



BRIDGES at WEST PALM BEACH

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 West Palm Beach neighborhood that Bridges targets has approximately 1,249 households and a population of 3,404 residents. In 2010, approximately 16% of the population was 0 to 8 years old (551 children).

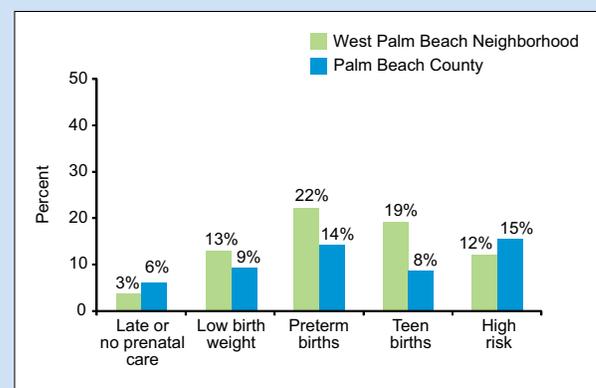
Census Tracts = 22 & 24 Population: 3,404 Population 0–8 years: 551

The first goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children born healthy. Children born in the West Palm Beach neighborhood in 2010 fared worse to children in Palm Beach County on most birth indicators (Figure 4-1). In 2010, 13% of infants were low birth weight, and 22% were born preterm. Twelve percent of births in the neighborhood were considered high risk. Approximately 3% of women received late or no prenatal care, and 19% of births were to teen mothers.

The infant mortality rate in the West Palm Beach neighborhood was higher than in Palm Beach County. 6.7 infants died for every 1,000 live births in West Palm Beach compared with 5.5 in Palm Beach County.

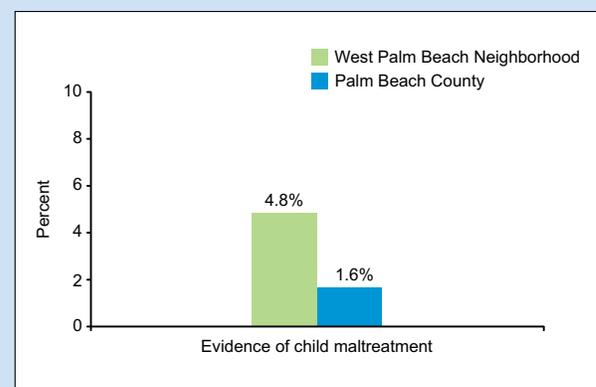
The second goal of the Bridges initiative is to make sure children are in safe and nurturing environments and remain free from abuse and neglect. Evidence of child maltreatment was higher in the West Palm Beach neighborhood than in the county (Figure 4-2). Data provided by the Department of Children and Families of Palm Beach County show that 4.8% of children in the neighborhood had evidence of maltreatment compared with 1.6% of children in Palm Beach County overall.

Figure 4-1. Prenatal Care and Births in the West Palm Beach Neighborhood (2010)



Source: Florida Department of Health

Figure 4-2. Evidence of Child Maltreatment in the West Palm Beach Neighborhood (2010).



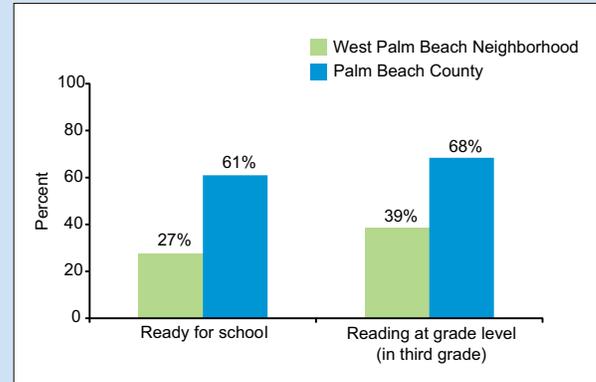
Source: Department of Children and Families in Palm Beach County. Note: Only 60% of children with evidence of maltreatment could be linked to a physical residence and geocoded to the neighborhood level.

*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, 27% of children in the West Palm Beach neighborhood were ready for school at kindergarten entry compared with 61% of children in Palm Beach County (Figure 4-3).

