



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 Lake Worth neighborhood that Bridges targets has approximately 1,408 households and a population of 4,137 residents. In 2010, approximately 15% of the population was 0 to 8 years old (622 children).

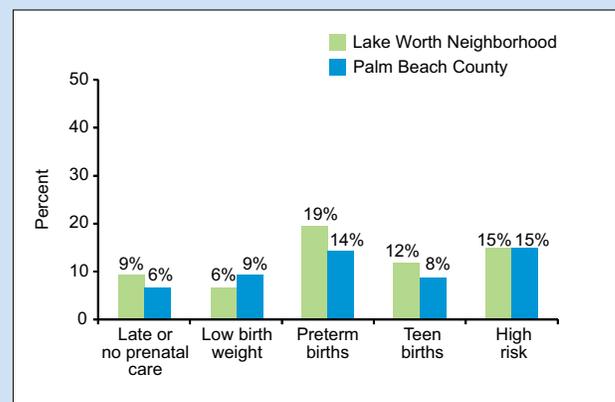
**Census Tract = 52.02    Population: 4,137    Population 0–8 years: 622**

**The first goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children born healthy.** Children born in the Lake Worth neighborhood in 2010 fared worse than children in Palm Beach County on most birth indicators (Figure 7-1). In 2010, 6% of infants were low birth weight and 19% were born preterm. In addition, 15% of births in the Lake Worth neighborhood were considered high risk. Approximately 9% of women received late or no prenatal care, and 12% of births were to teen mothers.

The infant mortality rate in the Lake Worth neighborhood was higher than in Palm Beach County overall. 10.4 infants died for every 1,000 live births in the neighborhood compared with 5.5 in Palm Beach County.

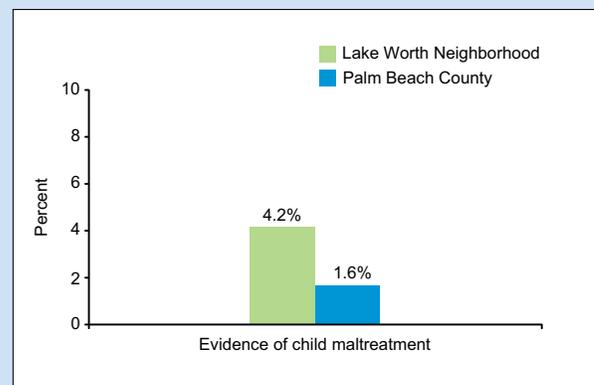
**The second goal of the Bridges initiative is to make sure children are in safe and nurturing environments and remain free from abuse and neglect.** Evidence of child maltreatment was higher in the Lake Worth neighborhood than in the county (Figure 7-2). Data provided by the Department of Children and Families of Palm Beach County show that 4.2% of children in the neighborhood had evidence of maltreatment compared with 1.6% of children in Palm Beach County overall.

Figure 7-1. Prenatal Care and Births in the Lake Worth Neighborhood (2010)



Source: Florida Department of Health

Figure 7-2. Evidence of Child Maltreatment in the Lake Worth Neighborhood (2010)



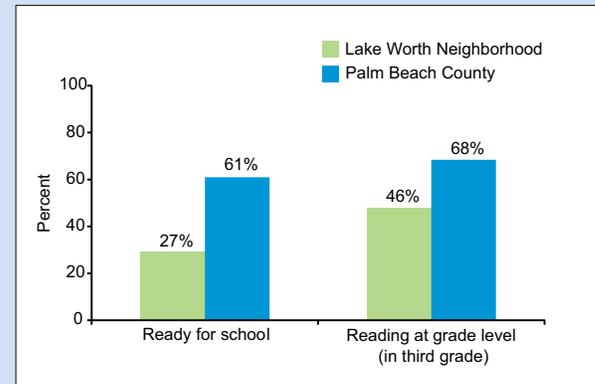
Source: Department of Children and Families in Palm Beach County. Note: Only 60% of children with evidence of maltreatment could be linked to a physical residence and geocoded to the neighborhood level.

