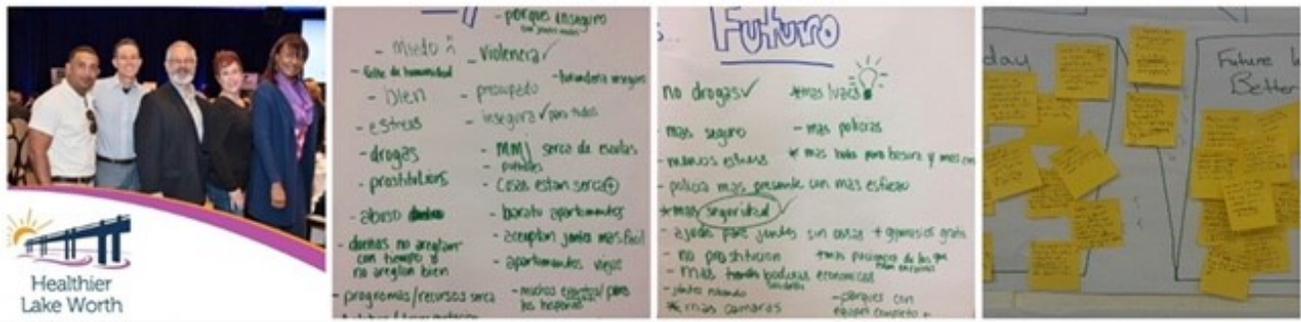


# Healthier Lake Worth Impact Report (Oct. 2017 – March 2018)

[healthiertogetherpbc.org/report/healthier-lake-worth-impact-report-oct-2017-march-2018/](http://healthiertogetherpbc.org/report/healthier-lake-worth-impact-report-oct-2017-march-2018/)



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Neighborhood: Lake Worth

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## Summary:

Healthier Lake Worth, a multi-year, community-driven, resident-led, place-based funding approach Initiative focusing on Behavioral Health, has been breaking ground and laying the foundation for transforming the concept of the Initiative into reality. We have been very busy in the last six months conversing with and engaging the residents of the community and inviting them to share their definition of Behavioral Health. Months of community engagement, assessment and building momentum through individual key informant interviews, Force Field Analysis, Focus Groups, Community Meetings, and Community Events, while building partnerships with businesses, stakeholders, and other key members of the Lake Worth community, has sparked interest, forged relationships, and encouraged residents of all ages and cultures to participate in Initiative activities, listen to the needs of the community, define behavioral health, and collect data. As awareness has spread, more community members and stakeholders have been attending the HLW Steering Committee meetings. In addition, HLW has received invitations from local organizations, to present the Initiative, and requests from other agencies throughout PBC to collaborate and partner with multiple campaign events. While we have been actively engaging the community, we have also been busy expanding our Steering Committee membership by holding regular monthly meetings to discuss roles, responsibilities, milestones, and timelines. We have been successful in building the Steering Committee members' capacity through Healthier Together Community Learning

and by sponsoring out-of-state conferences, to instill the tenets of community collaboration and collective impact skills. We also established Steering Committee leadership by naming a Chair and Co-Chair, developing our governance document, identifying the Initiative's geographic area of focus (the 33460 zip code, that includes the four voting districts in East Lake Worth), and assigning Action Workgroups, completing Data Sense-Making, and more.



## Key Partners:

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### 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.

## New Partners:

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### New Partners:

SK-9 Gang Prevention, Center for Child Counseling, Digital VibeZ, More Residents, Fitness by Rosa, PBC Parks and Recreation Department.

## Goals:

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1. Community Engagement – Increase residents' participation in Healthier Lake Worth's community meetings and events.
2. Create an awareness campaign strategy to Increase awareness of Healthier Lake Worth in the community.
3. Develop and initiate a formal Ambassador Program.
4. Hold community-wide meetings, at least quarterly.

