecurities in the Glades attend the Housing Insecurity Summit held at Palm Beach State College on January 17th, 2019.***

The successes highlighted above may appear to be minor in scope, however this approach/method has offered HG an effective way to model community capacity building, resident engagement around an issue that interests them, as well as showcasing HG value in the larger landscape. As stated earlier, this process will not help with immediately fixing the issue/problem, but the value to the Initiative and the larger community is a collective system alignment model that places residents in the “Center” with regards to authoring the change they would like to see – rewriting the Narrative.

Key Partners:

Glades Residents, Community Partner's, Inc., Federation of Families, Glades Ministerial Association, Office of Community Revitalization, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department, State of Florida Department of Children and Families, Glades Initiative, BRIDGES at Pahokee, BRIDGES at Belle Glade, Mz. Millionaire Radio Talk Show Host, Department of Juvenile Justice and City of Pahokee Parks and Recreation Department, First United

Methodist Church in Pahokee, Canal Point Methodist Church, Everglades Preparatory Academy, Belle Glade Youth Empowerment Center, Palm Beach State College, Student ACES, Pahokee Housing Authority, Grace Fellowship Worship Center, Motivational X – Neighborhood/Beautification, NAMI, Palm Beach County Library System in the Glades (Belle Glade, South Bay & Pahokee) and Quiet Waters Senior Center.

New Partners:

1. Open Table Residents - Representing Pahokee, Belle Glade & South Bay
2. Kings Tutoring and Mentoring Foundation
3. Wrisper: New Beginning Community Outreach

Goals:

1. HG Project Director with support from HG Steering members will share with the broader community "Theory of Action" framework - gathering their feedback to determine if what they shared in earlier conversations, is reflected in the "Theory of Action" document.
2. HG will plan with Glades residents a community event to highlight its successes to date, partnerships, in addition to sharing "Lesson's Learned".
3. HG will launch its "Growing Healthy Together" mini-grant in the Fall 2019.

Process and Implementation Outcomes:

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

Progress:

It order to begin to build authentic trust within communities, it is key to recognize and honor residents who have lived experiences – helping to validate trust in its truest form. Unfortunately, in communities where the issues/problems appear insurmountable, Glades residents have experienced a host of agencies, programs, and initiatives coming to solve or fix the communities' problems. Glades residents historically welcome everyone – with hopes of seeing improvements in the community and they are willing and eager to share their hopes, dreams and solutions with anyone who will take time to listen. What is often overlooked is the social capital in the community that residents have which goes unnoticed or devalued. With any great idea or program, sustaining any momentum after the project ends, often times comes to a screeching halt, because those left in the communities have not had the opportunity to build upon the strengths inherent in the communities.

HG with its intentional approach to engaging the community approaches each engagement by recognizing, validating, and reinforcing the strengths inherent in everyone in the community. HG has resigned itself to knowing we want to always get it right, but we are building a culture of trust at the Steering and Workgroup levels. This trust will support the learning that must take place, if HG is to assist the community/residents in modeling the change they want to see.

Associated Attachments:

- [Download File "MLK-Southbay-2019.jpg"](#)
- [Download File "ACES-1.jpg"](#)

- Outcome: **Quality, meaningful collaboration**

Progress:

During this reporting period, Healthier Glades (HG) connected with residents and others in diverse sectors to further learn about the Housing challenges along with initiatives specific to the Glades.

South Bay Villa (Palm Beach County Housing Authority) hosted the February Housing exploration “Action” workgroup meeting. Representatives from Commissioner Melissa McKinley’s office, Community Partners of South Florida, LORE – Housing Committee Representatives, private industry stakeholders, along with residents interested in sharing ideas around this topic attended the meeting held in February 2019.

HG exploratory “Action” workgroup members will be stepping back and supporting Community Partners of South Florida in leading this effort going forward.

Associated Attachments:

- [Download File "HG-Housing-workgroup-e1556472130191.jpg"](#)

- Outcome: **Community-led process**

Progress:

Glades youth leading the way in rewriting the narrative.

On April 21st, Glades youth representing Student ACES participated in a joint venture with youth representing Boynton Beach and Delray Beach to review the stories collected using the Sense Maker tool. The Sense Maker tool provides a platform for Glades youth to create a community question/prompt which will allow the person telling the story the opportunity to share a significant event or story that will help to inform the youth in this process. The youth participating in this effort, reviewed the stories shared, analyze the data/themes inherit in the stories along with making decisions about ways to create an action activity reflective of the opportunities the youth can build on.

