



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 Highland neighborhood that Bridges targets has approximately 1,311 households and a population of 4,628 residents. In 2010, approximately 16% of the population was 0 to 8 years old (753 children).

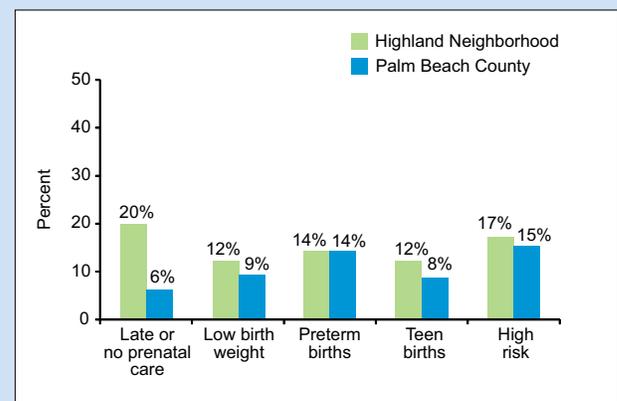
Census Tract = 44.02 Population: 4,628 Population 0–8 years: 753

The first goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children born healthy. Children born in the Highland neighborhood in 2010 fared worse than children in Palm Beach County on most birth indicators (Figure 6-1). In 2010, 12% of infants were low birth weight, and 14% were born preterm. Approximately 17% of births in the Highland neighborhood were considered high risk. Twenty percent of women received late or no prenatal care, and 12% of births were to teen mothers.

The infant mortality rate in the Highland neighborhood was similar to that of Palm Beach County. 5.8 infants died for every 1,000 live births in the neighborhood compared with 5.5 in Palm Beach County.

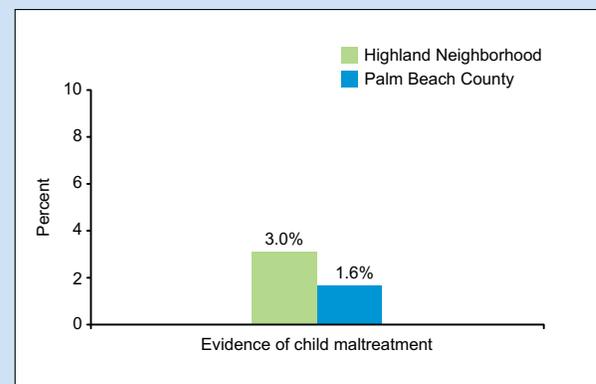
The second goal of the Bridges initiative is to make sure children are in safe and nurturing environments and remain free from abuse and neglect. Evidence of child maltreatment was higher in the Highland neighborhood than in the county (Figure 6-2). Data provided by the Department of Children and Families of Palm Beach County show that 3.0% of children in the neighborhood had evidence of maltreatment compared with 1.6% of children in Palm Beach County overall.

Figure 6-1. Prenatal Care and Births in the Highland Neighborhood (2010)



Source: Florida Department of Health

Figure 6-2. Evidence of Child Maltreatment in the Highland Neighborhood (2010)



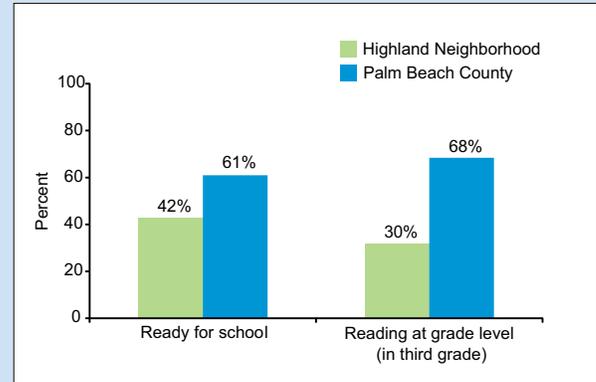
Source: Department of Children and Families in Palm Beach County. Note: Only 60% of children with evidence of maltreatment could be linked to a physical residence and geocoded to the neighborhood level.

