



This community profile is intended to provide insight on the conditions – both strengths and challenges – of a particular neighborhood through a variety of data gathered between 2010-2012*. Bridges seeks to engage the collective resources of this community and take action to improve conditions for children and families.

The Pahokee neighborhood that Bridges targets has approximately 1,600 households and a population of 4,527 residents. In 2010, approximately 16% of the population was 0 to 8 years old (715 children).

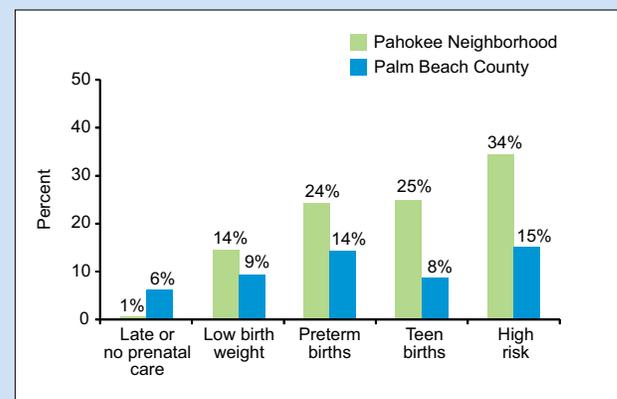
Census Tract = 80.02 Population: 4,527 Population 0–8 years: 715

The first goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children born healthy. Children born in the Pahokee neighborhood in 2010 fared worse than children in Palm Beach County on all birth indicators except prenatal care (Figure 9-1). In 2010, 14% of infants were low birth weight, and 24% were born preterm. In addition, 34% of births in the Pahokee neighborhood were considered high risk. Approximately 1% of women received late or no prenatal care, and 25% of births were to teen mothers.

The infant mortality rate in the Pahokee neighborhood was more than double that of Palm Beach County. 14.4 infants died for every 1,000 live births in the neighborhood compared with 5.5 in Palm Beach County.

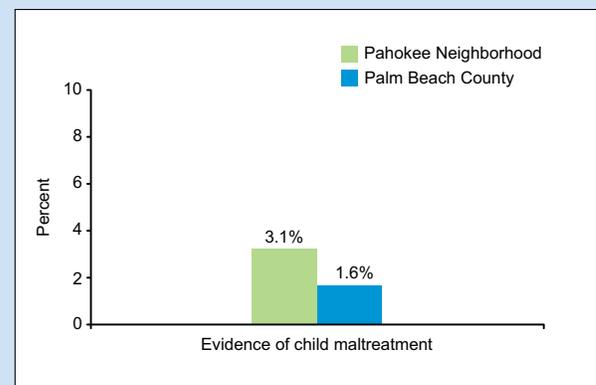
The second goal of the Bridges initiative is to make sure children are in safe and nurturing environments and remain free from abuse and neglect. Evidence of child maltreatment was higher in the Pahokee neighborhood than in the county (Figure 9-2). Data provided by the Department of Children and Families of Palm Beach County show that 3.1% of children in the neighborhood had evidence of maltreatment compared with 1.6% of children in Palm Beach County overall.

Figure 9-1. Prenatal Care and Births in the Pahokee Neighborhood (2010)



Source: Florida Department of Health

Figure 9-2. Evidence of Child Maltreatment in the Pahokee Neighborhood (2010)



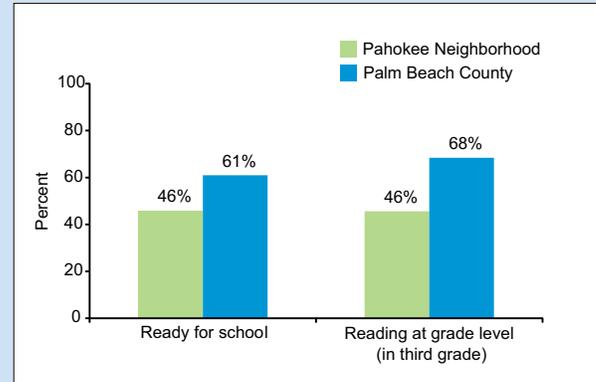
Source: Department of Children and Families in Palm Beach County. Note: Only 60% of children with evidence of maltreatment could be linked to a physical residence and geocoded to the neighborhood level.