Associated Attachments:

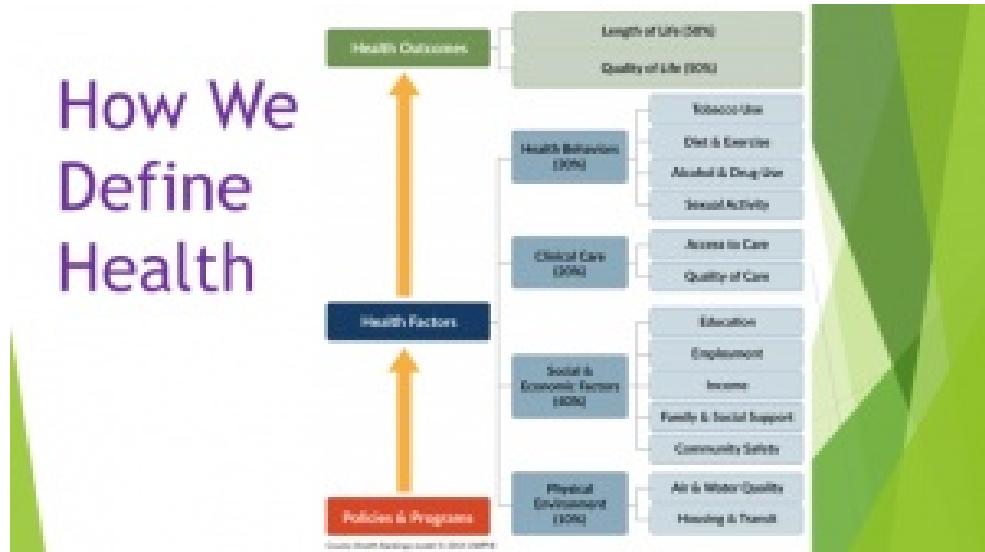
- [Download File "ACES-3.jpg"](#)
- [Download File "ACES-2.jpg"](#)
- [Download File "ACES-1.jpg"](#)

Detailed Narrative:

Shifting the “Health” Conversation

As a result of Glades residents selecting “Behavioral Health” as its focus, the past six months HG Steering members have spent a considerable amount of time unpacking and taking a deeper dive into creating a safe space to begin having a different conversation specific to the overall health and quality of life for residents residing in the Glades. The conversation around how communities define health and their mental model of what health look like was being challenged, in the context of “Behavioral Health”. The diagrams below was used as tool to begin the discussion.

How We Define Health



After reviewing the data from the Community Conversations along with key Stakeholder interviews as reported in the last Impact Report (April 2018 – September 2018), HG Steering members and others reflected on the feedback residents shared regarding the community's natural assets (e.g., parks, people, agriculture, churches, etc.). They also reflected on the sharing of challenges families/Glades residents encounter (e.g., affordable housing, lack of opportunities for diverse populous, unemployment/jobs, transportation, etc.).

It is often stated residents/families who are closest to the challenges – when given the space and a platform – will share their feelings and experiences in addition to ways in which to design plans to solve their own problems. The diagram below was also shared with HG Steering members. You will note many of the “Social Determinants of Health” areas below were described and shared with HG throughout the course of either the community conversations and/or stakeholder interviews – validating Glades residents as “Experts”.



Social Determinants of Health Diagram Chart

As HG continues unpacking what the community has shared as it relates to their hopes

and aspirations for themselves, families and alike, conversations are starting to emerge around possible “Root Causes” – the impact of poverty and its relation to overall health outcomes. As HG continues to shift the conversation with regards to ‘Health”, campaigns such as “Let’s Move” – promoting exercise, healthy eating and positive behavioral changes will add value to HG role in bringing awareness and a deeper understanding to the broader community specific to “Behavioral Health”.

“Let’s Move” Campaign – Healthier Glades

In relations to focusing on “Behavioral Health”, Palm Health Foundation “Let’s Move Campaign” was a great way for HG to support already existing efforts in the community – specific to exercising, movement and nutrition. Glades residents participated in organized efforts. Walking, basketball and youth fishing are but a few of the activities highlighted during the month of March 2019.

The partnerships and connections made in support of the “Let’s Move” Campaign throughout the Glades, provided HG with another opportunity in which to build on – residents coming together to partner with neighborhood corner store owners to add healthy products/fresh fruits and vegetables in select neighborhood stores.

Healthy Corner Store Pilot Program in the Glades

United Way of Palm Beach County met with Glades residents and corner store owners to introduce the Healthy Food/Corner Store Pilot program on March 22, 2019. A great deal of attention and discussion was around the data specific to the Glades (e.g., SNAP eligibility, food desserts, limited access to grocery stores, etc.) and the need to increase awareness which will help with improving the health of residents by bringing healthy food/products to neighborhoods where residents reside. With support from United Way of Palm Beach County staff, residents will have the



Glades residents preparing for “Let’s Move” 5k Run/Walk



Glades residents celebrating early morning 5k Run/Walk

opportunity to work together as a cohort, engaging others in the activities specific to implementing this program. There is great deal of energy in the neighborhoods to address healthy lifestyle changes and this program will help residents to determine what else will be needed to support the changes they would like to see.