5. Attend and participate in, and partner with, at least four community meetings and events per month.

## Process and Implementation Outcomes:

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

Progress:

- Local organizations are talking about HLW and referring other new initiatives that share common goals to join HLW.
- 13 additional community members have been attending our steering committee meetings on and off; we hope they will “buy-in” to what they see and what we are trying to accomplish and develop an understanding for the time and resources needed to join and support HLW.
- 70 community members were individually interviewed, 150 residents, including youth, participated in 9 focus groups.
- More than 500 community members have shared their short and long term vision for HLW.
- Interested residents are reaching out through Facebook to inquire about HLW.  
<https://m.facebook.com/HealthierLakeWorth/>

- Outcome: **Quality, meaningful collaboration**

Progress:

- Healthier Lake Worth is being invited by local organizations to talk about the Initiative.
- HLW has attended an average of 15 community and county-wide meetings per month.
- HLW has attended at least 2 community events per month.
- HLW has collaborated with 5 local organizations to co-host community events.
- HLW has partnered with community neighborhood associations for community cleanups
- HLW has supported Healthier Glades with the facilitation of multi-lingual Focus Group conversations and by assisting in the process of hiring their Project Director.
- HLW is working with For the Children to integrate and develop a HLW youth group.

- Outcome: **Community-led process**

Progress:

- HLW has formalized its Steering Committee.
- HLW has selected their Steering Committee Chair and Co-Chair through the process of ballot voting.
- Engaging residents in talking about their challenges in Lake Worth, sharing their vision for a healthier Lake Worth, and identifying their priority areas for HLW.
- HLW Steering Committee members have expressed their ideas and suggested programs and strategies to address priority areas through various community events.
- Steering Committee Members have organized two major Neighborhood Cleanups in the most under-represented neighborhoods to begin addressing their number one priority area, Neighborhood Health/Community Environment. More than 50 residents and friends of Lake Worth participated in the cleanups and collectively picked -up over 2500 lbs. of trash and recyclable items and many bulk items.
- About 40 residents, including many youth, attended the Community Data Sense-Making meeting in January.
- The Steering Committee Members identified five Action Workgroups: Governance, Data/Programming, Marketing, Community Engagement, and Awareness/Education
- The community has been providing feedback through HLW’s social media pages; Facebook has 168 followers and 164 likes and Instagram has 200 followers and 160 likes.
- The Steering Committee Leadership has finalized its Governance document and established a list of voting members.

## Detailed Narrative:

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### **Community Voices:**

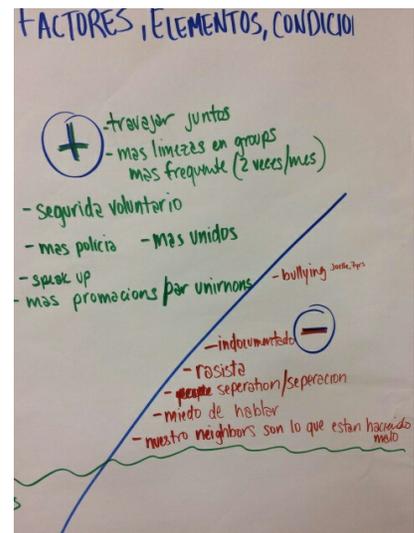
Although the Lake Worth community is made up of diverse races and cultures including, Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Haitian, and Guatemala-Mayan residents. When speaking with the community about its assets and challenges and its vision for a healthier future, as it relates to improving behavioral health in Lake Worth, we found out that their commonalities are greater than their differences and that they share similar goals for the community.

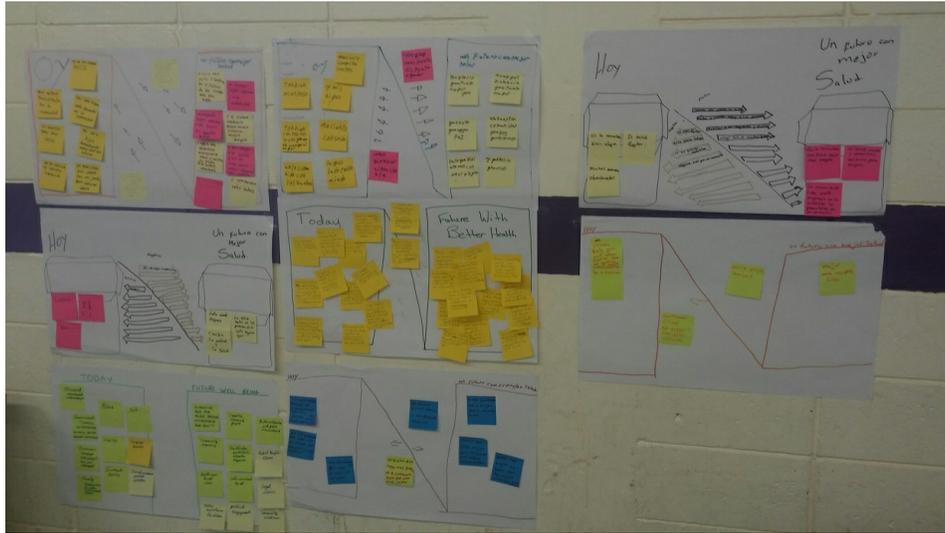
Over the last six months, Healthier Lake Worth has engaged in dialogue in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole with members, businesses and stakeholders in the community. This dialogue generated much-needed qualitative data. Below are some examples of the types of dialogue conducted, thus far:

