



Health Equity Zone

West Warwick

West Warwick Health Equity Zone
Annual Report to the Community
April 1, 2016-March 31st, 2017

Executive Summary

Health Equity Zones (HEZ) are geographic areas designed to achieve health equity by eliminating health disparities using place-based (where you live) strategies to promote healthy community (Rhode Island Department of Health).

During the second year of the West Warwick Health Equity Zone (HEZ) collaborative, the community continued to work to improve many aspects that affect the health of West Warwick residents. These include food access, teen health, healthy environments, overdose prevention and recovery, maternal health, and chronic disease. Throughout these efforts partnerships among government offices, local organizations, and community members have continued to be strengthened in collaboration with the backbone agency, Thundermist Health Center.



Welcome to the
HEZ HUB

A West Warwick FREE community space.

The HEZ HUB is supported by the West Warwick Health Equity Zone (HEZ), which is a group of local organizations, businesses, and residents coming together to create and support healthy, happy, and safe living in your neighborhood.

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Food Access



- Thundermist continued to host Farmers' markets to increase community access to fresh fruits and vegetables.
- SNAP and WIC are both accepted at the Farmers' markets and have seen a large increase in sales from Year 1 of the HEZ project.
- Westbay CAP has created an updated food resource guide with information about meal programs, food pantries, and food assistance programs.
- The Community Garden has hosted educational events for children and adults throughout the year.

Teen Health

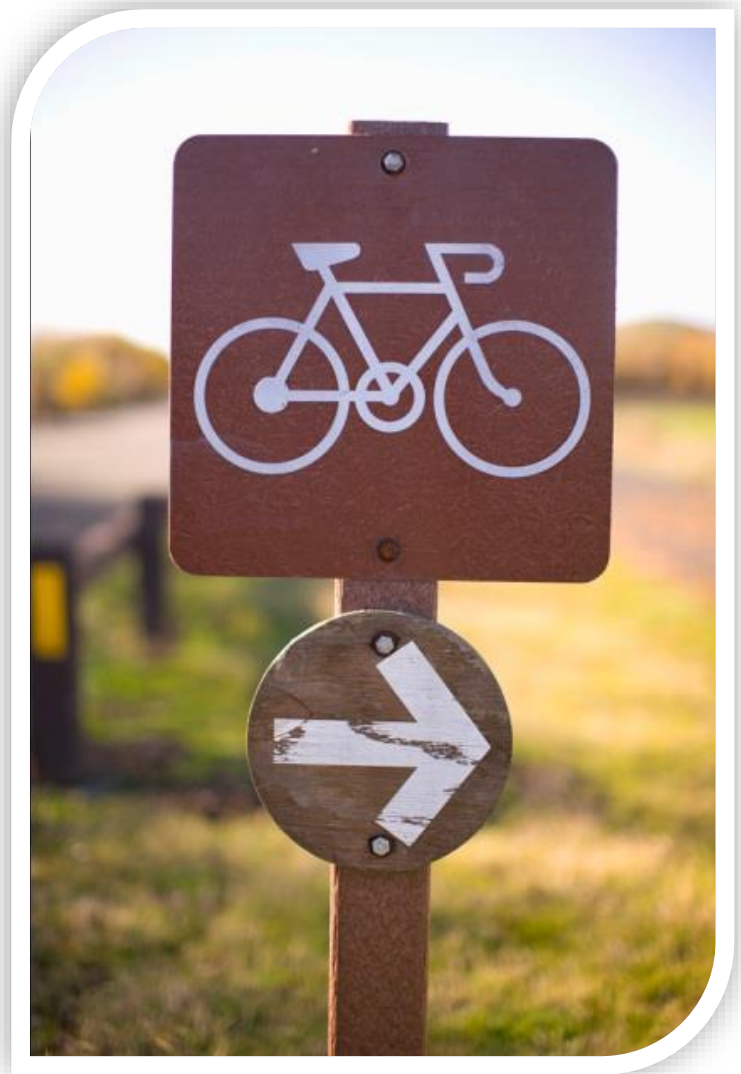
- A teen health working group has been established.
- The school district conducted a survey to ask teachers what resources they need to best support students. Teachers requested additional resources in the areas of supporting LGBTQ students, food access, and mental health.
- A member of the backbone agency provided information about Thundermist's trans health program to a student group at West Warwick High School and to some of the faculty and staff members.



Healthy Environments

- Using funding from the Rhode Island Foundation, the HEZ worked in conjunction with the city of West Warwick to build an orchard. It includes pear and cherry trees.
- Events in the community garden and on the bike path have been held to promote walking and physical activity.
- The West Warwick Town comprehensive plan will incorporate the recommendations from the Community Health Living Index needs assessment that was done in Year 1. This will help West Warwick continue to have physical space that promotes activity and health.

The HEZ hub has hosted physical activity classes including Zumba, pilates, and yoga.



Overdose Prevention and Recovery

As in many communities throughout New England, the opioid epidemic remains a large public health problem in West Warwick. Twenty-six deaths due to opioid overdose happened in West Warwick between 2014-2016. The HEZ continues to work with the Governor's Task Force on Overdose Prevention to address this serious public health concern.

- 93 people accessed recovery support services through the HEZ and Anchor Recovery.
- All West Warwick police officers have received naloxone training and now carry naloxone with them. A behavioral health clinician now works closely with police as well.
- In 2016 West Warwick EMS reported 57 overdose reversals.
- Thundermist has worked to expand Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services and received a \$325,000 grant to support this work.

Maternal and Child Health

- Rhode Island Kids Count reported 32.3/1000 births to teens in West Warwick from 2013-2015.
- 109 WIC recipients were referred for dental care.
- Teachers, providers, teens, parents and leaders at the Department of Public Health have been working to promote long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs).
- In Year 2 of the HEZ project Thundermist reported 3.2% of teenagers had received LARCs.



Chronic Disease

- In collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Health two Diabetes Prevention Program classes were offered.
- 12 residents attended the Diabetes Prevention Programs.

Community Partnership

- The HEZ Steering Committee as well as the Food Access, Teen Health, and Overdose, Prevention and Recovery Workgroups meet monthly.
- Eight West Warwick community members served as HEZ community ambassadors in Year 2 of the HEZ project, contributing their valuable input and spreading the word about HEZ activities.
- The HEZ collaborative includes representatives who are community members, educators, law enforcement, faith leaders, recovery experts, healthcare providers, and members of local government.