The fourth goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children who are proficient readers in third grade. In 2010, 39% of children in the West Palm Beach neighborhood were reading at grade level in third grade compared with 68% of children in Palm Beach County (Figure 4-3).

Figure 4-3. School Readiness and Third-Grade Reading Skills in the West Palm Beach Neighborhood (2010)



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

West Palm Beach Neighborhood: At A Glance

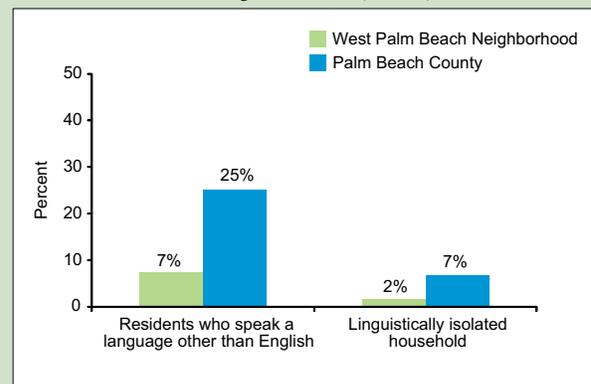
Race & Ethnicity. The racial composition in this neighborhood is 90% black and 6% white, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. The majority of residents in this neighborhood are non-Hispanic; just 5% identified their ethnicity as being Hispanic. The majority of individuals served by Bridges at West Palm Beach describe themselves as African American (82%).

Language. Among West Palm Beach neighborhood residents, 7% reported speaking a language other than English at home, and only 1% 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 64% of the population in the West Palm Beach neighborhood compared with 87% in Palm Beach County, which indicates 36% of residents did not complete high school or obtain a GED. Among West Palm Beach neighborhood residents 25 years old or older, 17% completed an associates degree or higher compared with 40% in Palm Beach County.

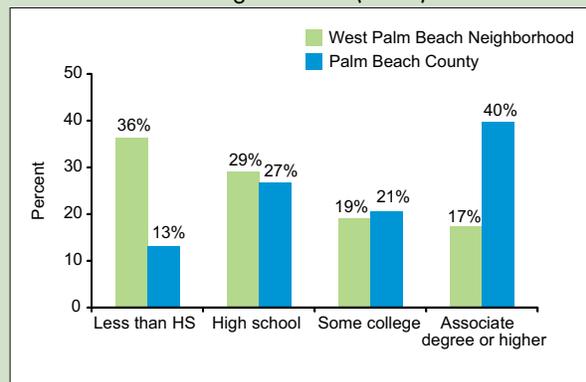
Housing & Household Composition. In this neighborhood, 21% of households are owner-occupied and the remaining 79% are renter-occupied. According to census data, 63% of residents report residing in the same household as one year ago (compared with 85% for Palm Beach County). Most children (83%) live in single-parent households compared with 37% in Palm Beach County.

Figure 4-4. Language of Residents and Households in the West Palm Beach Neighborhood (2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 4-5. Highest Education Attained by Residents in the West Palm Beach Neighborhood (2010)



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

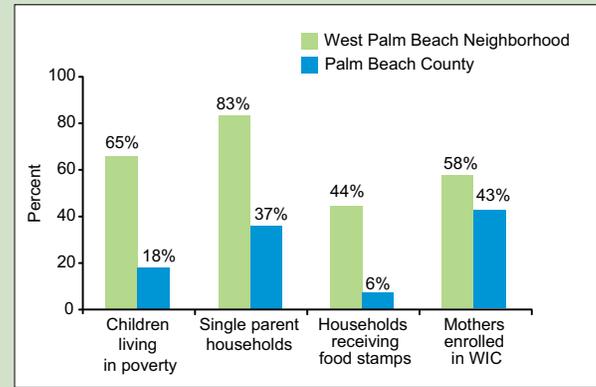
The median household income was \$18,783, compared with \$58,709 in Palm Beach County. The unemployment rate in the neighborhood was 24% compared with 9% in Palm Beach County.

Among children in the West Palm Beach neighborhood, 65% lived below the federal poverty level in 2010 compared with 18% in Palm Beach County. (Figure 4-6).

Households receiving food stamps accounted for 44% of the neighborhood compared with 6% in the county.