*Information contained in the profile represents a point in time; perceptions and staff insight may not express the views of the entire community.

The third goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children who enter kindergarten ready to learn. In 2010, 46% of children in the Pahokee neighborhood were ready for school at kindergarten entry compared with 61% in Palm Beach County (Figure 9-3).

The fourth goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children who are proficient readers in third grade. In 2010, 46% of children in the Pahokee neighborhood were reading at grade level in third grade compared with 68% in Palm Beach County (Figure 9-3).

Figure 9-3. School Readiness and Third-Grade Reading Skills in the Pahokee Neighborhood (2010)



Source: Palm Beach County School District.
 Note: Measured by the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) and the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).

Pahokee Neighborhood: At A Glance

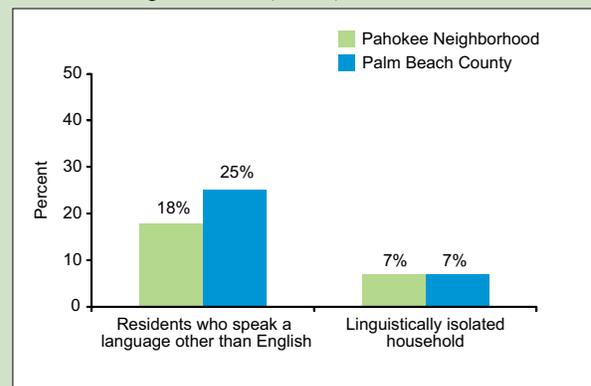
Race & Ethnicity. The racial composition in this neighborhood is 66% black and 24% white, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Just over one quarter of residents identified their ethnicity as being Hispanic (26%). Most individuals served by Bridges at Pahokee describe their ethnicity as African American (61%), or Mexican (34%).

Language. (Figure 9-4). Among Pahokee neighborhood residents, 18% reported speaking a language other than English at home, and 7% of households are considered linguistically isolated. Linguistically isolated households are those where no one 14 years old or older can speak English fluently.

Education. High school graduates accounted for 65% of the population in the Pahokee neighborhood compared with 87% in Palm Beach County, which indicates 35% of residents did not complete high school or obtain a GED. Among Pahokee residents 25 years old or older, 11% completed an associates degree or higher compared with 40% in Palm Beach County.

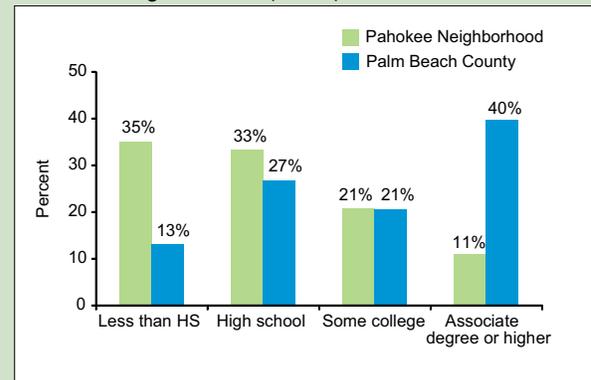
Housing & Household Composition. In this neighborhood, 49% of households are owner-occupied and the remaining 51% are renter-occupied. According to census data, 87% of residents report residing in the same household as one year ago (compared with 85% for Palm Beach County). More than half (51%) of the children live in single-parent households compared with 37% in Palm Beach County.

