

2020



Healthy Start Community Assessment

Executive Summary

HEALTHY START COALITION OF PALM BEACH COUNTY



Overview of Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County

For more than 30 years, Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSC) has funded programs and services to support expecting families and parents in raising children to reach their full potential. CSC is an independent special district established by Palm Beach County voters in 1986 and reauthorized in 2014. CSC is focused around four major goals. Children are: born healthy, safe from abuse and neglect, ready for kindergarten, and able to access quality afterschool and summer programs. Funded programs and initiatives reflect CSC's commitment to these goals.

Additionally, CSC recognizes that inequities exist among children based on a child's race and ethnicity. By addressing these inequities, CSC's goal is that race and ethnicity are no longer predictors of life outcomes. In 2016, CSC adopted a Racial and Ethnic Equity Impact Statement that states CSC's commitment to working in partnership with our providers and our community to reduce racial disparities.



Overview of the Healthy Start Community Assessment

The focus of this community assessment was on expecting families and families with children under the age of three years old. The team also chose to get feedback from those families who were not or did not participate in Healthy Start services. In order to better understand how we can engage more families in services, we needed to hear from those who do not participate.

The community assessment gathered information from a variety of sources, including the U.S. Census, FLHealthCharts, focus groups, and Photovoice (photos taken by community members).

Of significant note: the data for this report was compiled prior to the emergence of COVID-19. This report and the data tells an important story and is still useful, but should be read with the understanding that some things have changed since the advent of COVID-19.

What We've Learned

BIRTH OUTCOMES

The community assessment looked at several birth outcomes between 2014 through 2018.

These outcomes were compared to the national Healthy People 2020 (HP2020) goals, as well as Palm Beach County (PBC) outcomes for 2009 through 2013.

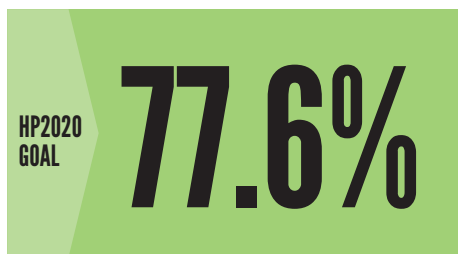
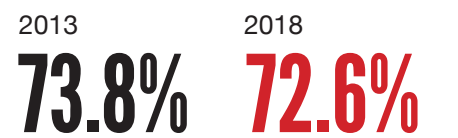
KEY

BNH: Black Non-Hispanic
WNH: White Non-Hispanic



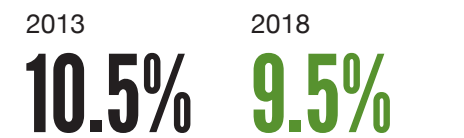
PRENATAL CARE

Percent of women who receive adequate and early prenatal care



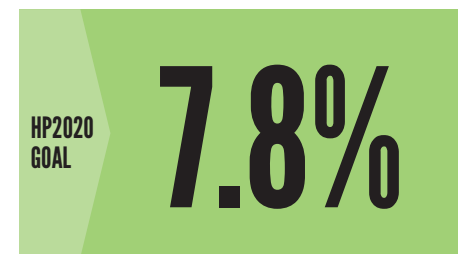
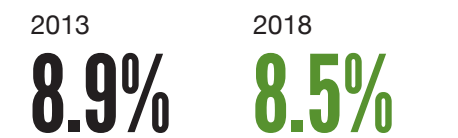
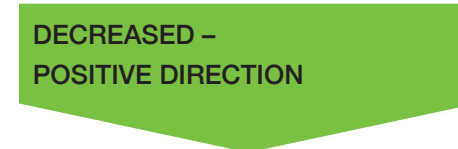
PRETERM BIRTHS

