

HEZ Year-End Reporting Packet

Bristol Health Equity Zone

July 2023

I. Executive Summary

The Bristol Health Equity Zone (BHEZ) fosters collaboration to identify the health risks and needs of the community and moves forward common objectives around health-promoting programs, services, and community design. While Bristol is fortunate to have the resources of many social services and community-based organizations already in place, most worked independently before the BHEZ. The Collaborative has created an umbrella where all can now work interdependently on personal health and mental wellness, suicide prevention physical activity, substance use, awareness, and prevention, and food/nutrition initiatives. Although the target demographics of the BHEZ include low- and moderate-income residents, senior citizens, and the Portuguese population, as well as those in need of behavioral health and food/nutrition resources, all are interspersed throughout the community, therefore, the organization addresses needs of the entire population of Bristol as well as those within the Bristol Warren Regional School District (BWRSD) as a regionalized district.

- The ongoing adverse conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic presented not only significant challenges but also additional opportunities to engage and serve the community. These additional opportunities included enhanced community engagement through the efforts of an expanded Community Outreach Team. Community Health Workers continued to widen their focus from attending community events to also embedding themselves in the natural environments of our target populations such as providing food deliveries for the East Bay Food Pantry and providing resource information, PPE and benefits navigation at stores, parks, etc. Continuous feedback from residents and community organizations, including the Bristol Warren Regional School District, strengthened BHEZ's focus on the behavioral health needs of youth and families and informed BHEZ's decision to partner with the school district to deploy two Community Health Workers in the schools and the community-at-large as part an integrated team with school personnel as well as the Warren HEZ.

BHEZ had new opportunities this year to effect systems change through:

- advocacy and direct support of the Town's and community partners' suicide prevention efforts
- advocacy for increased access of the town through offering beach wheelchairs to the community
- completion of the Equity and Results racial impact training series with RIDOH
- participation in the EBCAP's employee-led Equity and Justice Taskforce which is implementing a comprehensive set of interventions to solidify EBCAP's practice as an inclusive, equitable and anti-racist organization, which can only strengthen its effectiveness as a HEZ backbone agency,

BHEZ also continued to support five working groups:

Food/ Nutrition group continued to assist in the organization for the Monthly cooking demonstration and pulled together community organizations and residents to address specific areas of need such as food delivery from the East Bay Food Pantry.

Personal Health and Mental Wellness group added some Roger Williams University members and spread their Happy Mail Campaign onto the college campus in an effort to bring awareness and support to mental health needs, This group also continued attended community events to spread kindness as part of their Bristol Kindness Project *: <https://www.facebook.com/bristolkindnessprojectRI/> They were also awarded a legislative grant to have their *Don't Give Up Signs*, that are placed throughout town, translated and printed in Portuguese.

Substance Use Awareness and Prevention group continues to be an integral part of planning the Bristol Rally 4 Recovery Event. The Rally plans to take place in Bristol on September 9, 2023, at the new location, Bristol Town Beach. BHEZ also partnered with the East Bay Recovery Center to offer Narcan training to all the HEZ team members as well as the staff and volunteers at the East Bay Food Pantry.

Physical Activity group planned family activities for the Farmers Market and the COZ After School Program through the partnerships with community agencies such as Thrive Outside and The Audubon Society of RI. BHEZ offered activities and outreach at Family Fun days and supported scavenger hunts for the students of the Bristol Warren Regional School district. BHEZ also continues discussion with the town and local agencies such as Life Inc and Maher Center to support increased access to local parks and playgrounds, especially for residents using wheelchairs. In the Spring of 2023, BHEZ partnered with the Town of Bristol Parks and Recreation Department to provide two beach access wheelchairs for the Bristol Town Beach.

Suicide Prevention group has continued to focus on advocacy for bridge barrier legislation. The Group partnered with EBCAP communications department to develop an infographic to educate the community.

The BHEZ steering committee formed a sub-committee to work on reviewing and updating the mission/vision statements and finalized the new version in the Spring of 2023.

