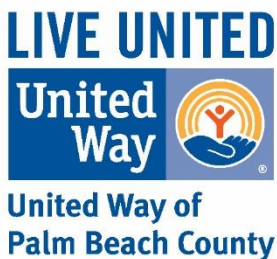




Hunger Relief Plan

Year 1 Update

October 1, 2015- September 30, 2016



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the first year of its existence, the Hunger Relief Plan partners have been working hard to create the strong foundations needed to build lasting change using a collective impact model. The Hunger Relief Plan is comprised of nearly 100 volunteers who are passionate about this cause. Their time has been devoted to implementing tactics and strategies from the Hunger Relief Plan.

Tackling childhood hunger has been a major goal of the plan since its inception. In our first year alone, major strides towards alleviating hunger of our youngest residents have been made. We have successfully expanded backpack programs to cover a greater percentage of children on free and reduced lunch as well as started a pilot program to feed homeless students over the weekend.

Making informed decisions is crucial to the success of the Plan thus we have been steadily conducting research to understand the needs of our community. We have studied the Glades and are beginning to turn our knowledge into programs and action. Looking at population and participation data has helped us promote SNAP outreach and increase applications in our county.

Coordination and collaboration are particularly important for the success of our work. Through the Plan, agencies who have had little contact before are now working together and achieving great things. Funders are enthusiastically contributing financially and through volunteerism. The successes of the Hunger Relief Plan's first year could not have been achieved without strong backing from this community.

Community Partners

211
Area Agency on Aging of Palm Beach and
Treasure Coast
Bank of America
Bethesda by the Sea
Boca Helping Hands
Boys and Girls Club
Boys Town South Florida
Bridges
Catholic Charities
Children's Services Council of Palm Beach
County
Community Caring of Greater Boynton Beach,
Inc
Community Foundation for Palm Beach and
Martin Counties
CROS Ministries
Department of Children and Families
Dot and Ruby Helping Hands
Farmer Jay Pure Organics
Farris Foundation
Feed the Hungry Pantry
Feeding South Florida
FLIPANY
Florida Atlantic University
Florida Crystals
Florida Power and Light
Florida Sugar Cane League
GCI Training and Empowerment Center
Meals on Wheels
Morselife
Office of Congressman Ted Deutch
Palm Beach Atlantic University
Palm Beach County Board of Commissioners
Palm Beach County Youth Services
Palm Beach County Division of Senior Services
Palm Beach County Food Bank
Palm Beach County Food Project
Palm Beach County School Food Services
Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
Palm Beach County UF IAS Extension
Palm Beach Harvest
Palm Healthcare Foundation
Pan-Florida Challenge
Ruth and Norman Rales Jewish Family Services
School District of Palm Beach County
The Glades Initiative
The Town of Palm Beach United Way
The Volen Center
UPS
United Way of Palm Beach County
West Palm Beach Rotary Club

Collective Impact and Hunger Relief

Despite its wealth, nearly 200,000 residents in Palm Beach County struggle with hunger. Recognizing the unacceptable consequences of local hunger, United Way of Palm Beach County and the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners, backed by a group of 150 stakeholders, convened a hunger relief project and identified the need to create a comprehensive plan to reduce local hunger. The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) and the University of South Carolina (USC) Center for Research in Nutrition and Health Disparities were commissioned to create a Hunger Relief Plan. The plan was approved by the Board of County Commissioners in October 2015.

Our stakeholders come from varied backgrounds and consist of community leaders, members of governmental agencies, local charities and non-profits, the agriculture industry, residents, and business leaders. From this diverse talent pool, a Hunger Relief Taskforce has been formed.

With the guidance from an executive committee of Hunger Relief funding partners, a Hunger Relief advisory committee and structure was formed in December 2015. The advisory committee is comprised of leaders from local foundations, Palm Beach County government, the School District of Palm Beach County, and human service agencies. It oversees four active workgroups that are focused on achieving the objectives outlined in the plan. In March of 2016, four groups began working on strategies and tactics from the plan:

- ❖ Childhood Hunger, focuses on Goal 4.
- ❖ Senior Hunger, focuses on Goal 5.
- ❖ Glades Hunger, focuses on Goal 3.
- ❖ Infrastructure, focuses on Goals 7 and 8.