Figure 9-4. Language of Residents and Households in the Pahokee Neighborhood (2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 9-5. Highest Education Attained by Residents in the Pahokee Neighborhood (2010)



Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

Economic Indicators:

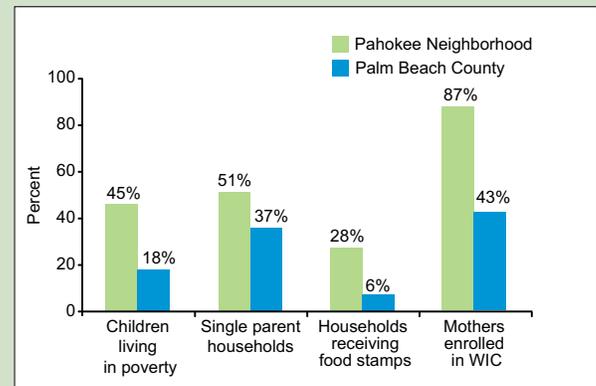
The median household income was \$28,807 compared with \$58,709 in Palm Beach County. The unemployment rate in the neighborhood was 19% compared with 9% in Palm Beach County.

Among children in the Pahokee neighborhood, 45% lived below the federal poverty level in 2010 compared with 18% in Palm Beach County. (Figure 9-6).

Households receiving food stamps accounted for 28% of the neighborhood compared with 6% in Palm Beach County.

Births to mothers enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program was 87% in the Pahokee neighborhood and 43% in Palm Beach County. (Figure 9-6).

Child and Family Socioeconomics in the Pahokee Neighborhood (2010)



Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

WIC provides vouchers for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women, as well as to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

Neighborhood Strengths, Existing Resources, and Partners

Staff at Bridges identified many resources and supports as the community's strengths, including the many collaborations and partnerships they have forged throughout the community, including with the public library, elementary school, recreation center, and several child care providers. In addition, Bridges has partnered with the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO) in launching a summer reading program called "Books on Patrol."

Bridges at Pahokee is located in western Palm Beach County, and is a small rural city compared to cities in eastern Palm Beach County along the Atlantic Ocean. Pahokee is notable for agriculture, farming and football. Pahokee High School football program has consistently ranked among the state's best and several local athletes have been selected to play football in the National Football League (NFL). Bridges at Pahokee is currently using office space at the Florida Community Health Center. The site is nestled among single family resident homes, as well as the bulk of the community health and medical providers.



Bridges staff described specific strengths that include:

- This is a close-knit community. Most people in this community have lived here for a long time and tend to live close to their relatives. Census data shows that there is low mobility, with approximately 87% of residents reporting to be in the same household as one year ago (compared with 85% for Palm Beach County).
- This community has family-friendly events periodically that are open to the public. Examples include, Q-Fest, Pahokee Heritage Music Festival, Annual Reading Conference, and "I Love Pahokee Day."
- Members of the community are one of the greatest strengths and are dedicated to improving the conditions for families and their young children. People in this community are not afraid to ask for help when they need it. Residents are willing to work together to improve neighborhood conditions.

There is a sense of community pride and belonging in Pahokee where people come together and look out for each other.

- People in this community regularly attend a local church or faith-based organization, and churches are willing to collaborate with Bridges in its endeavors. In particular, the large number of churches (n = 18) and a strong faith are considered core strengths. Churches in Pahokee are leaders and advocates in the community and the community cares what they have to say. Churches have been instrumental in helping Bridges to recruit fathers for the "All Pro Dad" fatherhood engagement effort, where Bridges offers activities to facilitate an opportunity for fathers spend quality time with their children. Churches have also been generous in allowing Bridges to use their facilities to host events, activities, and meeting individually with parents. For example, Bridges at Pahokee hosted the "It takes a Village" event at United Methodist Church.

There are collaborative efforts and partnerships happening in the Pahokee neighborhood.