*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, 42% of children in the Highland neighborhood were ready for school at kindergarten entry compared with 61% in Palm Beach County (Figure 6-3).

The fourth goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children who are proficient readers in third grade. In 2010, 30% of children in the Highland neighborhood were reading at grade level in third grade compared with 68% in Palm Beach County (Figure 6-3).

Figure 6-3. School Readiness and Third-Grade Reading Skills in the Highland Neighborhood (2010)



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

Highland Neighborhood: At A Glance

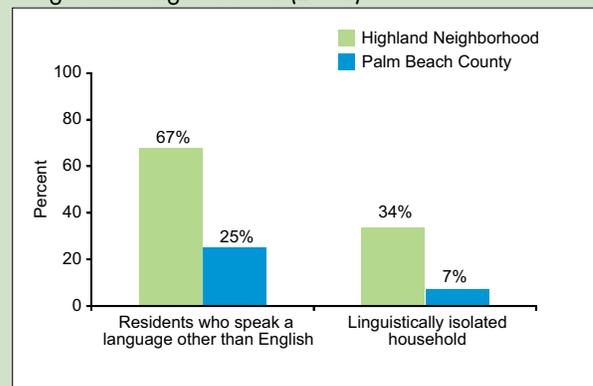
Race & Ethnicity. The racial composition in this neighborhood is 51% white and 20%, black according to the 2010 U.S. Census. In addition, 28% of this neighborhood classified their race as either: American Indian or Alaskan Native (10%), some other race (12%), and multi-racial (6%). Over half of residents in this neighborhood identified their ethnicity as being Hispanic (55%). The majority of individuals served by Bridges at Highland describe their ethnicity as Guatemalan (43%), Mexican (12%), or Haitian (12%).

Language. Among Highland neighborhood residents, 67% reported speaking a language other than English at home, and 34% 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 58% of the population in the Highland neighborhood compared with 87% in Palm Beach County, which indicates 42% of residents did not complete high school or obtain a GED. Among Highland residents 25 years old or older, 9% completed an associates degree or higher compared with 40% in Palm Beach County.

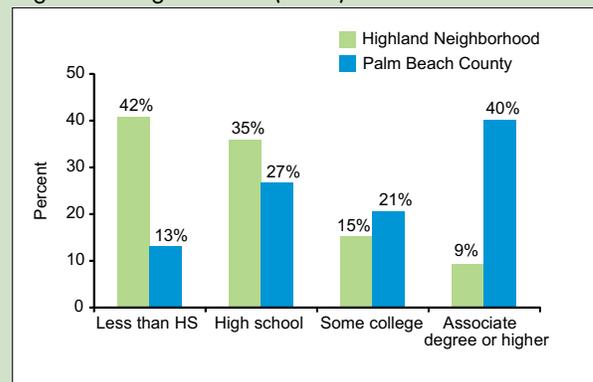
Housing & Household Composition. In this neighborhood, 33% of households are owner-occupied and the remaining 67% are renter-occupied. According to census data, 75% of residents report residing in the same household as one year ago (compared with 85% for Palm Beach County). Over half (53%) of the children lived in single-parent households compared with 37% in Palm Beach County.

Figure 6-4. Language of Residents and Households in the Highland Neighborhood (2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 6-5. Highest Education Attained by Residents in the Highland Neighborhood (2010)



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

Economic Indicators:

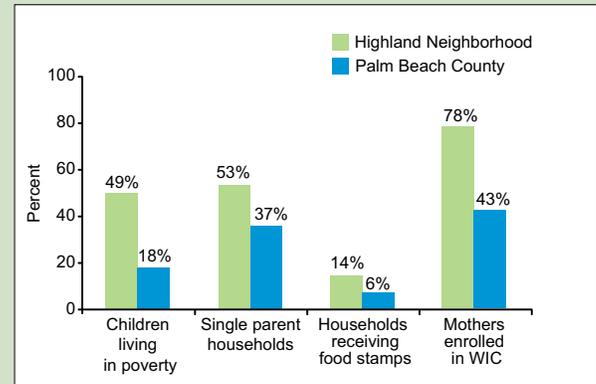
The median household income was \$30,930 compared with \$58,709 in Palm Beach County. The unemployment rate in the neighborhood was 11% compared with 9% in Palm Beach County.