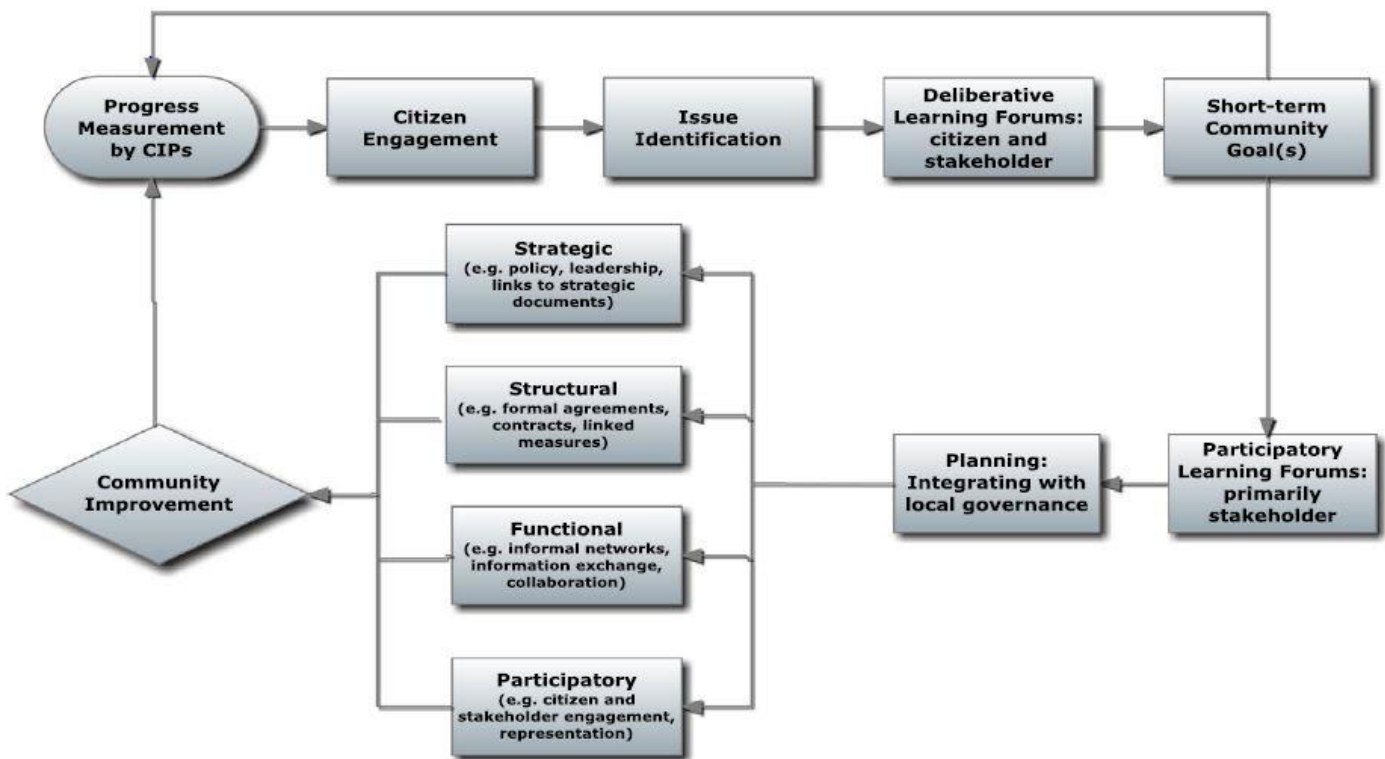
Hunger Relief Goals

1. All county residents will be aware of hunger in Palm Beach County and solutions at hand.
2. The Palm Beach County Hunger Relief Taskforce, elected officials, and community members will advocate for the strengthening of public policies at all levels of government to systemically fight hunger and reduce food hardship.
3. Hunger in the Glades will be reduced through intensive, focused outreach and attention.
4. All Palm Beach County children will have access to the nutritious food they need to build healthy bodies and strong minds.
5. Low-income older residents of Palm Beach County will have balanced nutritious diets.
6. Participation in SNAP will increase substantially to benefit more residents of Palm Beach County, and SNAP benefits will be enhanced.
7. All Palm Beach County residents will be able to access healthy, affordable food in their community.
8. Food banks, pantries, and other charitable agencies will partner to connect families to nutritious food and resources.
9. All Palm Beach County families will have the knowledge to make the best possible healthy food choices.
10. Low-income families in Palm Beach County will achieve higher incomes to purchase food and household crisis hunger will decrease.