- **Businesses are willing to collaborate with Bridges.** Circle S Pharmacy in Pahokee allows Bridges to post information about prenatal care and other health topics at the store. The Pahokee Rotary Club sponsored a kids fishing tournament where they reserved spots for Bridges families; the event provided participating children with a fishing pole, tackle box, and fishing instructions from professionals.
- **The local elementary school (Pahokee Elementary School)** views collaborating with Bridges as important. At the beginning of each school year, Bridges at Pahokee does a "meet and greet" with teachers to either reconnect or introduce what Bridges has to offer for families and children. Bridges participates in family literacy and family involvement nights, so families to understand how they can be involved their children's education.
- **Bridges at Pahokee collaborates with the Loula V. York Public Library** to offer Children's Story Hour to Bridges families and children. Pahokee Parks and Recreation Department allows Bridges use of its facility for Family Literacy, parent child activities, and other events.

The map (Figure 9-7) shows the census tract area that Bridges at Pahokee targets for services as well as the location of the Bridges site. It also includes a one-half-mile area outside the census tract to show potential resources available to families living in the Pahokee neighborhood. The services indicated in the map and descriptions below were those identified in a scan of area resources using 211 online registry, accessible registries for licensed child care providers, health, schools, libraries, parks, and locally developed resource guides that were believed to be current at the time the resource list was developed in fall of 2012. This may not represent all area resources.

Services and resources exist in the Pahokee area, these include:

- Family planning/pregnancy prevention
- Non-medical resources for expectant parents
- Pediatricians/family medical practices
- Counseling/mental health services
- Parks/playgrounds/recreational facilities.

There are two social services or nonprofit agencies in this area shown in light blue on the map. Basic needs services such as food and clothing are available through New Hope Charities and Glades Area Pantry.

Seven organizations provide health care or medical services in this larger area (shown in yellow on the map). Routine health care services for adults and children are available through the Florida Community Health Center. Pahokee Pediatrics is also located near the Bridges site. Bridges at Pahokee has created a monthly dinner workshop, Dine with Doctor, that provides information on health topics by a local pediatrician.

Four parks and other recreational facilities are shown on the map in purple. These facilities include the Pahokee Department of Recreation (where some Bridges activities take place), Duncan Padgett Park, Paul Rardin Park, and the Pahokee Marina. Pahokee

borders the largest fresh water lake in the state of Florida, Lake Okeechobee.

Six educational resources are shown on the map in green. This includes the Loula V. York Public Library and Pahokee Elementary School, which partners with Bridges at Pahokee to create a combined calendar of events for families in the community, including marketing the Triple P activities offered at Bridges.

Bridges at Pahokee partners with several child care providers including the following: Morrison Family Child Care, Butler Family Child Care, and Bright Ideas Early Learning Center. There are a total of 45 licensed child care providers in the larger area. Of those, 31% participate in the Quality Counts system. Quality Counts is an early care and education improvement and support system that is designed to enhance the quality of child care so that children birth to five years of age are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school.

Figure 2-7. Greater Pahokee Neighborhood



Challenges to Improving Child Outcomes

Staff identified several challenges to improving outcomes for children and families in the Pahokee neighborhood:

More than one-third of the births in the Pahokee neighborhood were considered high risk (compared to 15% in the county). Additionally, 25% of births were to teen mothers; this is more than three times higher than Palm Beach County overall.

There is a high rate of unemployment. The unemployment rate in the Pahokee neighborhood is more than double the rate seen in Palm Beach County overall (19% in Pahokee neighborhood, while 9% in Palm Beach County). In recent years, several locally owned businesses closed, as well as other larger area employers including the Glades Correction Facility, U.S. Sugar Co-Op Bryant Plant, Glades General Hospital, and Sago Palm Juvenile Detention Center, resulting in fewer employment opportunities for residents.

