HEALTH EQUITY ZONE
WEST WARWICK

2018 Priority Areas
West Warwick
HEALTH EQUITY ZONE FRAMEWORK

Background

The HEZ will build infrastructure for equity.

Collaboration
Partnerships and community participation 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

Health Equity Zone Response

7
Residents who are community ambassadors that guide the HEZ

13
Community organizations who are partners of the Health Equity Zone

10
Unique Health Equity Zones across the state of Rhode Island

Community Spotlight

Community Ambassadors

The West Warwick Health Equity Zone (HEZ) hired 7 Community Ambassadors who are residents of West Warwick. The Ambassadors provide invaluable guidance the HEZ initiatives.

The Ambassadors act as community catalysts and use a “bottom-up” approach to raise awareness about health equity. The HEZ trains the Ambassadors about social justice, health equity, community engagement, and advocacy. Each Ambassador participates in HEZ priority-focused collaboratives, and works side-by-side with their group’s chair to ensure a community voice is steering the group’s work. Each Ambassador develops a community project to engage residents in the work of the HEZ. For example, the West Warwick Rocks project is a creative hide & seek activity that spreads kindness and connects kids, families, businesses, and all residents to each other and to the many assets & healthy environments in their city.
"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." - RI Health. The West Warwick Health Equity Zone aims to improve health equity by addressing upstream factors for particularly vulnerable populations in their city.

West Warwick is home to more than 29,000 people and is disproportionately affected by health disparities. Health disparities are preventable differences that are found in socially disadvantaged populations and are driven by upstream factors such as poverty, lack of transportation, toxic stress and abuse, lack of access to nutrition and recreation, and accidental drug overdose. In West Warwick, 22% of children live below poverty line and 21% are known survivors of child abuse; both numbers exceed the state and national average. 43% of WIC eligible people do not access benefits and there are only 2 grocery retailers located in the city. Only 4% of land is use for recreation space and public transportation is lacking. Lastly, West Warwick experienced an increase in opioid-related deaths in 2017 from 2016.

The overall mission of the West Warwick Health Equity Zone is to utilize collective impact and leverage the many community assets and resources to address health disparities in West Warwick by working to reduce preventable differences, or social determinants of health. After conducting a comprehensive review of available data, completing a community assessment, talking to community leaders, and consulting community ambassadors, the West Warwick Health Equity Zone decided to create 5 work-groups with the following focuses, Overdose Prevention & Recovery, Healthy Food Access, Healthy Environments, Teen Health, and Trauma-informed Communities.

Thundermist Health Center is the backbone agency. The Lead Partners are: the West Warwick Police Department, Westbay CAP, Kent County YMCA, West Warwick Public Schools, Farm Fresh RI, 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.
West Warwick

OVERDOSE PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

Background

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

- 6th: Highest rate of overdose deaths in Rhode Island in 2016, down from 3rd in 2015
- 10: Overdose deaths in West Warwick in 2017, 2 more than 2016
- 100x: Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is up to 100x more potent and responsible for drastic increase in OD's

Health Equity Zone Response

- 100%: Police trained in Naloxone rescue and carry Naloxone, drug that reverses overdoses
- 46: Non-fatal opioid related encounters by Behavioral Health Clinician working with WWPD
- 12: Residents with lived experience completed Peer Recovery Coach Academy

Community Spotlight

**Embed Behavioral Health Clinician in West Warwick Police Department**

The Providence Center, in partnership with West Warwick Police Department and Thundermist Health Center, implemented a pilot ride along Police Behavioral Health Clinician to facilitate diversion of individuals with SUD, with emphasis on the opioid epidemic and risk of overdose, from criminal/justice system involvement, and instead steer them toward treatment. The clinician increases capacity on the police force by training 100% of force, integrating SUD services, and coordinating care and community response through case conferencing and systems mapping design with the HEZ.
Many people in West Warwick do not have access to healthy, affordable, fresh food.

6 in 10
Eligible people are not enrolled in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program

<13%
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
Pop-up Farmers Markets were sponsored to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables

Screen
Train organizations to screen clients for food insecurity and refer to community resources

40% more
Provide "bonus bucks" for people using WIC and SNAP at farmers markets

Community Spotlight

Weekly & Pop-Up Farmers Markets
The West Warwick HEZ Food Access collaborative aims to increase consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in West Warwick, a community with limited access to transportation and retail food stores. In 2017, Westbay Farms and Thundermist Health Centers, hosted two weekly summer farmers markets, and Westbay CAP held 4 monthly markets. In addition, the HEZ collaborative sponsored 6 "pop-up" farmers markets designed specifically to increase access for people receiving senior coupons, SNAP benefits, and WIC program vouchers. These 'pop-ups' were held at 4 West Warwick locations: the Public Library, the Civic Center, the Senior Center & WIC office, and the HEZ Hub, and were supported by Farm Fresh RI.
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 CHLI 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.
West Warwick is a community deeply affected by trauma. Too many people experience abuse, violence, and poverty. Traumatic stress, or toxic stress, is a form of chronic and prolonged stress caused by adverse childhood experiences such as abuse, neglect, exposure to violence, or poverty. It has inter-generational and lifelong effects on an individual’s physical and mental health, with additional impacts on the social, emotional, and educational development of children and adolescents. The Teen Health work group identified reducing the effects of traumatic stress for students as a top priority with the goal of achieving funding to create a trauma-informed school community by 2021. They are piloting a two-part trauma-informed training for 40-50 high school educators, counselors, social workers, and school staff. The training will provide the knowledge to identify the symptoms of traumatic stress, tools to create a safe learning environment, and ways to mitigate the affects of secondary traumatic stress on the educator.
Health Equity Zone Participants