Evaluating Our Progress

The Hunger Relief Taskforce is utilizing a Collective Impact approach to alleviating hunger, providing a framework for transformative community change. Collective Impact is the “framework for community change efforts designed to focus on shifting systems, policies, and environments.”¹ To evaluate a program utilizing this framework one must measure the five elements that form its basis: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, engaging in mutually reinforcing activities, maintaining continuous communication, and backbone support organizations.² In order to determine our effectiveness we will be measuring our ability to foster relationships, build community trust, the way we facilitate and manage change, and the effectiveness of sharing our knowledge with the community we serve.

Collective Impact in Action



CIP = Collective Impact Project

(Source: Wood, D. (2016). Community indicators and collective impact: facilitating change. *Community Development*, 47(2), pp.194-208.)

¹ Weaver, L. (2016). Possible: Transformational change in collective impact. *Community Development*, 47(2), pp.274-283.

² Kania, J., & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter. Pp. 36-41.

Building Strong Partnerships

Since its unveiling in October 2015, enthusiastic partners, volunteers, donors, and key stakeholders have been working hard to build strong relationships among hunger relief providers and the community to implement the Hunger Relief Plan. This has included enlisting volunteers, gathering and analyzing data to identify areas of high need, and implementing projects that directly relieve hunger.

Created a Framework to Address Goals: The first step toward implementing the Hunger Relief Plan was to prioritize where we should start. Childhood Hunger, Senior Hunger, Glades Hunger, and Infrastructure were identified as our initial focus. Workgroups have been set up to concentrate on these specific areas. A Hunger Relief Advisory Committee comprised of community leaders provides resources and guidance for workgroups. Each workgroup has a chair or co-chairs who are members of the Advisory Committee.

As these collegial relationships have strengthened, the combined efforts of the stakeholders have resulted in well researched programs delivered with passion by enthusiastic hunger advocates.

Bringing Stakeholders Together to Make an Impact on the Community: One of the strongest predictors of our success is our ability to form strong, lasting relationships with organizations working toward hunger relief. The Hunger Relief Taskforce has brought together experts across various disciplines to serve together on workgroups to coordinate a county-wide response to hunger. Workgroups are open to anyone in the community who would like to work on the goals outlined in the Hunger Relief Plan. Workgroup members include advocates, representatives from non-profit organizations, government agencies, businesses, agricultural organizations, and foundations. Many workgroup participants have met colleagues with a similar purpose and mission for the first time as a result of the Hunger Relief Plan.

Working Towards Common Goals: Each group is working to tackle issues specifically identified in the Hunger Relief Plan. To start the process, each workgroup came to consensus on which tactics and strategies from the Hunger Relief Plan they would work on related to their respective goals. This has



included gathering data, identifying highest needs neighborhoods and gaps in service, and implementing collective impact projects to address those needs. As these collegial relationships have strengthened, the combined efforts of the stakeholders have resulted in well researched programs delivered with passion by enthusiastic hunger advocates. Often a project undertaken to advance one group's goals, helps another.

Starting with Data Makes a Big Difference

Without the right data, it's challenging to know where to start. In order to gain an increased understanding of hunger in Palm Beach County we have been looking at the entire problem, searching for trends to determine the best solutions. Using recommendations from the Hunger Relief Plan we conducted research and analyzed existent data.

Searching for the Underserved: Florida is a state known for its snowbirds and retirement communities. With such a reputation, it is shocking to learn how many seniors qualify for SNAP, yet do not utilize the program. One of the major projects undertaken this year was an analysis by zip code and municipality of data of the 65+ population below the poverty level and combining it with the 60+ SNAP participation rate. Through this, key underserved areas were identified and work is currently being undertaken to begin outreach to these areas.