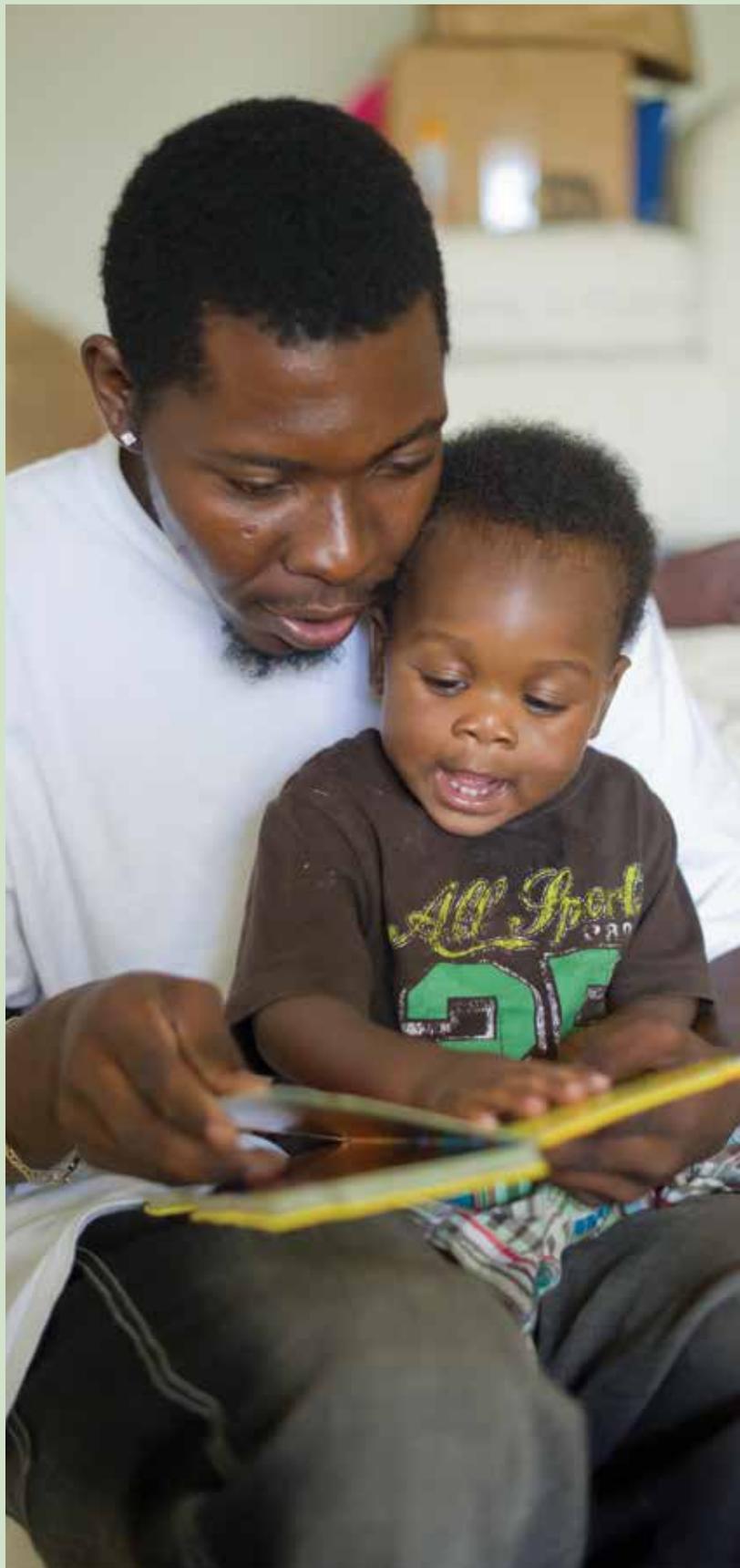
Families struggle to provide the basic needs for their children. Census data shows in 2010, 45% children in the Pahokee neighborhood lived below the federal poverty line.

The average income in Pahokee is much lower than in the rest of Palm Beach County; the median household income in the Pahokee neighborhood is \$28,807 compared to \$58,709 in Palm Beach County.