Vision

Bristol Health Equity Zone envisions an equitable community, where community members are mentally and physically healthy, and feel connected, empowered, and safe.

Mission

Bristol Health Equity Zone works to create a community that is healthy, just, and inclusive, by responding to community members, cultivating partnerships, and advocating for equity.

- For further information, visit our parent site <https://www.bristolhez.org/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/BristolHEZ>
- <https://www.ebcap.org/programs/bristol-health-equity-zone/>

II. Demographic Information of HEZ Community Served

HEZ Demographic Description	
Geographic area served (include Zip Codes and/or	The Town of Bristol is in Bristol County in the East Bay area of Rhode Island. Bristol is a peninsula, surrounded by Narragansett Bay, Mount Hope Bay and the Kickemuit River. The town is built on the

Census Tracts if possible)	traditional territories of the Pokanoket Wampanoag. It is a deep-water seaport named after Bristol, England.
Description of racial/ethnic groups served in area and estimated population reached	<p>The population of Bristol as of the last census was 22,493. The median household income of Bristol residents in 2022 was \$80,727. When compared to the county, Bristol median household income is \$10,924 lower than Bristol County. Despite the overall increasing household wealth, there remains a population living in Bristol with very limited financial means. Of the 8,065 households in Bristol in 2022, 591 (8.6%) had income below the poverty level. The Town has a large population of low- to moderate-income residents who live in the downtown neighborhood known as the “Mosaico” neighborhood.</p> <p>The Bristol HEZ service area is comprised of the following racial and ethnic groups and the BHEZ seeks to serve each of these groups with an equity and inclusion lens: 93.4% White 1.8% Black 2.9% Hispanic 2.0% Asian</p> <p>Bristol is home to a large ethnic population of Portuguese residents, at approximately 29% of the population according to Census statistics, the majority of which reside in the low- to moderate income neighborhood known as the Mosaico neighborhood.</p> <p>+</p>
Key areas of RI Statewide SDoH your HEZ is focused on z	The Community Needs Assessment along with RIDOH identified SDOH needs have determined the focus of the Steering Committee and Work Groups to date. The currently active Work Groups include: Suicide Prevention, Mental Wellness, Substance Use/Awareness, Physical Activity, Food and Nutrition.

III. Major Accomplishments

Health Disparities:

Over the last year BHEZ established an outreach team that has gained recognition in the community by attending community events (see attached list) and conducting street outreach in various locations throughout town. An integral piece of BHEZ’s COVID-19 outreach efforts has been the continued building of community relationships and trust, and building them in a manner that allows us to meet people where they are, both physically and emotionally. We have coordinated a variety of direct services over the last year, including distributing masks and COVID self-test kits and delivering meals. Outputs include:

- 11,432 masks were distributed
- 11,520 meals delivered
- 4,358 at-home test kits distributed

Partnership with the Town of Bristol:

The Bristol HEZ has improved its ability to impact systems change through building its relationship with the Town of Bristol. BHEZ partnered with the town in a community-wide effort to increase beach access to persons with disabilities by purchasing beach access wheelchairs. We continue to strengthen our relationship with the Bristol Prevention Coalition (BPC) and continue our strong partnership with the Bristol Police Department by supporting a bike safety event and participating in the Community Night Out Event. We have also continued to support the Parks and Recreation part-time Recreation Coordinator at Quinta Gamelin Community Center (QGCC). This position has assisted with offering free and low-cost exercise classes and other activities to the community; for example, Toddler Playtime, chair yoga, meditation, pottery and Lego Engineering. Through increased partnership the Bristol Parks and Recreation Department, BHEZ has offered monthly Tech Talks and Community Viewing of the cooking demonstration to the community. The Town also continued to provide free office space to BHEZ, embedding BHEZ in its busy Recreation Center which promotes HEZ visibility and access for town residents.