Births to mothers enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program was 58% in the West Palm Beach neighborhood and 43% in Palm Beach County.

Figure 4-6. Child and Family Socioeconomics in West Palm Beach 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 collaborations and partnership with the Northwest Community Consortium, which encompasses local churches, nonprofits, and civic organizations that are dedicated to improving the quality of life in this particular West Palm Beach neighborhood.

Bridges at West Palm Beach is located in a renovated apartment building beside Payne Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church in an area known as the Northwest Historic District. The Northwest neighborhood was first settled in 1894 when blacks were relocated to West Palm Beach; this area served as the city's segregated all-black community until 1960. The Northwest neighborhood remains a predominantly black residential area with a diverse mix of single-family homes and small apartment buildings.



Bridges staff described specific strengths that include:

- **This community has family-friendly events** periodically that are open to the public. Recent examples include the Heart & Soul Fest, Teen Awareness Fair, Easter Egg Hunt, and Kids' Day Out activities via Coleman Park.
- **This is a close-knit community.** Although people may move frequently, most people have lived in this community for a long time and tend to live close to their relatives.
- **Bridges members have become ambassadors and advocates** in their community. Some Bridges members have become engaged in the Community Consortium, where residents are actively involved and lead in the community improvement efforts. Bridges members have also been involved in the Strong Start Community Dialogue groups, which led to an action plan of hosting a community mixer to raise awareness about promoting healthy births.

There are collaborative efforts and partnerships happening in the West Palm Beach neighborhood.

- **Many services and activities provided by Bridges are also co-located** throughout the community including at Payne Chapel, West Palm Beach Athletic League, YWCA Child Care Center, and Salvation Army.
- **There are 37 churches shown on the map on page 5, including the Payne Chapel AME Church where Bridges is located.** Churches play a significant role in this community and they have been willing to collaborate with Bridges. Several churches in the West Palm Beach neighborhood are members of the Northwest Community Consortium where they partner with each other, as well as other organizations seeking to improve neighborhood conditions. Specifically, these churches coordinate feeding programs, health fairs, youth development, crime prevention, capacity building and self-sufficiency programs.
- **Local government officials have shown support of the mission and endeavors of the Bridges.** Mayor of West Palm Beach, Jeri Muoio, volunteered at the 2012 Back to School Bash where she handed out backpacks and spoke with the children and families who attended. Also, the city's Parks and Recreation Department and Community Revitalization Agency are involved in Back to School Bash and partnered with Bridges to provide activities for children and families.
- **Bridges at West Palm Beach collaborated with the West Palm Beach Park and Recreation Department** in the Fit Kids Triathlon that over 200 families attended at Gaines Park. Staff used the opportunity to distribute helpful information and tips about early childhood health issues.
- **Local nonprofits frequently communicate and share resources.** Bridges at West Palm Beach collaborates with WHIN nurses to offer a monthly workshop, "Sweet Pea Baby and Me" for pregnant women and their partners, as well as parents with children less than a year old. Additionally, in partnership with each other – Urban Youth Impact, Bridges, and Greater Antioch Baptist Church – offer a parent support group, "Women Helping Women."
- **Some local media has been helpful to Bridges.** For example, X102.3 FM featured events that Bridges at West Palm Beach organized (e.g., car wash, family festival block party).
- **Several local businesses have been supportive of Bridges.** For example, Karlene's Spa and Hair Salon offered haircuts and styling for students at the Back to School Bash free of charge. Bridges also connects with local restaurants to offer discounts for families who are Bridges members, including: Frederick's Island Shack, DD's Chicken and Seafood, Queen of Sheeba, Sports Page Bar & Grill, and others.
- **Local elementary schools view collaborating with Bridges as important.** Bridges at West Palm Beach collaborates with UB Kinsey / Palmview Elementary to support students with behavioral issues through Triple P services. Bridges offers individual Triple P sessions and seminars on-site at UB Kinsey / Palmview Elementary to make it easier for parents to access these services and supports, as well as connect to Bridges.

The map (Figure 4-7) shows the census tract area that Bridges at West Palm Beach 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 West Palm Beach 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 map may not represent all area resources.

Services and resources exist in the West Palm Beach area include the following:

- Medical care for pregnant women
- Non-medical resources for expectant parents
- Pediatricians/family medical practices
- Counseling/mental health services
- Licensed child care providers
- Parks/playgrounds/recreational facilities.