\*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 Lake Worth neighborhood were ready for school at kindergarten entry compared with 61% of children in Palm Beach County (Figure 7-3).

**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 Lake Worth neighborhood were reading at grade level compared with 68% of children in Palm Beach County (Figure 7-3).

Figure 2-3. School Readiness and Third-Grade Reading Skills in Lake Worth Neighborhood (2010)



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

## Lake Worth Neighborhood: At A Glance

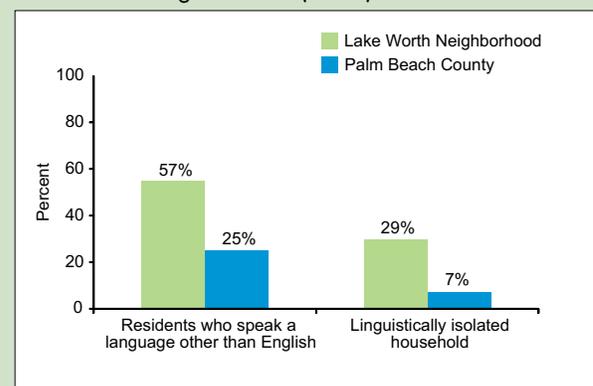
**Race & Ethnicity.** The racial composition in this neighborhood is 57% white and 23% black, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Two-fifths of residents in this neighborhood identified their ethnicity as being Hispanic (41%). The majority of individuals served by Bridges at Lake Worth describe their ethnicity as Haitian (38%), Guatemalan (22%), or Mexican (12%).

**Language.** Among Lake Worth neighborhood residents, 57% reported speaking a language other than English at home, and 29% 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 57% of the population in the Lake Worth neighborhood compared with 87% in Palm Beach County, which indicates 43% of residents did not complete high school or obtain a GED. Among Lake Worth neighborhood residents 25 years old or older, 24% completed an associates degree or higher compared with 40% in Palm Beach County.

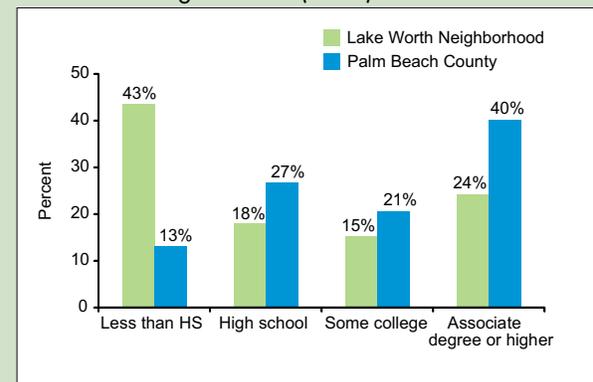
**Housing & Household Composition.** In this neighborhood, 27% of households are owner-occupied and the remaining 73% are renter-occupied. According to census data, 78% of residents report residing in the same household as one year ago (compared with 85% for Palm Beach County). Over half (54%) of the children lived in single-parent households compared with 37% in Palm Beach County.

Figure 7-4. Language of Residents and Households in the Lake Worth Neighborhood (2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 7-5. Highest Education Attained by Residents in the Lake Worth Neighborhood (2010)



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

## Economic Indicators:

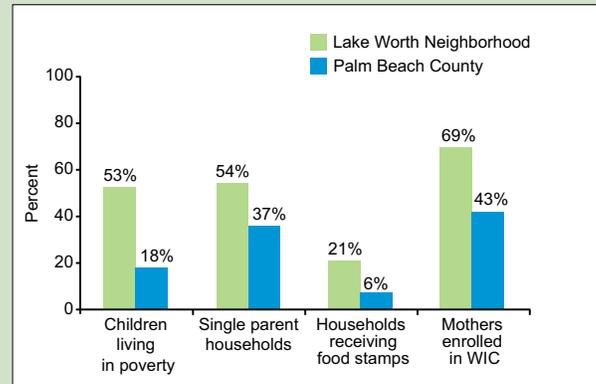
The median household income was \$34,872 compared with \$58,709 in Palm Beach County. The unemployment rate in the neighborhood was 24% compared with 9% in Palm Beach County.