Among children in the Highland neighborhood, nearly half (49%) lived below the federal poverty level in 2010 compared with 18% in Palm Beach County.

Households receiving food stamps accounted for 14% of the neighborhood compared with 6% in Palm Beach County.

Births to mothers enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program was 78% in the Highland neighborhood and 43% in Palm Beach County.

Figure 6-6. Child and Family Socioeconomics in the Highland 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. (Figure 6-6).

Neighborhood Strengths, Existing Resources, and Partners

Staff at Bridges identified many community strengths, including the resiliency, strength, and faith of members of the neighborhood. Families living in this community view Bridges at Highland as being a safe and trusting environment. The Highland Bridges is located at Highland Elementary School and has an established relationship with the school and its families since 2008.

Bridges at Highland operates as one of 20 federally funded Full-Service Community Schools through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Full-Service Community Schools provide additional services to the school community with the goal of increasing parent involvement and, ultimately, student academic performance and overall well-being.

At Highland Elementary, this involves the provision of early childhood education (2-, 3-, and 4-year-old Pre-K classrooms); an evidence-based home-visiting program focused on emergent literacy and language skills (Parent-Child Home program); school-based mentoring for its students, as well as many other services and opportunities offered under the umbrella of the Bridges. Some additional community services sharing space with Bridges are an afterschool program facilitated by the Guatemalan-Maya Center, as well as family literacy and adult education.

Bridges staff described specific strengths that include:

- **Members of the community are one of the greatest strengths—their resiliency, strength, and faith**—and they are willing to work together to improve neighborhood conditions. Local residents participated in the Great American Cleanup where neighbors gather to take on clean-up and beautification projects.
- **This community has family-friendly events periodically that are open to the public**, examples include: Daddy-Daughter Dances, downtown Lake Worth events such as “Street Paint,” annual Lake Worth Easter Egg Hunt.
- **Residents regularly attend a local church or faith-based organization**, and there are 15 churches in the larger surrounding area. Bridges is interested in further developing their relationships with churches serving local families and children.



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

- The partnership between Bridges and Highland Elementary School is viewed as beneficial by school staff. School staff refer parents to Bridges for parenting support and getting connected with services to meet their needs. Further, having families welcomed to Highland Elementary School to participate in activities at Bridges improved parents' involvement in other aspects of the school, such as parent-teacher conferences and School Advisory Committee meetings.
- Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse (AVDA) facilitates workshops at Bridges on the dynamics of healthy relationships in order to help families recognize an unhealthy relationship, bullying, and domestic violence.

The map (Figure 6-7) shows the census tract area that Bridges at Highland 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 Highland 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 Highland area, these include the following:

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

There are nine social services or nonprofit agencies in this greater Highland area (shown in light blue on the map). Some of these include: Adopt-A-Family, Dress for Success, Farm Workers Coordinating Council, and Guatemala-Maya Center. Bridges offers “Where 2 Turn 2” workshops where local social service providers will be featured for potential offerings and opportunities they have available.

Nine organizations provide health care or medical services in this larger area including a health clinic (Lake Worth Ultimate Health Center) and two multilingual pediatrician’s offices that accept Medicaid reimbursement (John Duque Pediatrics and Joaquin A. Nunez). Additionally there are four organizations that provide counseling and mental health services (Counseling Services of Lake Worth, Serenity Now, Chrysalis Health, and Helping Hand Community Mental Health Center), and two drug and alcohol treatment programs.