Better Understanding the Communities We Serve: Of all the areas in Palm Beach County, the Glades has been particularly stricken by hunger problems. We designed a survey to learn how to keep more locally grown produce in the area. It explored a range of topics including distribution times, demographics in terms of age, race and ethnicity, eligibility requirements, storage, product availability, and product sourcing. The goal of this survey was to better understand the pantries' capabilities, how the Taskforce could help them increase the nutrition of the food they provide, and whether the pantries had the existing infrastructure to accept additional fresh produce. We are currently looking to implement projects that address what we have learned from this survey.



Evaluation of Current Efforts: For children on free and reduced lunch, the summer can be particularly challenging. The Summer BreakSpot program operates throughout the state of Florida to address this need. The Hunger Relief Taskforce has been evaluating the local program to track effectiveness and to look for ways to increase participation. When addressing this, the group collected data on free and reduced lunch participation as well as SNAP eligibility to find areas with the biggest need.

Performance, Capacity and Coordination: Continuing with our commitment to strong data and working to achieve the best level of understanding of the communities we serve, a GIS mapping survey has been commissioned to assess the performance, capacity and coordination of Palm Beach County pantries. The overarching goal of this assessment is to produce a geographical visualization of food pantry baseline measures that can guide hunger relief partners with prioritizing actions and resources, while tracking hunger relief progress at the pantry scale.

Highlights of Collaborative Projects

Healthy Meals in Summer Classrooms: A partnership with Pan-Florida Challenge and the School District of Palm Beach County was able to provide healthy meals to students at a three-week reading class in June 2016 and a three-week summer program in July 2016 at Barton Elementary in Lake Worth.

Summer Meal Outreach: In the summer of 2016, 776,500 meals were served to children through the School District for Palm Beach County Food Service, an increase of 8% on last year. The Childhood Hunger Relief Workgroup partners from numerous agencies worked together to reach out to families in their scope of influence through handouts and social media.



Child and Family SNAP Outreach: At the end of February 2016, the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSC) contributed \$150,000 to the Palm Beach County Food Bank as a direct result of the findings of the Hunger Relief Plan. With this funding, the PBC Food Bank was able to hire two SNAP benefit specialists to assist low income families with obtaining benefits and fund a weekend nutrition program.



SNAP SIGN-UP for Seniors
Hunger Relief Plan - Palm Beach County

SNAP can help you pay for healthy food. Apply TODAY!



If you qualify, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) can help you buy nutritious foods such as breads, cereals, fruits, vegetables, meats and dairy.

Benefits average \$122 a month per client in Florida (The average benefit for individuals over age 60 living in Palm Beach County is \$113 a month).

SNAP can help you stretch your food dollars and prevent you from having to choose between buying medicine or buying food. It's free to apply and you can get one-on-one help filling out the application either online or by hand.

There is no limit on the number of people who can participate. Your participation wouldn't "take away" assistance from someone else.

WHERE TO START:

Call the Helpline at 1-866-684-5885, visit www.YourADRC.org, OR Call 211

Apply online at: www.myflorida.com/accessflorida

All information is kept CONFIDENTIAL.

From Data to Action - SNAP Outreach to Seniors:

Encouraging eligible seniors to sign up for SNAP benefits is a major goal of the Hunger Relief Plan. After months of data collection and analysis, the three zip codes with the highest number of eligible seniors were established and targeted for SNAP outreach. Efforts to distribute SNAP information to these areas, as well as a major low-income retirement community have begun. Flyers were designed with group input using key messages for seniors. Flyers are available in English, Spanish, and Creole in order to reach as many seniors as possible. Outreach efforts will be tracked to assess efficacy.

Community Gardens:

Two community gardens were created through a partnership with Farmer Jay Pure Organics, which the Florida Sugar Cane League generously sponsored. In addition to providing fresh food, these gardens will teach children about nutrition as well as agriculture through this unique hands on experience.