“I Love Pahokee Day”
Fishing Tournament Winner



Glades residents inviting United Way of PBC to the table to plan next steps

Broken Places

Building off of what is being learned and discussed during both HG Steering and “Action” workgroup meetings, conversations around Trauma, its impact and ACES has come to the forefront. HG assisted in supporting efforts that showcased the showing of *Broken Places* – a documentary at Dolly Hand Theatre on March 27th, 2019. Viewers were given a unique time-lapse perspective on how trauma that children experienced shaped their lives as adults. ***Broken Places*** interweaves these longitudinal narratives with commentary from a few nationally renowned experts in neurobiology and early childhood development in order to illuminate the potentially devastating impact of childhood adversity as well as the factors that can foster resilience.

- Roughly 90 Glades residents and community partners attended the showing sponsored by United Way of Palm Beach County, Palm Health Foundation, Birth to 22 Initiative and Children's Services Council.
- Residents in the Glades have arranged to host additional showings in the Month of May, 2019 – highlighting Mental Health Awareness/Trauma Informed Care – South Bay, Belle Glade, Pahokee and Canal Point.
- An additional activity/workshop focusing on ACES, Trauma and Toxic stress has been scheduled for May 2, 2019.



Broken Places Sponsors and Panelist

HG has a lot to celebrate during this reporting period:

1. With Glades residents guiding the work, HG has a draft of the “Theory of Action” - changes we want to see documented. Consensus reached on March 8th, 2019.
2. HG has officially hired its VISTA Outreach Coordinator – effective May 13, 2019.
3. HG successfully piloted a “Lunch & Learn” – Sense Maker activity with Student ACES and key stakeholders, held on December 5th, 2018.
4. HG is continuing to engage residents in the initiative – recognizing a continuum of engagement intersections in which residents will determine when they engage and their level of engagement.
5. Glades residents organizing around “Healthy” eating initiatives, as evident by working alongside United Way of Palm Beach County piloting the Corner Store project in the Glades (Pahokee, Canal Point, Belle Glade & South Bay). This project – led by Glades residents will support partnerships between participating corner store owners and residents.
6. HG supporting dynamic youth driven activities – “Story Telling” – Student ACES using Sense Maker to shift the conversation and narrative.



Healthier Glades Residents at Dolly Hand for the documentary – Broken Places Showing

This reporting period, also brings with it additional celebratory highlights for HG and the community.

The HG Project Director embarked upon a “Challenge” by where several steps, with regards to planning, researching and alike were required to begin working towards completing the “Challenge”. The “Challenge” statement was predicated on HG wanting to be clear, by recognizing and highlighting existing engagement efforts in the community doing the work.

HG Challenge Statement:

Maximize stakeholder/agency collaborative opportunities that will increase community ownership, buy-in and action resulting in Healthier Glades, showcasing its unique value in the larger community landscape (by June 30th, 2019). Below are a few of the WINS celebrated from engaging in the Challenge:

Outcome Wins

- Increased diversity to support HG Steering and workgroup(s) (e.g., ethnicity, age, geographic education, etc.)
- HG Engaged 10 residents and 3 corner store owners in the initial planning on March, 22, 2019 – Healthy Corner Store Project
- A total of 90 residents and agency providers attended Broken Places – Documentary on March 27, 2019 – Palm Beach State College

Insight Wins

- Glades residents (adult & youth) eager to get involve and ready to lead
- Open Table captures the untapped talent – social capital in the community
- There is a great deal of energy around “Wellness’ and residents are seeking alternative opportunities wellness avenues (e.g., yoga, palates, bicycling, etc.)

Capability Wins

- Student ACES – Moving to Action training held on April 21, 2019 in Boynton Beach (e.g., data analysis, community planning, etc.)
- Hiring a full-time Vista Volunteer to support HG Outreach activities/events
- A total of 4 residents were trained in Mental Health First Aid – supporting Healthier Glades Initiative

Lessons Learned:

1. Recognizing the work of effective engagement and community change takes time.
2. Valuing HG WINS – a road map to telling the HG Story over time.
3. Understanding the various communication channels established to date, their role and the impact on marketing HG in the broader community.

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

1. Completing the Performance Challenge and recognizing the Challenge value – bringing about professional growth, which will support engagement efforts specific to the Initiative.
2. Highlighting the capabilities of youth residing in the Glades – aspirations around youth re-writing the narrative, led by Student ACES
3. Successfully hiring a VISTA Volunteer to support HG engagement efforts/Outreach.

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

1. Recognizing the need to have diverse resident Ambassadors to assist with outreach, translation, etc.
2. Communication – knowing the audience, recognizing ways to provide on-going feedback in manner that provides continues updates/feedback, etc.
3. Enhance social media platform.

Next Steps:

Healthier Glades next steps are exciting:

1. Plan annual HG celebration and use event to share draft Theory of Action/changes we want to see document.
2. Launch “Growing Healthier Together” Mini Grants in fall 2019.
3. Update Community/Resident Engagement Marketing Plan – Year 2.
4. Continue to engage Resident Ambassadors who have organically emerged from this process and support ways to build their capacity.
5. Provide infrastructure design for HG Action workgroups – starting with Community/Resident Engagement.