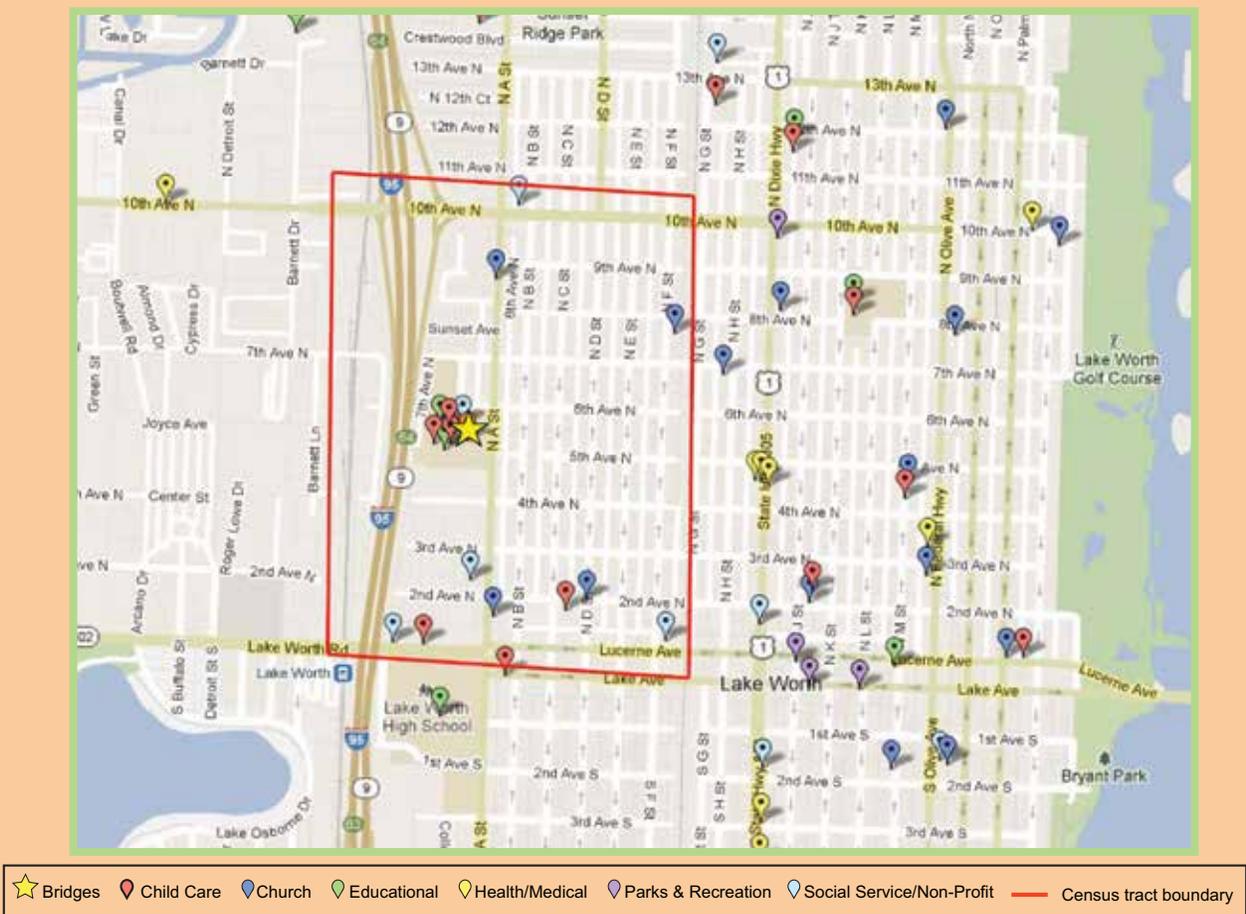
Seven parks and other recreational facilities are shown in the map in purple. Some of the area parks include Sunset Ridge, Memorial, Barton, and Bryant Park, which feature amenities such as playgrounds, pavilions, and athletic fields and courts for soccer,

football, basketball, and tennis. Also nearby is the Lake Worth Playhouse and a municipal swimming pool.