Percent of women who gave birth before 37 weeks



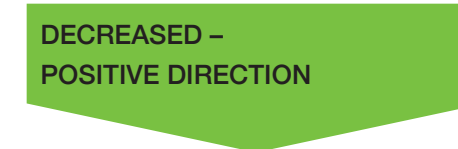
LOW BIRTHWEIGHT

Percent of babies born weighing less than five pounds and eight ounces



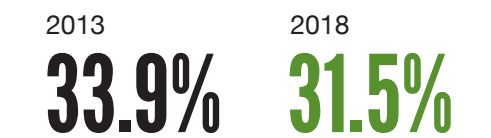
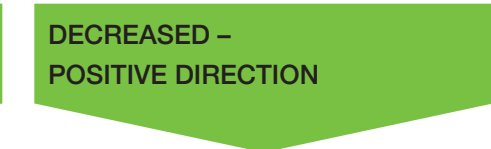
INFANT MORTALITY

The number of babies, for every 1,000 live births, who die before their first birthday



INTERCONCEPTION INTERVALS

Percent of women who had less than 18 months in between births



RACIAL & ETHNIC DIFFERENCES

BNH, non-Haitian and Hispanic women improved from 2013 to 2018.

WNH and Hispanic women have much lower rates of preterm births than **BNH and Haitian women**.

WNH and Hispanic women have much lower rates of low birthweight births than **BNH and Haitian women**.

BNH non-Haitian women had 3.5 times the rate of infant mortality compared to **WNH women**.

WNH women had the highest percentage of births with less than 18 months in between.

Opportunities...

Community residents identified areas that could improve opportunities for participating in services, as well as possible solutions to make those improvements.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



TRANSPORTATION

Not all families have personal cars, and some need to share cars. Public transportation is not always available or convenient to locations people need to get to.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN

Fathers want to participate, and do when it's an option. However, there are limited opportunities for fathers (and other parenting figures) to participate; often they are ignored or aren't asked to participate.



MENTAL HEALTH

Families are afraid to take advantage of mental health services or admit to feeling depressed because of concerns about how they will be labeled.



SERVICE HOURS

Service hours aren't always available outside of traditional work hours, which means many families have conflicts during hours when services are available.



TRUST, EMBARRASSMENT, AND PRIDE

"Government programs" do not always have reputations as high quality and are often thought of as being for poor or "bad" parents. Parents are concerned about what participating in these programs can mean for how people think of them.



HOUSING

Lack of housing, especially affordable, safe housing, continues to be an issue for many families.

...and Solutions

SOLUTIONS INCLUDED



ENGAGING FAMILIES AND SOCIAL CIRCLES

Many families, especially non-White families, spoke about seeking parenting guidance and advice from their families and social circles. It's important to engage with community elders and other respected adults so they understand services available and can pass along information.



INCENTIVIZING PARTICIPATION

Parents who are hesitant about participating in a program may consider trying it if they are offered a small incentive (such as diapers) to attend.



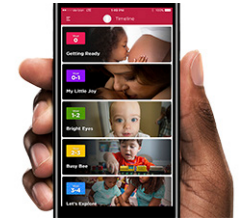
MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

Using locations that people already trust and frequent (such as churches, neighborhood schools, libraries, and parks) is important to build trust and may increase participation.



MORE FLEXIBILITY

Parents have a lot of demands on their time. Being able to "drop in" to a class, or participate when you can, instead of having to commit to a long-term program, may keep people more engaged.



UTILIZING NEW TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Programs can be delivered in other ways than in person, such as through telehealth models. Parents also increasingly turn to social media to look for parenting advice, education, and programs in their area.

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You got to literally reschedule your whole life. Somebody call and say, "Hey I'm about ready, I need you here at such and such." Then when the phone hangs up – it's easy for the doctor to say that – but when we hang up and look at our real-life schedule, it's like "Uhhh... I can't be there at 5 because we got one bill, then this, then that, then this."

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REFERENCES

The United States Census, specifically the American Community Survey for the years 2014-2018;
FLHealthCharts, which utilizes data from Florida's Bureaus of Community Health Assessment and Vital Statistics for the years 2014-2018;
A series of seven focus groups (60 total participants) that took place in March 2020 in different geographies and engaged a variety of demographics;
A series of four Photovoice sessions (14 total participants) that took place between February-March 2020 in different geographies and engaged a variety of demographics.

To view the full report, please contact Cady Sandler, Community Planning and Partnerships Officer, at 561-374-7550 or cady.sandler@cscpbc.org.