- 70 individual key informant interviews included questions intended to identify and “flesh-out” the strengths of a healthier community, the challenges faced in Lake Worth, short and long term goals for Healthier Lake Worth, and how the initiative can successfully reach and engage the community, as a whole.

- 9 Force Field Analyses/Focus Groups with over 150 people including: 3 in Spanish, 3 in Haitian Creole and 2 in English and 1 with youth, only. The conversations encouraged the groups to express their experiences emotionally, spiritually, physically, and financially, and to discuss their overall well-being and that of their family, and share their vision of the future of better health in Lake Worth. They were also encouraged to discuss negative forces that could impede the Initiative and the positive forces that would move the Initiative to success, and to identify who is involved and responsible and who should be involved and responsible?

- 4 community engagement events engaged over 500 residents and asked them to talk about what would make Lake Worth a healthier place to live, express their vision for a healthier Lake Worth, and define behavioral health based on their life experiences in Lake Worth. In the end, we began to hear the same feedback over and over.





### Data Sense-Making:

The qualitative data and needs assessments collected from the community have been put through analysis where it was broken down into different categories. The Top Ten categories referenced the most by the participants were identified. Analysis of the Top Ten revealed that the residents of Lake Worth are defining Behavioral Health on a more macro level that emphasizes their neighborhood health and community environment, safety, recreation, lack of resources, community engagement and collaboration, drugs and alcohol, housing, language barriers, access to healthcare and food insecurity.

The top 5 categories were defined by the participants as follows:

- Neighborhood Health/Community Environment: Concerns included an unclean environment, trash and recyclable items in the streets, unsafe roads, because of too many pot holes, insufficient street lighting in certain neighborhoods, and too many stray dogs and cats roaming the streets causing residents who walk with their children to be afraid of being attacked.

- Safety: Concerns included drug usage and dealing on various corners, alcoholism, prostitution, homelessness, crime, and a general lack of police visibility.



- Recreation: Concerns included no safe parks at walking distance for family outings and not enough free or affordable family events or social programs for youth and family.
- Lack of resources: Concerns included not enough after-school educational programs for youth, not enough community centers and not enough exercise gyms.
- Community engagement and collaboration: Concerns included: a divided Community, racism, fear of speaking, lack of engagement at meetings by the multicultural population, and a belief that city officials are unwilling to collaborate with residents.

This deciphered data was presented at a large community meeting attended by 40 residents including: the Steering Committee members, key community contributors, youth, residents, stakeholders, and some city officials. The information was well received and produced some “Aha!” moments. Because there are so many underlying issues going on with groups in the community, some of the Steering Committee members were surprised that mental health, immigration, the language barrier, and access to healthcare were not in the Top Ten on the concern list. The discussion continued on the 1 -3 areas that stood out to the group in an attempt to determine why these areas are important. We are still digesting the information and we strive to determine the actions that make sense, moving forward.





## Lessons Learned:

We have achieved many “wins” since inception. However, we have not escaped the challenges of a start-up Initiative and have learned many lessons.