Pre-School Development Grant (PDG):

Over the last year, BHEZ continued to focus on providing resources, support, and education to families with children ages 0-5 and expectant parents, particularly those from traditionally underserved communities. BHEZ partnered with Warren HEZ to expand PDG programming by implementing a shared position of Family Navigator to help connect families with resources including evidence-based family visiting programs, WIC, Head Start, and health and social service needs. Through the Family Navigator position, BHEZ improved their relationship with local libraries by doing weekly outreach during story times. The libraries also partner with HEZ to host events such as potty training and sensory friendly story times. The Family Navigator was also able to utilize and expand the relationship with the Bristol Warren Regional School District. Over the school year, the School District sent referrals to the Family Navigator. Bristol HEZ was also present at a Science Night and a Math & Literacy Night to distribute information and offer resources to local families. At the end of the school year, Bristol and Warren HEZs partnered with local kindergarten teachers and Head Start preschool teachers to host a transition to Kindergarten event to support caregivers through the transition process.

Evaluation:

This year, through partnership with the Warren and East Providence HEZs, BHEZ was able to hire an Evaluator. Since January 2023, we have been able to make significant progress with Evaluation Framework and Processes, Data Collection: Systems and Alignment, Community Needs Assessment and Work Group Development (more details in Evaluation Section).

Monthly Cooking Demonstrations:

BHEZ continued to support the monthly cooking demonstration through The Common Pub and Grille. Owner, Courtney Poissant, a well-known, trusted resident of the Portuguese community of Bristol, hosts the demo while giving health/nutrition tips. Bags with the ingredients are given out into the community the day before the demonstration so residents can follow along at home. This continues to be a popular community activity (see specific numbers in the dashboard). In order to increase the socialization aspect of this cooking demonstration that was put on hold when it went virtual due to COVID-19, BHEZ started offering *Community Viewings* of the demonstrations this year. Through community partnerships with the Senior Center and the Parks and Recreation Department, BHEZ was able to bring bags of food to these

locations monthly and have groups gather to watch the demonstration together. BHEZ was also able to offer two In -person cooking demonstrations this year.

Regional Approach

Many of the Bristol HEZ staff positions have peers and counterparts within EBCAP and in the other Warren and East Providence HEZs. This year we met quarterly with the full HEZ staff and worked to share best practices, develop camaraderie and deliver a wish list of trainings that were established in September by the large group. In SFY 23, staff participated in Mental Health First Aid, Motivational Interviewing, Data Academy, De-escalation, LIHEAP/SNAP/Narcan, and an ongoing series of DEI experiences. In addition, several standing meetings with different members with similar roles were formed interagency: CHW meet with HEZ and Integrated Community Health monthly; Family Navigators from HEZ meet with Home Visiting and Baby Steps team members monthly; project coordinators share inventory and updates on events monthly; and Project Directors meet bi-weekly. And all of EBCAP engaged, with help from an outside facilitator and an EBCAP Task Force for Justice and Equity, in a continuous effort to embed strategies that support four stages of psychological safety. “Psychological safety refers to an environment of rewarded vulnerability in which employees feel 1) included, 2) safe to learn, 3) safe to contribute, and 4) safe to change the status quo- all without being marginalized, or punished in some way”. *The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety*”, ©Leader Factor

Justice and Equity

During 2022-23, the HEZs, and the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) Health Equity Institute (HEI), was part of a team of partners in a year-long racial equity impact workshop facilitated by Equity and Results (E&R). This year-long series focused on moving from antiracist belief to action by setting a baseline of foundational knowledge and applying it to an Antiracist Results-Based Accountability methodology to disrupt racial inequity. Each HEZ gathered a team of residents and community partners to develop both collective and HEZ-specific results and identified strategies for racially equitable impact.

The Warren, Bristol and East Providence HEZ’s are also part of EBCAP’s Task Force for Justice and Equity. The HEZ directors attended EBCAP’s bi-weekly training through D & I Strategies <https://dandistrategists.com/> and are also part of EBCAP’s implementation team. The HEZ directors have been part of the facilitation of *Psychological Safety* Training throughout the agency. They have facilitated the training for all the HEZ teams as well as other departments within EBCAP.