Among children in the Lake Worth neighborhood, more than half (54%) lived below the federal poverty level in 2010 compared with 18% in Palm Beach County (Figure 7-6).

Households receiving food stamps accounted for 21% of the neighborhood compared with 6% in Palm Beach County.

Births to mothers enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program was 69% in the Lake Worth neighborhood and 43% in Palm Beach County.

Figure 7-6. Child and Family Socioeconomics in the Lake Worth 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 7-6).

## Neighborhood Strengths, Existing Resources, and Partners

**Staff at Bridges identified many resources and supports** as the community's strengths, including the strong partnership with the school district's adult education department, a local elementary school (South Grade), and several churches in the community.

Bridges at Lake Worth is located on the first floor of a two-story building on a busy commercial street (Dixie Highway) in Lake Worth. The Bridges site is immediately surrounded by other businesses – motels, convenience stores, pawn shops, health clinics, liquor stores, neighborhood ethnic markets and tucked in the side streets are apartment buildings where locals and Bridges families live. Help with public assistance applications via C.R.O.S. Ministries and Adult Education and Family Literacy classes via the Palm Beach County School District are examples of some services offered on-site at Bridges.

**Bridges staff described specific strengths that include:**

- **Members of the community are one of the greatest strengths, and work together to improve conditions for children and families.** Some of Bridges at Lake Worth parents have become excellent ambassadors in their respective neighborhood block or church in promoting early childhood development, literacy, and Bridges.
- **Residents regularly attend a local church or faith-based organization.** There are 15 churches in the larger surrounding area, and churches have been willing to collaborate with Bridges in its endeavors. Local churches brought awareness to their congregation members about what Bridges has to offer for families and children. Churches have also allowed Bridges access to their facilities to hold workshops, community events, or meet with families one-on-one when the location is more convenient for them.



## There are collaborations and partnerships happening in the Lake Worth neighborhood.

- **Bridges at Lake Worth teams up with Healthy Mothers/Healthy Babies (HM/HB)** to conduct outreach, build awareness and provide education, either through door to door canvassing or at a health and resource fair. Bridges also coordinates with the Maternal Child Health Division and HM/HB to provide childbirth classes for pregnant members on-site.
- **The local elementary school (South Grade Elementary School) views collaboration as important.** The principal recognizes that the children and families they serve have needs that are beyond the scope of school resources. Bridges at Lake Worth



collaborates with South Grade to cultivate greater parent involvement and understanding of a parent's role in their child's education. Lake Worth Bridges participates in the school's Parent University/Café, which allows them to connect with parents and communicate the supports and resources available via Bridges and other local partners.

- **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.
- **Radio stations have been helpful in advertising and bringing awareness of the Bridges to Spanish- and Creole-speaking families** by inviting Bridges staff to speak on the air about Bridges.

**The map** (Figure 7-6) shows the census tract area that Bridges at Lake Worth 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 Lake Worth 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 Lake Worth area these include:**

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

There are 8 social service and nonprofit organizations in the larger Lake Worth neighborhood area shown on the map in light blue (e.g., Community Action Program, C.R.O.S Ministries, Dress for Success, For the Children, Haitian Citizens United Taskforce).

Six organizations provide health care or medical services in this larger area, some of which include: Barosy Medical Center, Lucia Medical Center, John Duque Pediatrics, and Chrysalis Health. Additionally, just south of the area shown on the map is the Lantana/Lake Worth Health Center. Bridges at Lake Worth works with private medical offices, Community Health Center, and Caridad Clinic. These providers offer uninsured families access to health services on a sliding scale, or lower cost. These partners also provide free health screenings and health education workshops for Bridges families on-site.

