HEALTH EQUITY ZONE

WEST WARWICK

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY
April 2015 - March 2016
West Warwick is home to more than 29,000 people. The overall mission of the West Warwick Health Equity Zone is to utilize collective impact and leverage community resources to address health and wellness disparities in West Warwick by focusing on the social determinants of health. West Warwick is disproportionately affected by many health disparities. Disparities are driven by upstream factors including a lack of access to healthy food and recreation, high rates of teen pregnancy, trauma, and accidental drug overdoses. The West Warwick Health Equity Zone decided to focus on these topics after conducting a comprehensive review of available data and talking to community leaders.

As defined by the Rhode Island Department of Health, "Health equity means everyone has an equal opportunity to take advantage of resources that will help them live a long, healthy life. It focuses on differences in population health that are related to unequal economic and social conditions in specific locations. These conditions are both systemic and changeable." The West Warwick Health Equity Zone aims to improve health equity by addressing upstream factors for particularly vulnerable populations.

Thundermist Health Center is the backbone agency. The action team members are: the West Warwick Police Department, West Bay CAP, the YMCA, West Warwick Public Schools, Farm Fresh RI, West Warwick Prevention Coalition, The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery Community Center, Town of West Warwick, West Warwick Senior Center/Department of Human Services, West Warwick Public Library, Rhody Food on the Move, and SouthPointe Christian Church.
The HEZ will build infrastructure for equity.

**Collaboration**  
Partnerships and collaboration are highly valued to ensure sustainability

**Equity**  
Programs ensure that all people can reach their highest level of health

**Impact**  
Organizations work together using collective impact to increase effect

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**Health Equity Zone Response**

- **Residents who are community ambassadors to guide the Health Equity Zone**: 8
- **Community organizations who are partners of the Health Equity Zone**: 13
- **Unique Health Equity Zones across the state of Rhode Island**: 11

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**Community Spotlight**

**Community Ambassadors**

The West Warwick Health Equity Zone has hired 8 Community Ambassadors. The Community Ambassadors will provide invaluable guidance and community input to the Health Equity Zone. The Ambassadors will act as community catalysts, using a “bottom-up” approach to raise awareness about health equity. The Health Equity Zone will train Community Ambassadors on topics of social justice, health equity, and advocacy. Each Community Ambassador will have one primary work group affiliation; they will work side by side with the chairpeople of their work group to ensure that a community voice is present and steering the work of the group.
Healthy Food Access

Background

Many people in West Warwick do not have access to healthy, affordable, fresh food.

- **4 in 10** Eligible people are not enrolled in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program.
- **16%** of West Warwick residents eat recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables.
- **Barriers** Many people in West Warwick face barriers to accessing a grocery store.

Health Equity Zone Response

- **6** Create six new food access points in West Warwick, including pop-up markets.
- **Screen** Train organizations to screen clients for food insecurity and refer to community resources.
- **$5 → $7** Implement "bonus bucks" for people using WIC and SNAP at farmers markets.

Community Spotlight

Pop-Up Farmers Markets

The West Warwick HEZ sponsored four "pop-up" farmers markets last year. These are special farmers markets designed for people receiving Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program vouchers and senior coupons. The HEZ hosted the markets at the location of the Senior Center and WIC office. 377 people attended the pop-up markets over the summer, resulting in $1,353 in WIC checks redeemed. In addition, the HEZ distributed $574 worth of "bonus bucks" at these markets.
OVERDOSE PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

Background

West Warwick has high rates of substance use and overdose deaths.

3rd
Highest rate of overdose deaths in Rhode Island in 2010-2012

6
Overdose deaths in West Warwick in 2014

"Ground Zero"
Description of overdose epidemic by Dr. Josiah Rich of Miriam Hospital

Health Equity Zone Response

46
People trained on using Naloxone, a drug that reverses overdose deaths

Recovery
Create a space open 20 hours a week with peer recovery services

72
People provided with recovery services or who attended recovery social events

Community Spotlight

Peer Recovery Services

Anchor Recovery Community Center and The Providence Center implemented peer recovery services through the HEZ in September, 2015. The HEZ offers drop-in peer recovery services at the HEZ Hub (1229 Main Street), Monday through Friday for 20 hours a week. Peer to Peer Coaches work with people who have experienced addiction to provide empathetic support and services. Anchor and The Providence Center have also hosted several social events, including a New Year’s Eve party, to build a recovery community. To date, over 72 people have accessed peer recovery services through the HEZ.
TEEN HEALTH

Background

Teens in West Warwick are greatly affected by many health issues.