IV. HEZ Success Stories / Narratives

School Based Community Health Worker Project:

Through the CDC Community Health Worker Grant, BHEZ hired two Community Health Workers (CHWs) to support the Bristol Warren Regional School District. Jess and Mack were hired in the Summer of 2022 and have not only embraced the role, but have proven to be true assets to the community. They have used innovative thinking to build relationships with students and families. One example of this is renovating their office space into a mini food pantry as well as a thrift store.

Through regular open houses in their office, they were able to talk to hundreds of students this year. Jess and Mack have also become part of the behavioral health team at Mt Hope High School and hold regular school events such as Table Time in the cafeteria and an Activities Fair. They have built rapport with families and have maintained relationships to assist with resource navigation. This project has allowed BHEZ to meet families where they are and support the school system through assisting with the behavioral, healthcare and social service needs of students and families. The school district has expressed enthusiasm for embedding such services within the schools and reach out to BHEZ for support to address student needs on a regular basis. Through this project, the CHWs were able to reach 145 students this school year.

See link for more data regarding this project:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAFin36qyDc/LjARq5jjZrQYSVqp336zzg/view?utm_content=DAFin36qyDc&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink

CHW story:

Through outreach, we encountered a student that had outgrown his shoes and the family could not afford to buy new ones. The student's mother had gone on social media to find him a pair of used boots for free. Although these were an improvement, they did not fit him quite right and his toes were pushing against the top of the boots. That's when I reached out to some local people we had done some work with previously. I got a reply from the local Community Center- a few people that worked there wanted to help. Some employees chipped in and bought a new pair of sneakers for this young man, and boy were they nice shoes! Not only did he get a new pair of shoes, one of the workers at the Community Center also picked up a pack of socks for the student. He said, "you cannot have new sneakers without new socks too." Because of these special people, this student had a great new pair of shoes that fit and new socks too. When I gave him the shoes and socks you would have thought it was Christmas morning. He was SO excited!

Community Relationships through Tech Talk

Through a partnership with the Town of Bristol Parks and Recreation Department, BHEZ has been able to offer a monthly *Tech Talk* Series. This time is to the community members who require assistance with their technology questions. Since dedicated its inception a year ago, its popularity has grown tremendously. There is one senior couple, in particular that has come often and has come to rely on this time for their technology needs. They often call and ask for Sarah, one of BHEZs CHWs, because they not only benefit from her assistance, it is clear they enjoy their time with her as well. Sarah has assisted them with their tech needs for their phones, laptops, desktops, email, apps, and even their car setup! This couple has reached out at other times as well and has built a great relationship with HEZ over the last year. They have been amazing to work with and we look forward to assisting them in the future!



BHEZ Week of Caring

The BHEZ Health and Mental Wellness, Food and Nutrition and Suicide Prevention Work groups combined their efforts this year to do a Week of Caring Event. This event was an effort to promote an upstream approach to suicide prevention and mental wellness by engaging the community to promote kindness. BHEZ coordinated local partners in a week-long schedule of caring community activities such as Happy Mail for the Military, Food Drives, Positive Messaging signs, Kindness Shells, Virtual Meditation, and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Training- Talk Saves Lives. BHEZ was able to engage the local school district, Roger Williams University, the local farmers market, Bristol Parks and Recreation Department, Rogers Free Library, local churches and the Bristol Police Station in these activities. At the culmination of the week, On the Day of Caring, community volunteers did yard clean ups for Seniors in the Bristol community. Community members came out to assist with the yard clean ups and spend time with the senior residents. The event was a success and BHEZ working groups are already discussing the possibility of making it an annual event!