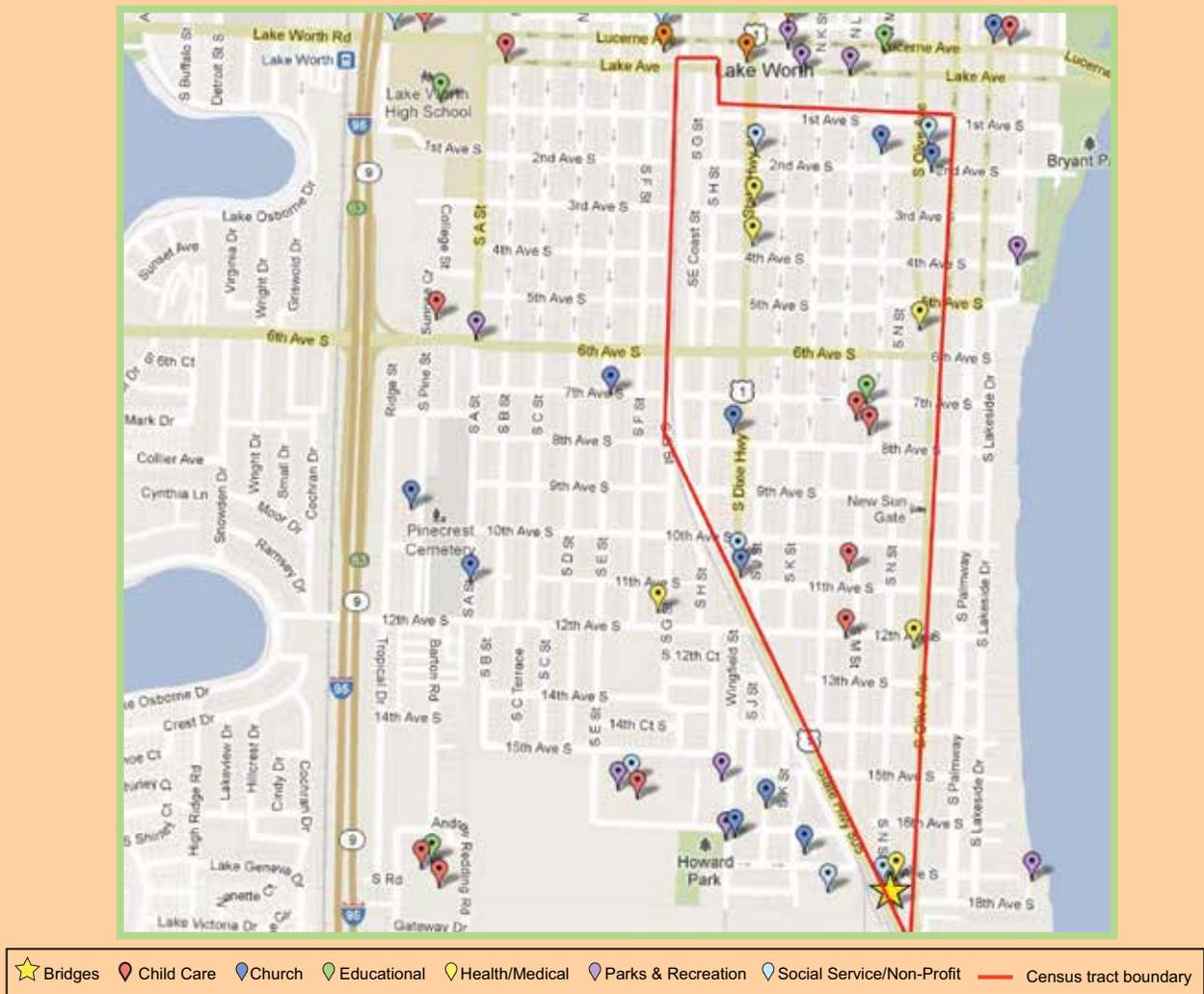
Nine parks and other recreational facilities are shown on the map in purple. Some of the area parks include South Palm, Memorial, Howard, and Bryant

Park, which feature amenities such as playgrounds, pavilions, and athletic fields and courts for soccer, football, basketball, and tennis. Also nearby is Wimbley Gymnasium and a Youth Empowerment Center that offers programming, such as audio-visual design, dance, zumba, career exploration, etc.