There are 26 social services or nonprofit agencies in the West Palm Beach area shown in light blue on the map, including: Community Action Program, Center for Family Service, New Hope Charities, and Vickers House.

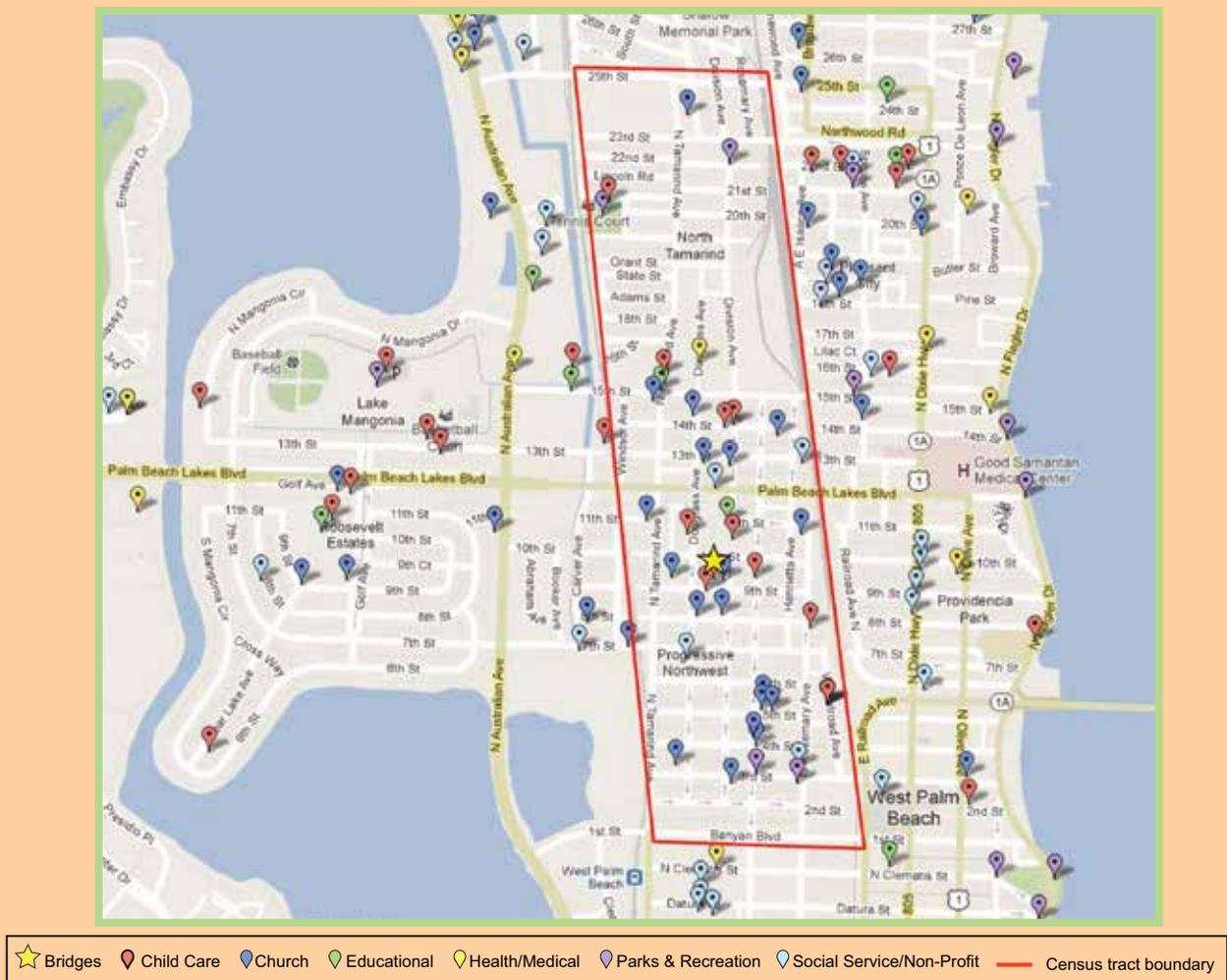
Eleven organizations provide health care or medical services shown in yellow on the map. Some include: Good Samaritan Medical Center, OB/GYN specialists of the Palm Beaches, Florida Resource Center for Women and Children, Legacy Behavioral Health, and Multilingual Psychotherapy Centers. There are also several drug and alcohol abuse treatment providers and peer support programs located within the community.