V. HEZ Action Plan Dashboard

(Please See Attached)

VI. HEZ Evaluation Plan

Collaborative Evaluation Planning: 2022 -2023

Over the 2022-23 program year, EBCAP (backbone agency) and the three HEZ sites it supports – Bristol, East Providence and Warren - identified data collection and evaluation as an opportunity for collaboration and joint learning. There are several reasons this group of HEZ sites and backbone agency have taken a collaborative approach, including:

- Working together maximizes available financial resources and creates economies of scale.
- These three HEZ sites, and EBCAP, share overlapping populations and agency partners. While each HEZ represents a distinct community, they work with many of the same community partners on similar issues. This is especially true with Bristol and Warren, who share pre-K students and the same K-12 public school district.

- Through the shared backbone agency, significant opportunities exist to identify, access, and share relevant data sources to inform community assessment, program development and evaluation.

With these considerations in mind, an RFP process for an evaluation consultant was completed in Fall 2022. Jill Glickman was selected for the contract and started work in January 2023. Ms. Glickman meets regularly with each HEZ Director, attends Steering Committee and Work Group meetings as needed, and leads a monthly joint evaluation meeting with three HEZ Directors, Rita Capotosto, EBCAP's Vice President for Family Development, and members of EBCAP's internal quality team.

Over the last six months, significant progress has been made in four areas:

- Evaluation Framework and Processes
- Data Collection: Systems and Alignment
- Community Needs Assessment
- Work Group Development

Progress in each area is noted below and includes specific examples of how our collaborative approach across the three HEZ sites and with EBCAP has been successful thus far.

Evaluation Framework and Processes

The evaluation consultant is working with each HEZ to develop an evaluation framework and data collection plan to include:

- Logic model, theory of change, or other framework to provide a foundation for 2023-24 and beyond.
- Outputs, outcomes, and data collection guide for individual programs.
- Jointly developed metrics to better understand the effectiveness of the HEZ model and shared backbone agency
- Inclusion of an ongoing stakeholder feedback loop to disseminate evaluation findings and inform future data collection, learning, and evaluation plans
- Alignment with state-level RI Health Equity Measures and evaluation plan

An overarching goal of this effort is to provide each HEZ with an evaluation framework that is flexible enough to adapt to changing needs and opportunities but also provides the guidance and direction needed to demonstrate progress toward short and long-term outcomes.

We began the development of this framework this Spring with the East Providence HEZ. A draft logic model, set of evaluation questions and aligned 3-year data collection plan are being shared with key stakeholders, including the Steering Committee, for input and revisions. Once the process and templates have been vetted and refined by the East Providence team, the processes and materials will be used to launch a similar effort with the Bristol and Warren HEZ sites to strengthen and guide their program planning, data collection and evaluation.

Data Collection: Systems and Alignment

The evaluation consultant supported all three HEZ directors to strengthen and align data collection with program goals, evaluation plans and stated outcomes, short and long-term. This is both an individual project with each HEZ and part of the collaborative effort across three sites with EBCAP. Main activities to date include:

- Outreach to community and state partners to collect relevant data by zip code wherever possible. This has been central to the updated community needs assessment underway in Bristol *and* will serve as baseline data as we work to identify and track short, medium and long-term outcome measures for all three HEZ sites.
- Internal work with each HEZ to standardize data collection for HEZ-sponsored or supported activities and programs.
- A new project with EBCAP's internal quality team to explore how to systematize data collection to inform community needs assessments and build capacity to demonstrate longer-term health outcomes. With the depth and breadth of EBCAP's services in all three HEZ communities and the participation of their staff as part of our joint evaluation team, this effort represents significant untapped potential for future evaluation efforts.
- Review collected data and summarize results for internal review and external reporting.

Community Needs Assessment

While each HEZ engages in ongoing community assessment activities, Bristol launched a targeted community assessment “refresh” process over the last six months to ensure that the primary focus areas they identified in 2020 reflect the community's current needs. The three main components of the Assessment effort are:

1. Develop a targeted community survey to reach demographic groups that may have been under-represented in their 2020 survey, administered during the height of the pandemic. The 2023 Survey instrument is in the final review process and will be administered in the Summer /Fall.
2. Collect relevant data from existing sources. The Evaluation consultant initiated collection of relevant data from existing sources - local, state and national - with a strong emphasis on zip code level data wherever possible.
3. Share findings with Key Stakeholders. In May, initial data findings on key issues of concern, such as food access/insecurity, personal health and wellness, demographic shifts, and other social determinants of health that may be impacting Bristol residents, were shared with the Bristol Steering Committee for review and discussion. This session was the first of several planned as more data and survey results are available. Similarly, data pertinent to specific Work Groups will be shared and discussed in their meetings to inform future program plans and overall goals.