Additional Highlights of Collaborative Projects

Bridging the Gaps for Home Delivered Meals: A strategy from the Hunger Relief Plan is to identify the amount of local funding needed to leverage services and the capacity of local community-based organizations to support these efforts. Home-Delivered Meal Programs for seniors has been identified as a significant need. In the summer of 2016, agencies that provide home delivered meals from across Palm Beach County met together to share their waiting lists, needs, and best practices. United Way of Palm Beach County is working to raise resources, create awareness, and recruit volunteers to help address this need.

Benefits Outreach Specialists: Barriers to SNAP participation for seniors include lack of transportation and a lack of comfort or familiarity with technology. Many are unable to present themselves at a DCF Community Partner to sign up for SNAP in person. To address this problem, DCF and Palm Beach County Food Bank have made use of traveling benefit outreach specialists who take appointments for senior SNAP applications at specific sites. Some locations require an appointment, while others accept walk-ins

Capacity Building: The Hunger Relief Taskforce has been awarded a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service for three AmeriCorps Vista members to work on capacity building hunger relief projects. The first of these members will be assigned to focus on Senior Hunger. A second member will be assigned to the Infrastructure Workgroup and tasked with assisting the GIS survey and helping to implement SNAP Bonus Bucks programs. Through funding from the USDA, the Bonus Bucks Program allows users of SNAP benefits to double their funds on healthy food from local farms. The third AmeriCorps VISTA member will be working with the Childhood Hunger workgroup and will be responsible for helping to expand and publicize summer meal programs.



Pilot Helping Hungry Children Who Are Homeless: The School District of Palm Beach County has over 3000 students identified as homeless. A pilot program for fall of 2016 is distributing backpacks to over 50 homeless elementary students at one local school. Pan-Florida Challenge is providing these backpacks working with the school principal and school food service.

Expanding Partnerships: The Jim Moran Foundation has awarded \$556,690 to United Way of Palm Beach County, which in partnership with the Pan-Florida Challenge (PFC) will provide nutritious "PFC Super-Power Packs" to more than 760 children over three years. Kid-friendly food items will be delivered to children every Friday afternoon, which includes a six-serving meal donated by Meals of Hope so that the entire family eats healthy meals throughout the weekend. Through a collaboration with the Boys & Girls Clubs in four Belle Glade elementary schools and one stand-alone Club in Palm Beach County, children and families will receive food throughout the school year, including holiday breaks.

In the Press

One of the best ways to complete goal one of the Hunger Relief Plan (raise awareness of the hunger problem to all residents of the county) is to allow a conversation to be cultivated organically. Media groups have reported on the programs we created and support, shared the news of our successes, called on us and our partners for our expertise on hunger related issues, and highlighted the issues that affect our work.

Pop-up Food Pantry: Through a partnership with CBS News 12, Farmer Jay Pure Organics, Allstate Insurance, and Depend, the Hunger Relief Taskforce was able to hold a pop up pantry. CBS12 Studios in Riviera Beach hosted the event on June 18, 2016 which provided fresh produce and nutrition information to those in need. Palm Beach Harvest distributed 25,000 pounds of produce. Through this event, volunteers were able to distribute 500 bags of food. Representatives of community agencies including the Department of Children and Families, the Children's Services Council, 211, CROS Ministries, Shine Medicare (Area Agency on Aging), Palm Beach County Food Bank, and the Palm Beach County School District shared information on their resources. The Florida Department of Children and Families provided SNAP information and the Palm Beach County School District shared information on Summer Break Spots and other youth services. Music and family friendly activities were provided by Digital VibeZ, Inc, an organization that promotes a healthy lifestyle through activities that incorporate technology and dance fitness.