- Because the Lake Worth community is a diverse “melting pot” consisting of Caucasians, Haitians, Hispanics, Guatemalan Maya, and African Americans, it presents a unique challenge in developing a strategy to reach its population. The multi-lingual and multi-cultural make-up of the community makes engagement particularly trouble-some because it requires a great deal of time and effort to reach all the groups. Though, ideally, the various groups would be brought together, the message would be communicated clearly, and everyone would openly express their ideas and concerns, and jointly arrive at solutions that would benefit everyone, the reality is that even with quality translators present, the Initiative’s message is difficult to deliver, consistently, and it is equally difficult to get the various groups to open up, be understood, and work together, for the common good.
- Though we have consistently been able to attract large groups at community events, it has been difficult to get all of the multi-cultural groups to attend community meetings, at the same time, or actively participate in Steering Committee meetings. What we’ve determined is that having mono-lingual meetings with individual groups encourages more participation and more engagement. In short, people are much more likely to show up to a meeting, if the primary language spoken is theirs.
- For example, our sense-making community meeting was not well attended by most of the different multi-cultural groups, except for the Osborne youth, despite the meeting being widely advertised in three languages: English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole via HLW’s social media page, and the distribution of flyers at various local organizations where many of the Force Field exercises and Focus Groups took place. To improve participation in future meetings, the Steering Committee members made a decision to take the monthly meeting on the road, holding it at different local agencies who serve, primarily, certain cultural groups. This decision has not only given the Steering Committee members the opportunity to learn about different partners and resources in the community, but has also helped them to meet the groups in an environment where the attendees feel more comfortable and place their trust.

- The first meeting on the road was successful in improving the multi-cultural presence, however there was still little engagement by all of the different groups, due to the language barrier. For instance, though there was a Steering Committee member who helped with translation, the Spanish group was still reluctant to express its feelings, due to shyness, a lack of confidence, and concern that they would not be understood. A strategy that the Steering Committee leadership feels might work to address these issues is to create language-specific sub-Action Workgroups under the Community Engagement Action Workgroup. Their task would be to develop effective methods of reaching each of the distinct language groups.
- The ultimate success of the Initiative will be dependent upon the gathering and analysis of a great deal of information from each of the multi-cultural, multi-lingual groups in Lake Worth. However, this process can be slow and frustrating to the residents and other stakeholders who have been involved with the Initiative, from the beginning. They feel that tangible progress has been slow, and they have had a difficult time embracing the reason for the delays. So, it is imperative that the Steering Committee members embrace this knowledge and do their best to maintain a balance between what needs to continue happening (data gathering, etc.) and what will be necessary to keep the participants engaged. The Initiative needs to keep the participants interested, because it needs their skills and their time. Therefore, it is imperative that HLW makes sure that action happens at meetings, and between meetings, while still being sure to prioritize community needs and developing “best practices” to ensure future success.

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

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1. Completing the 9 months Healthier Together Project Director Learning Performance Challenge.
2. The progress made in collecting quality, meaningful data from the various and distinct groups in the community and in breaking down this data, in a comprehensive, yet readily understandable, manner, for presentation to the groups who attended the Sense-Making Community meeting in January 2018.
3. Maintaining momentum for the Healthier Lake Worth Initiative by consistently staying engaged in the community, and being the face of HLW at large community events and local and county-wide meetings.

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

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1. Insufficient communication, sharing, and engagement by the multi-cultural, multi-lingual population of Lake Worth in a group setting to discuss what a healthy Lake Worth looks like.

2. There are diverse groups from different neighborhoods in Lake Worth; each with strong claims of prevalent issues that are unique to them and feelings of being ignored, each with different cultural dynamics, and each with different views of how HLW should proceed with determining its priorities.
3. People are impatient and tired of meetings, with no actions resulting, though they suggest actions. However, because certain skills need refining at this stage, effective action is difficult.

## Next Steps:

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Healthier Lake Worth is very excited about moving forward and will need to:

1. Document the changes we want to see.
2. Establish a game plan for success.
3. Develop metrics to measure success.
4. Build a structure for, and a clearer understanding of, what the Action Workgroups are designed to accomplish.
5. Recruit Ambassadors.
6. Build capacity and organizational skills in the Steering Committee members, Action Workgroup members, and Ambassadors.
7. Create HLW's Mission and Vision Statements.
8. Create a Marketing brochure for HLW.
9. Create strategies to engage the multi-lingual population.
10. Celebrate HLW's 1 year of learning and its "Wins".