Bristol's targeted assessment process has directly benefitted both Warren and East Providence. Examples include:

- The work completed by the consultant to update survey language questions for Bristol to reflect best practices, especially around race/ethnicity, gender and sexuality, can be adapted and used by the other two HEZ sites in their future assessment efforts.
- Most of the data collected from existing sources for Bristol was also collected for Warren and East Providence at the same time to inform their ongoing community assessment, program development and evaluation.

Work Group Development

The evaluation consultant has been available to Work Group champions and consultants to provide zip code, county and state-level data as needed and to support data-focused learning opportunities at Work Group meetings. These efforts have helped to build the capacity of Work Group members to utilize data to support local needs assessment and to inform the development of targeted activities and programs.

Still in its first few years of operation, Warren has especially benefited from this approach as it stood up two new Work Groups in the last six months: Youth and Food Access/Insecurity. Warren's Youth-focused Work Group, led by Amy Griffin, took a significant dive into relevant data to inform their initial workplan. Additionally, the Warren and Bristol Food-related Work Groups convened a joint meeting in June to examine recent data collected by the evaluation consultant.

VII. Partner Summary

(See attached)

VIII. Community Needs Assessment Summary / Update

As noted in the over-arching evaluation plan, Bristol launched a targeted community assessment "refresh" process starting in February 2023 to ensure that the primary focus areas identified in 2020 reflect the community's current needs. The three main components of the Assessment effort are outlined below, along with key findings to date.

4. Develop and Administer 2023 Community Survey Instrument

We worked with our evaluation consultant to develop a targeted 30-item community survey to reach demographic groups that may have been under-represented in our 2020 survey administered during the height of the pandemic. Key features of this effort include:

- Targeted outreach to reach residents under age 50 and residents with families, two groups under-represented in the 2020 survey participation.
- Inclusion of survey items from 2016 and 2020 to compare responses over time
- An in-depth review of the survey language questions from 2020 to ensure that we are modeling inclusion and reflecting best practices. This resulted in new language on several survey items, including race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and substance use.

The 2023 Survey instrument is in the final review process and will be administered in the Summer/Fall. Once data collection is complete, results will be shared with the Steering Committee and other relevant stakeholders to inform current and future priorities.

5. Collect Relevant Data from Existing Sources

Starting in January 2023, our evaluation consultant- initiated collection of relevant data from existing sources - local, state, and national - with a strong emphasis on zip code level data where possible.

Sources consulted include:

- United Way 2-1-1
- East Bay Food Pantry
- Kids Count 2022 and 2023 Factbooks
- Thrive by Five: Data in Our Backyard

- East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP)
Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), Census data at community zip code level
- RIDOH Health By Numbers publications
- Bristol HEZ School-based CHW data collection: 2022- 2023

We anticipate this will be an ongoing effort to inform our work as more data sets become available.

6. Share Findings with Key Stakeholders

In May 2023, initial data findings on key issues of concern, such as food access/insecurity, personal health and wellness, demographic shifts, and other social determinants of health that may be impacting Bristol residents, were shared with the Bristol Steering Committee for review and discussion. This session was the first of several planned as more data and survey results are available. Similarly, data pertinent to specific Work Groups will be shared and discussed in their meetings to inform future program plans and overall goals.