- **7%**
  Teens aged 18 and 19 have given birth in West Warwick

- **Cycles**
  People who have teen parents are more likely to become teen parents themselves

- **13%**
  Teens accessing Title X services use long-acting reversible contraceptives

Health Equity Zone Response

- **School**
  Work with the school to facilitate access to adolescent health services

- **Collaboration**
  Create a group to support teen decision making and pregnancy prevention

- **LARC**
  Increase access to long-acting, reversible contraceptives (LARC) for teens

Community Spotlight

**Coalition to Improve Teen Health**

Our teen health workgroup has been working collaboratively to develop a mission and vision on how we understand and aim to improve teen health in West Warwick. The workgroup which is made up administrators, educators, parents, social workers and school committee representation is being led by the West Warwick school superintendent.
West Warwick is a community deeply affected by trauma.

118 Cases of child abuse and neglect in 2014 in West Warwick

38% Arrests for domestic violence in West Warwick had a child present

285 Arrests made for domestic violence in 2013 in West Warwick

Health Equity Zone Response

Train
Provide training for organizations to provide trauma-informed care

Screen
Implement screening and referrals at agencies for trauma

Collaborate
Create a strong network of partnerships to address trauma

Community Spotlight

Toxic Stress
Toxic stress is a form of chronic stress when a person experiences adversity, such as abuse, neglect, exposure to violence, or poverty. Toxic stress has prolonged and intergenerational physiological, psychological, and community-level effects. West Warwick is a community deeply affected by toxic stress: too many people experience abuse, violence, and poverty. This leads to a cycle of poor health outcomes. A delegation from Kent County, including members from our Health Equity Zone, visited Tarpon Springs, FL to explore their designation as a “trauma-informed community.” In 2016, we will convene a working group to assess West Warwick’s readiness for such a community-wide approach.
Healthy Environments

Background

The environment of West Warwick can be enhanced to encourage physical activity.

**Assets**
- Residents noted community assets, such as the bike path and community garden.

**Prevent**
- Physical activity helps to prevent many chronic diseases, including diabetes.

**1.7**
- Average number of hours children on WIC watch television.

Health Equity Zone Response

**255**
- Survey respondents engaged to understand ways to improve physical activity.

**Leverage**
- Utilize community assets that increase physical activity and walkability.

**Create**
- Work with the city to improve and create spaces for people to be active.

Community Spotlight

Community Healthy Living Assessment

With 10 Community Healthy Living Assessments (CHLA) conducted throughout the Town of West Warwick, over 255 residents participated in conversations focused on physical activity and access to healthy food. Overall, residents appreciate our town's resources such as sidewalk connectivity, the bike path, River Walk, and the civic center. Many unique and creative ideas emerged from the CHLA process, including short-term and long-term strategies. These ideas included developing a calendar of public recreation programs and a plan to revitalize public transportation throughout West Warwick.
Health Equity Zone Participants

Backbone Agency: Thundermist Health Center
Lauren Nocero - AVP Program Development and Grants
Susan Jacobsen - Director of Health Equity Zone Initiatives
Victor Arias - West Warwick Health Equity Zone, Program Manager
Elaine Trujillo - Health Equity Zone Program Assistant
Annajane Yolken - Program Design, Implementation and Evaluation Manager
Eliza Sutton - Healthy Food Access Manager

Steering Committee
Senator Adam Satchell - West Warwick
Annajane Yolken - Thundermist Health Center
Cindy Singleton - WestBay Community Action
Denise Kaplin - YMCA of Greater Providence
Elaine Trujillo Correa - Thundermist Health Center
Eliza Sutton - Thundermist Health Center
Evans Hill - WestBay Community Action
Frederick Presley - Town of West Warwick
Gus Piazza - SouthPointe Christian Church
John Magiera - West Warwick Police
Karen Tarasevich - West Warwick School Department
Keith Remillard - West Warwick School Department
Lauren Nocera - Thundermist Health Center
Manny Murray - West Warwick Senior Center
Maureen Meyer - Thundermist Health Center
Michelle Harter - The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery Community Center
Neta Taylor - YMCA of Greater Providence
Owen Helen - The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery Community Center
Paul Salera - WestBay Community Action
Richard Silva - West Warwick Police Department
Sheri Griffin - Farm Fresh RI
Susan Jacobsen - Thundermist Health Center
Tanner Green - SouthPointe Christian Church
Tom Joyce - The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery

Overdose Prevention & Recovery Workgroup
Debbie Piazza - SouthPointe Christian Church
Elaine Trujillo - Thundermist Health Center
Gus Piazza - SouthPointe Christian Church
John Magiera - West Warwick Police Department
Jon-Paul Capece - Thundermist Health Center Board
Mark Knott - West Warwick Police Department
Michelle Harter - The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery Community Center
Owen Helen - The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery Community Center
Richard Silva - West Warwick Police Department
Susan Jacobsen - Thundermist Health Center
Tanner Green - SouthPointe Christian Church
Teddy Gribbin - SouthPointe Christian Church
Tom Joyce - The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery Community Center

Healthy Environments Workgroup
Annajane Yolken - Thundermist Health Center
Cara Agudelo - Thundermist Health Center
Denise Kaplin - Greater Providence of YMCA
Elaine Trujillo - Thundermist Health Center
Frederick Presley - Town of West Warwick
Jim Berston - YMCA of Greater Providence
Keith Remillard - West Warwick School Department
Libby Cato - Town of West Warwick
Neta Taylor-Post - YMCA of Greater Providence
Susan Jacobsen - Thundermist Health Center
Victor Arias - Thundermist Health Center

Teen Health Workgroup
Elaine Trujillo - Thundermist Health Center
Eric White - West Warwick School Department
Karen Dodd - West Warwick School Department
Karen Moniz - West Warwick School Department
Karen Tarasevich - West Warwick School Department
Keith Remillard - West Warwick School Department
Kimberly Mainex - West Warwick School Department
Patricia Keenan - West Warwick School Committee
Paul Salera - WestBay Community Action
Phil Solomon - West Warwick School Department
Susan Jacobsen - Thundermist Health Center
Tamarie Piecyk - Thundermist Health Center
Tina Richardson - WestBay Community Action
Victor Arias - Thundermist Health Center

Healthy Food Access Workgroup
Annajane Yolken - Thundermist Health Center
Anne McLaughlin - West Warwick Public Library
Biana Silvestri - Kent County YMCA
Cindy Singleton - WestBay Community Action
Cara Agudelo - Thundermist Health Center
Denis Fortier - Echo Valley
Donna Walker - Sodexo
Elaine Trujillo - Thundermist Health Center
Eliza Sutton - Thundermist Health Center
Erin Blais - Echo Valley
Evans Hill - WestBay Community Action
Gemma Gorham - Rhody Food On The Move
Keith Remillard - West Warwick School Department
Manny Murray - West Warwick Senior Center
Paul Salera - WestBay Community Action
Seannah Ballah - Thundermist Health Center
Sheri Griffin - Farm Fresh RI
Steve Stycos - WestBay Community Action
Susan Jacobsen - Thundermist Health Center
Thea Upham - Farm Fresh RI
Tom O’Donnell - West Warwick Public Library

Community Advisor’s/ Guest Speakers/Supporters
Abdelnasser Hussein - Islamic School of Rhode Island
AJ’s Restaurant
Biana Silvestri - YMCA of Greater Providence
Chris Irwin - Department of Corrections
Ed Sousa - Community
Father David Martins - RICares
Jacob Gribbin - Community
James Watson - SouthPointe Christian Church
Janice Bisceglion - The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery Community Center
Jay Messier - Community
Joanne Casale - Boneheads Wing Bar
Joelle Bayer - YMCA of Greater Providence
Jonathan Goyen - The Providence Center/Anchor Recovery
Judy Chick - West Warwick Prevention Coalition
Mary Bradshaw - Mind and Body Studios
Michael Cellucci - Cellucci’s Martial Arts and Fitness
Marc Starling - West Warwick housing authority
Oleg Kishkovich - Sanctuary Recovery
Richard Canning - Community
SNAP Outreach
Teddy Gribbin - Community

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