Seven educational facilities, shown in the map in green, are in the larger area surrounding the Highland neighborhood. Some of the educational facilities or resources include the following: Highland and North Grade Elementary Schools, Lake Worth High School and Lake Worth Middle School, the Adult Literacy Program at Highland Elementary, and the Lake Worth Library. Bridges at Highland and the Lake Worth Library partner together to offer an interactive story hour for Bridges children and families.

Bridges at Highland partners with several child care providers some of which include: the early childhood classrooms at Highland Elementary and the Lake Worth Head Start. There are a total of 15 licensed child care providers in the larger area. Of those, one participates 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 6-7. Greater Highland Neighborhood



Challenges to Improving Child Outcomes



Bridges staff identified several challenges to improving outcomes for children and families in the Highland neighborhood:

The percent of births where women received late or no prenatal care was more three times higher in the Highland neighborhood than in the rest of Palm Beach County (20% in the Highland neighborhood vs. 6% in Palm Beach County).

The percent of residents 25 years old and older without a high school degree or equivalency is more than three times higher in the Highland neighborhood than in the rest of Palm Beach County (42% vs. 13%). Additionally, there are residents in the community who have had very little formal schooling (some with less than eighth-grade education or no formal education at all).

Many residents are not fluent English-speakers. Several languages other than English are commonly spoken including Spanish, Guatemalan-Mayan (e.g. Q'anjob'al, Mam, K'iche') and Haitian Creole.

Immigration issues and fear of deportation are challenges for this neighborhood. There are frequent raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials, which result in deportation and families being torn apart. These issues affect relationships between residents in the community, government officials and local police.

Residents are often hesitant to seek out help when needed. This reluctance may be related to concerns about deportation, and there is a reluctance to trust social services providers.

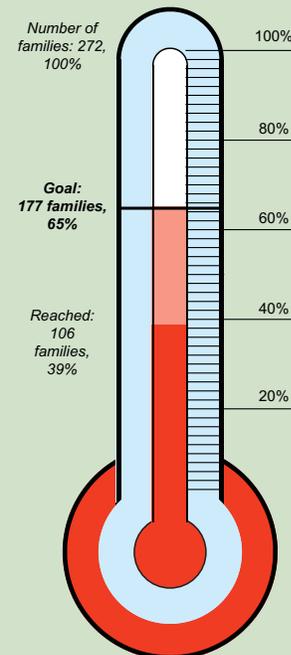
Participation Rates: Of the families who visited Highland Bridges,

- 56% participated in parent-child activities.
- 49% participated in Triple P individual sessions, groups, or seminars.
- 93% participated in navigation activities.
- 65% participated in adult education or capacity-building workshops and activities.

Service Reach (between June 2011 and December 2012):

- 248 parents of children 0–17 participated in services or activities at Bridges at Highland.
- 222 families participated, and of those families, 79% had children ages 0–5 (n = 175).
—Of those families with children 0–5, 60% resided in a target neighborhood (n = 105).
- 272 families with children age 0–5 lived in the Highland neighborhood during the 2010 census.
- 106 families with children age 0–5 who live in the Highland neighborhood participated in activities at Bridges.
—Therefore, we estimate Bridges has been successful in reaching approximately **39%** of the families with children 0-5 in the Highland 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.



Bridges at Highland first opened in January 2008 as a Bridges Beacon.

Bridges at Highland 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 activity, Arts & Crafts, Kindergarten Round Up, and "Family Activity Night"
- Individual and group parent support and education: Triple P
- 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, ESOL, GED, computer workshops, "Community 411," Nutrition class series, Safety Series workshops, Adult sewing classes, etc.
- Community engagement: Strong Starts Community Dialogue Circles, Street Reach campaign, Stroller Patrol, Bridges at Highland Neighborhood BBQ, Great American Clean Up, etc.



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Bridges is a program of

Children's Services Council

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Healthy. Safe. Strong.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Evening events, activities, and appointments
available when scheduled between 5:30pm-7pm
Saturdays: 10:00am-2:00pm
Office hours may vary
based on scheduled community events.