Natural disasters destroyed many homes during hurricane Wilma in 2005 and many of them were never repaired or rebuilt.

While there are many licensed child care providers, access is difficult for most due to the cost and the eligibility requirements for child care subsidies.

There are limited opportunities to develop partnerships and collaborate since Pahokee is a small city and there are not as many resources. Pahokee is approximately 45 miles away from major cities in eastern Palm Beach County. Pahokee residents, in particular, often need to travel to Belle Glade, or even eastern Palm Beach County, for some services, which can be a challenge without reliable transportation.



Participation Rates: Of the families who visited Pahoee Bridges,

- 41% participated in parent-child activities.
- 26% participated in Triple P individual sessions, groups, or seminars.
- 100% participated in navigation activities.
- 49% participated in adult education or capacity-building workshops and activities.

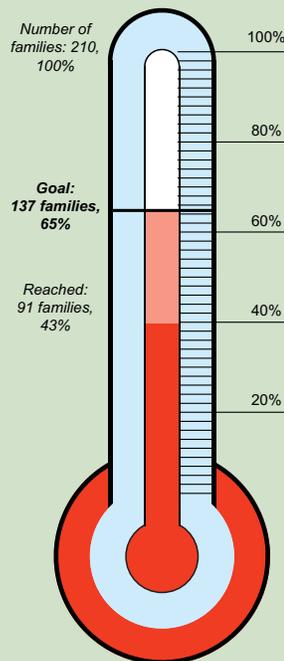
Service Reach (between June 2011 and December 2012):

- 212 parents of children 0–17 participated in services or activities at Bridges at Pahoee.
- 196 families participated, and of those families, 81% had children ages 0–5 (n = 158).

—Of those families with children 0–5, 58% resided in a target neighborhood (n = 91).

- 210 families with children age 0–5 lived in the Pahoee neighborhood during the 2010 census.
- 91 families with children age 0–5 who live in the Pahoee neighborhood participated in activities at Bridges.

—Therefore, we estimate Bridges has been successful in reaching approximately **43%** of the families with children 0-5 in the Pahoee neighborhood thus far.



Bridges works hard to meet the needs of families in order to enhance parents’ ability to promote the health, early development, safety, and school success of their children. The Bridges model is inspired by the Harlem Children’s Zone core principle of saturating a neighborhood with information and services to improve the environment for children and families living there. To achieve this saturation, Bridges hopes to reach at least 65% of families with young children 0–5 living in the neighborhood and cultivate an environment where children are healthy, safe, and ready to succeed in school.





Serving Pahokee since January 2011.

Bridges at Pahokee offers activities to reach the goals of the Bridges initiative, such as outreach, parent support and navigation. Examples of some of these activities include the following:

- Child development through parent-child activities to promote early literacy, social, and motor skills for kindergarten readiness: Children’s Story Hour, “Cooking with Kids,” “Creative Crafts,” and “Families Reading Together”
- Individual and group parent support and education: Triple P, “Dine with Doctor”
- Developmental screenings using Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) for children age 0–5
- Navigation services - connecting families with needed resources and helpful opportunities: FL ACCESS community partner (help with food, Medicaid, and cash assistance applications), Family Resource Library, car seat safety check/installations, and Business Center (allows members use of a computer, fax, copy, & notary service)
- Adult education and capacity-building workshops: Family Literacy and GED classes; “What to Expect” and “Where 2 Turn 2” workshops featuring available community resources.
- Community engagement: Strong Starts Community Dialogue Circles, Families Coming Together – “Planting Seeds of Love,” Bridges Block Party



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Bridges is a program of

CONTACT INFORMATION:
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Pahokee, FL 33476
561-924-9224



Monday–Thursday: 9am–7pm
Evening events, activities, and appointments
available when scheduled between 5:30 pm–7 pm
Friday–Saturday: 9am–4pm
Office hours may vary
based on scheduled community events.