Twelve parks and recreational facilities are shown on the map in purple. Some of the park and recreation facilities in the West Palm Beach area include: Gaines Park Community Center, Coleman Park, Pleasant City Community Center, and the Waterfront Commons.

Eight educational facilities are in the larger area surrounding the West Palm Beach neighborhood including Bridges school partner, U.B. Kinsey / Palmview Elementary, Center for Creative Education, Roosevelt Middle School, and the Mandel Public Library (shown on the map in green). Bridges at West Palm Beach has partnered with Palm Beach State College, and a representative comes to Bridges to meet with members interested in registering for classes, applying for financial aid, receiving a career assessment, and preparing for GED.

Bridges at West Palm Beach works with several child care providers. Some of them include: Apostolic CDC, Faith's Place Center for Education, Little Kings and Queens, and YWCA Child Care. There are a total of 26 licensed child care providers in the larger area. Of those, 27% 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 4-7. Greater West Palm Beach Neighborhood





Challenges to Improving Child Outcomes

Staff identified several challenges to improving outcomes for children and families in the West Palm Beach neighborhood:

Unemployment is high. In the West Palm Beach neighborhood the unemployment rate is 24% compared with 9% in Palm Beach County. Further, 36% of residents do not have a high school degree or equivalent.

Families move frequently due to lack of employment and affordable housing. Census data showed that 63% of residents reported to be in the same household as last year (compared with 85% for Palm Beach County), suggesting that more than one-third of residents moved at least once in the 2010 year.

The percent of single-parent households is more than twice as high in the West Palm Beach neighborhood (83%) than in Palm Beach County (37%). Families with fewer resources, including many single-parent households, are at higher risk for stress, poor physical and mental health, and other problems that can affect parenting.

Evidence of child maltreatment in the West Palm Beach neighborhood (4.8%) was three times higher than the rate in Palm Beach County (1.6%).

The average income in the West Palm Beach neighborhood is much lower than in the rest of Palm Beach County; the median household income in the West Palm Beach neighborhood is \$18,783 compared to \$58,709 in Palm Beach County. Nearly two-thirds of children in the West Palm Beach neighborhood lived below the federal poverty line during 2010.

There is limited awareness among families of affordable resources and services within the local area. Additionally transportation to services outside the immediate area presents a challenge, according to Bridges staff.

The neighborhood is known for its frequency of crime, and recently actions taken by the Northwest Community Consortium led to them receiving a federal grant that provides additional security patrol officers who have taken an active presence in areas of the West Palm Beach neighborhood.

Participation Rates: Of the families who visited West Palm Beach Bridges,

- 54% participated in parent-child activities.
- 38% participated in Triple P individual sessions, groups, or seminars.
- 100% participated in navigation activities.
- 36% participated in adult education or capacity-building workshops and activities.

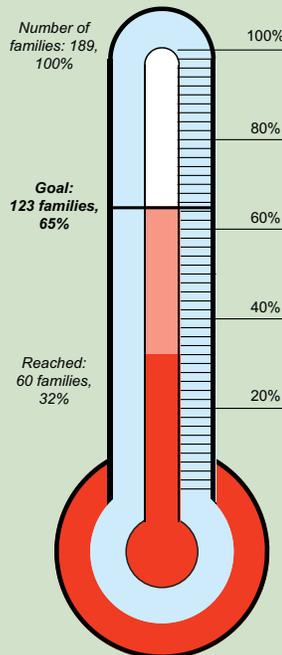
Service Reach (between January 2012 and December 2012):

- 139 parents of children 0–17 participated in services or activities at Bridges at West Palm Beach.
- 120 families participated, and of those families, 75% had children ages 0–5 (n = 90).
—Of those families with children 0–5, 56% resided in a target neighborhood (n = 50).