Backbone Agency: Thundermist Health Center
- Lauren Nocera - AVP Program Development and Grants
- Susan Jacobsen - Director of Health Equity Zone Initiatives
- Krista Handfield - West Warwick Health Equity Zone, Project Manager
- Denise Crooks - Health Equity Initiatives Evaluation

Steering Committee
- Senator Adam Satchell - West Warwick
- Anne McLaughlin - West Warwick Library
- Cindy Singleton - WestBay Community Action
- Charlotte Boudreau - YMCA of Greater Providence
- Chris Imbriglio - RI Department of Corrections
- Chris Durigan - Thundermist Health Center
- Dale Feldon - West Warwick Community Ambassador
- Donna Walker - Sodexo
- Earnest Zmyslinski - Town Manager of West Warwick
- Jason Messier - West Warwick Town Council
- John Magiera - West Warwick Police
- Karen Tarasevich - West Warwick School Department
- Keith Remillard - West Warwick School Department
- Krista Handfield - West Warwick Health Equity Zone
- Lauren Nocera - Thundermist Health Center
- Manny Murray - West Warwick Senior Center
- Major Knott - West Warwick Police
- Michelle Mitchell - West Warwick Community Ambassador
- Owen Heleen - 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
- Thea Upham - Farm Fresh RI
- Tom O'Donnell - West Warwick Library

Overdose Prevention & Recovery Workgroup
- Catherine Shultz - Anchor Recovery
- Chris Imbriglio - RI Department of Correction
- Father Dave Martins - Saint Therese Old Catholic Church/Anchor Recovery
- Dale Feldon - West Warwick Community Ambassador
- Deb Dettor - Anchor Recovery
- Diana Santos - Thundermist Health Center
- Dr. Laura Forman - Care New England
- Ed Sousa - Community Member
- Emma Romano - Thundermist Health Center
- Heather Seger - The Providence Center/West Warwick Police
- John Magiera - West Warwick Police Department
- Jon-Paul Capece - Open Doors
- Mark Knott - West Warwick Police Department
- Michael Adamowicz - Thundermist Health Center
- Dr. Michael Poshkus - Thundermist Health Center
- Michelle McKenzie - Prevent Overdose & Naloxone Intervention
- Michelle Mitchell - West Warwick Community Ambassador
- Rosalind Lewis - West Warwick Community Ambassador
- Susan Jacobsen - Thundermist Health Center
- Tanner Green - SouthPointe Christian Church
- Tanner Green - SouthPointe Christian Church

Teen Health Workgroup
- Ed Dwyer - 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 Maine - West Warwick School Department
- Michael Mascello - West Warwick School Department
- Patricia Keenan - West Warwick School Committee
- Paul Salera - WestBay Community Action
- Philip Solomon - West Warwick School Department
- Susan Jacobsen - Thundermist Health Center
- Tamarie Piecyk - Thundermist Health Center
- Tina Richardson - WestBay Community Action
- Todd Kirschcrofer - Thundermist Health Center

Healthy Food Access & Health Environment Workgroup
- Anne McLaughlin - West Warwick Public Library
- Charlotte Boudreau - Kent County YMCA
- Cindy Singleton - WestBay Community Action
- Coreen St. Jean - Be the Change
- Deb Nelson - Saints Rose and Clement Parish
- Donna Walker - Sodexo
- Joan Crollo - Westbay Farm
- Katie Mulligan - University of Rhode Island
- Keith Remillard - West Warwick School Department
- Linda Garvin - West Warwick Community Ambassador
- Manny Murray - West Warwick Senior Center
- Paul Salera - WestBay Community Action
- Peter Prak - Westbay Community Action
- Sheri Griffin - Farm Fresh RI
- Stephanie Bush - University of Rhode Island
- Steve Stycos - WestBay Community Action
- Susan Jacobsen - Thundermist Health Center
- Tara Cimini - Thundermist Health Center
- Thea Upham - Farm Fresh RI
- Tom O'Donnell - West Warwick Library

Community Supporters & Groups
- Alateen
- Alcoholic’s Anonymous
- Chris Imbriglio - Department of Corrections
- Geoff Capraro, MD, MPH
- Kent County YMCA
- Maria Sailent - Community
- Mary Bradshaw - Mind and Body Studios
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Nancy Griffin-Reed - Community
- Prevent Overdose & Naloxone Intervention
- SNAP Outreach
- SMART Recovery
- RiteAid Pharmacy
- Trans Health Access Team - Thundermist Health Center
- URI Expanded Food and Nutrition Program
- West Bay Farm
- West Warwick Community Ambassador Group
- West Warwick Parks & Recreation
- West Warwick Town Council

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