Four educational resources are shown in the map in green, including the Lake Worth Library and South Grade and Barton Elementary Schools. Bridges at Lake Worth has partnered with South Grade Elementary to provide summer kindergarten transition activities, outreach, and support services for parents.

There are 17 licensed child care providers in the 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 7-7. Greater Lake Worth Neighborhood



## Challenges to Improving Child Outcomes



### **Staff identified several challenges to improving outcomes for children and families in the Lake Worth neighborhood:**

The percent of residents 25 and older without a high school degree or equivalency is more than three times higher in the Lake Worth neighborhood than in the rest of Palm Beach County (43% 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. Nearly 60% of residents speak a language other than English at home in the Lake Worth neighborhood compared to 25% in Palm Beach county. Additionally, 29% of households in the Lake Worth neighborhood are considered linguistically isolated compared to 7% in the county. Several languages other than English are commonly spoken including Spanish, Guatemalan-Mayan, and Haitian-Creole.

The unemployment rate in the Lake Worth neighborhood is nearly three times the rate seen in Palm Beach County overall in 2010 (24% in Lake Worth neighborhood, while 9% in Palm Beach County).

More than half of children in this neighborhood lived below the federal poverty line in 2010, indicating families likely experience difficulty providing for their children's basic needs.

Immigration issues and fear of deportation is a concern in this neighborhood. It can be a challenge to connect undocumented adults to needed services because often they are not eligible for the services and fear deportation. Moreover, residents are reluctant to trust social services providers or to seek out needed help.

Crime in the neighborhood and larger community is a concern for families. Families report to Bridges staff that they do not generally feel safe when walking through the neighborhood, especially after dark.

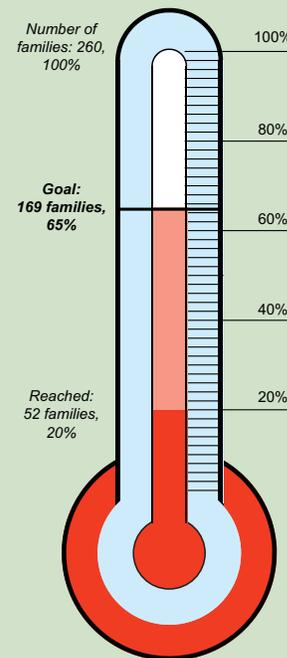
**Participation Rates: Of the families who visited Lake Worth Bridges,**

- 34% participated in parent-child activities.
- 9% participated in Triple P sessions, groups, or seminars.
- 99% participated in navigation activities.
- 43% participated in adult education or capacity-building workshops and activities.

**Service Reach (between June 2011 and December 2012):**

- 197 parents of children 0–17 participated in services or activities at Bridges at Lake Worth.
- 193 families participated, and of those families, 78% had children ages 0–5 (n = 151).  
—Of those families with children 0–5, 37% resided in a target neighborhood (n = 56).
- 260 families with children age 0–5 lived in the Lake Worth neighborhood during the 2010 census.
- 52 families with children age 0–5 who live in the Lake Worth neighborhood participated in activities at Bridges.  
—Therefore, we estimate Bridges has been successful in reaching approximately **20%** of the families with children 0-5 in the Lake Worth 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 Lake Worth since January 2011.

Bridges at Lake Worth 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: Lake Worth Library Story Time, Kindergarten transition activities, Early Childhood Development Skill Building Fun
- Individual and group parent support and education: Triple P; Roundtable on early childhood education
- Developmental screenings using Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) for children 0–5 years old
- 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, and copier).

- Adult education and capacity-building workshops: Family Literacy and Adult Education, English as a Second Language (ESOL), Health education workshops, and Health Care Information seminar
- Community engagement: Strong Starts Community Dialogue Circles, Member appreciation dinner, Health Awareness/Back to School Event for families in the community, in-home parent-child activities via parent ambassadors.



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Bridges is a program of

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Saturdays: 10:00am–2:00pm  
Office hours may vary  
based on scheduled community events.