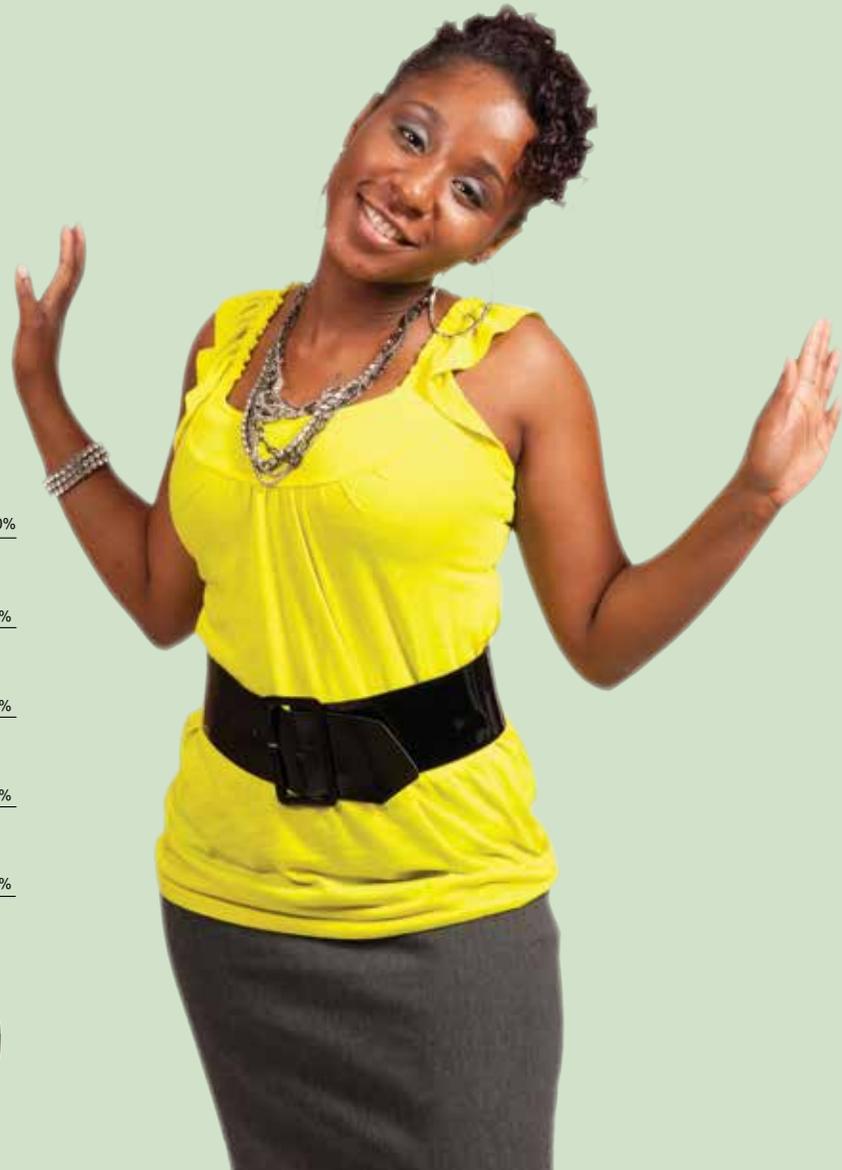
- 189 families with children age 0–5 lived in the West Palm Beach neighborhood during the 2010 census.

- 60 families with children age 0–5 who live in the West Palm Beach neighborhood participated in activities at Bridges.

—Therefore, we estimate Bridges has been successful in reaching approximately **32%** of the families with children 0-5 in the West Palm Beach 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 West Palm Beach since
January 2012.**

Bridges at West Palm Beach 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: Raise Me Up / Children's Zone, Family Crafts, WEE Read
- Individual and group parent support and education: Triple P, Sweet Pea Baby and Me, Women Helping Women
- Developmental screenings using the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) for children ages 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: Parents Learn Too (Literacy, GED, Career Assessment, etc.)
- Community engagement: Strong Starts Community Dialogue Circles, Family Night, Father to Father Breakfast, Family Festival Block Party, Community Baby Showers, Healthy Births Mixer



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Bridges is a program of

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Monday-Friday: 9am-7pm
Evening events, activities, and appointments
available when scheduled between 5:30pm-7pm
Saturdays: 10am-2pm
Office hours may vary
based on scheduled community events.