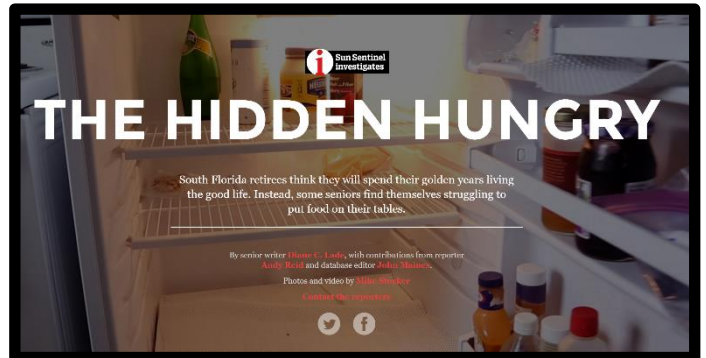


In the Press

Highlighting Senior Hunger: Working to alleviate senior hunger is a major goal of the hunger relief initiative. In late July, the Palm Beach County Post ran a story on the increase of senior participation in SNAP. This article provided chances for many of our collaborators to comment on the state of food security for older residents in the county. Nancy Yarnall, chair of the Senior Workgroup, was also able to highlight the waitlist for home delivered meals for seniors. [Palm Beach Post 7/27/16]

Corporate Partnership Makes National News: As part of an effort to increase donations to the Palm Beach County Food Bank during the Thanksgiving holiday season, the United Way of Palm Beach County teamed up with Uber. Area businesses collected food for donations and Uber drivers came to deliver the donations to the pantry. Additionally, Uber ran a promotion that provided a free ride and a \$5 donation to the United Way of Palm Beach County for each new customer. [Forbes 11/24/15]

Creative Solutions: While alleviating hunger is a serious undertaking, it can be both fun and rewarding. In November 2015, the Forster Family Food Pantry partnered up with Project Thanksgiving to provide 5000 turkeys to the Palm Beach County Food Bank. This was done via a ticketed food and craft beer festival. Attendees were able to watch Beatles cover bands play while they ate and there were plenty of family friendly activities including face painting, a climbing wall, and glitter tattoos. [Sun Sentinel 11/4/15]



Sun Sentinel December 20, 2015- Hidden Hungry

South Florida retirees think they will spend their golden years living the good life. Instead, some seniors find themselves struggling to put food on their tables.



*Palm Beach Post
December 22, 2015 –*

The Central Palm Beach Chamber, the Western Palm Beach County Farm Bureau and the South Florida Fair hosted the annual Farm City Luncheon which highlighted hunger.

Thank you

*Thank you to all the workgroup members who have shown up faithfully to workgroup meetings to **create solutions, collaborate, and work on alleviating hunger** in Palm Beach County.*

Thank you to all the generous funders who support hunger relief efforts for our community.

A special thank you to our advisory committee and workgroup chairs!

- ❖ *Rev Pamela Cahoon, Chair Hunger Relief Taskforce, Co-chair Infrastructure Workgroup*
- ❖ *Jeff Koons, Co-chair Infrastructure Workgroup*
- ❖ *Commissioner Melissa McKinlay, Co-chair Glades Hunger Relief workgroup*
- ❖ *Caroline Villanueva, Co-chair Glades Hunger Relief workgroup*
- ❖ *Erica Whitfield, Chair, Childhood Hunger Workgroup*
- ❖ *Nancy Yarnall, Chair, Senior Hunger Workgroup.*

Jon VanArnam, Beth Walton, Donald Hsieh, Randy Scheid, Chris Koehn, Wendi Lipsich, Renee Constantino, Allison Monbleau, Kate Magro, Stephanie Glavin, Charlie Ring, Seth Bernstein, Lisa Williams, Alina Alonso, and Teresa Janeczek.

In Conclusion

By utilizing the Collective Impact framework, we have been able to create strong partnerships that result in effective programs and positive outcomes. None of our work could be completed without the support and work of our dedicated community partners.

Through collaborations we have been able to make great strides in tackling hunger in Palm Beach County. Weekend feeding **backpack programs** for children throughout the county have been increased, **SNAP outreach** is now reaching a greater number of seniors, and through key high profile projects, a **greater awareness** of the problem has been raised. Each project that we undertake is well researched through the use of **data analysis and consistent communication** with hunger relief partners. This commitment to data ensures that we have the greatest understanding of the populations we serve in order to deliver the most effective programs. The hunger problem in our county cannot be solved overnight, but the foundations we have built will facilitate lasting change over the coming years.

Do you want to get involved?

Please contact us at 561-375-6642 to get involved in a workgroup, find hunger relief volunteer opportunities, or to support our work through a charitable contribution.

<http://www.unitedwaypb.org/hunger>