Key takeaways identified at the May meeting include:

- The overall population and household size in Bristol are not growing; however, the number of residents over 65+ increased from 2010 to 2021 and is projected to continue to rise
- Racial/ethnic diversity will continue to increase slowly in Bristol, according to ESRI's Diversity Index
- Local food pantry use is highest among seniors and those in single-person households. Additionally, we see potential early signs of a rise in food insecurity for families with children in 2023
- United Way 2-1-1 data provided insight into what Bristol residents who called 2-1-1 in 2021 and 2022 identified as their top needs: Rent and Food
- Multiple data sources point to health disparities, lack of access, and specific needs experienced by families with children in Bristol. Data points explored at the meeting include:
 - Food insecurity, both food pantry data and low uptake (compared to eligibility for school breakfast)
 - Rise in childhood obesity
 - Under-utilization and under-enrollment in services and supports such as WIC
 - High utilization, right from the start, of the new school-based HEZ CHW's placed at Mt Hope and Kickemuit, in partnership with the school district and Warren HEZ
- RIDOH state-level data on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) point to a need for mental health and social supports for youth identifying as LGBTQ.

See Slide Deck from May 30th Steering Committee meeting in attachment for more in-depth information.

In Fall 2023, the Steering Committee will continue to review relevant data to inform Bristol HEZ's current and future work, including the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), early childhood data, and the 2023 Bristol HEZ Survey results.

IX. Looking Forward to the coming year (FY24)

Evaluation Plans for 2023 –2024

We anticipate that we will be able to maintain momentum on the work outlined in the Evaluation Plan in the new program year. Key activities will include:

- Logic models and evaluation framework completed for East Providence and developed in partnership with Bristol and Warren stakeholders.
- Administration and analysis of the 2023 Bristol Community Needs Assessment Survey.
- More standardized data collection across HEZ-sponsored and supported activities, especially demographic data. This effort may also include the addition of 1-2 questions focused on understanding the increasing concern noted in the literature around loneliness and social isolation.
- Planning for a targeted qualitative evaluation effort across all three HEZ sites. Planning will include identification of core evaluation question shared by the three sites as well as methodology that will yield results to inform their work. Under consideration: case studies or “seven stories” approach, key information interviews, or focus groups across the three communities.
- Continued work with the EBCAP quality team to mine data capacity and opportunities for collaboration on data collection and analysis.
- Continued focus on data collection from relevant, existing sources to inform the work of each HEZ and build community capacity to discuss and utilize data alongside lived experience and subject matter expertise.

The last 6 months of independent evaluator support has been a tremendous asset to the expansion of our HEZ evaluation. Looking forward to Fiscal Year 2024, we foresee opportunities for additional collaboration with East Providence and Warren HEZs related to housing advocacy (in partnership with Housing Works RI); access to affordable healthy food (possible merging of working groups) and resource and benefits navigation. Due to these regional approaches and increased capacity, we could benefit from additional support with the ongoing financial aspects of the project.

The Bristol, East Providence and Warren Health Equity Zones remain fortunate to share the backbone agency of East Bay Community Action Program. In addition to the regional strategies to address health disparities, the access to social, medical, and behavioral health staff and services has been invaluable. New staff are able to immediately connect with subject matter experts across different departments, and programming opportunities are expanded due to the wealth of knowledge and partners at our fingertips. Our Health Disparities and Community Health Worker programming has been strengthened by our connection with the EBCAP Health Department, Our Pre-School Development Grant continues to build relationships with the EBCAP Home Visiting Team and Head Start/Early Head Start departments, who supported play-and-learn groups, outreach activities, and staff on-boarding.

EBCAP also continues to provide administrative support to the Bristol, East Providence and Warren HEZs, including in the areas of human resources, finance, and communications. It should be noted that EBCAP bears the financial and administrative burden for this support; an ongoing challenge faced by backbone organizations is the inability to charge HEZ funding the federally approved indirect cost rate to support administrative functions. As we head into Year 9 of BHEZ, and increase our focus on creating sustainable funding streams, it should be noted that these funding streams need to include funding support for backbone organizations. HEZs are complex initiatives, with complex financial and administrative

requirements; allowable expenses should reflect the time and dedication required of backbone organizations to support these requirements.

It should also be noted that the majority of HEZ funding is through short-term grants; this funding instability leads to barriers in recruiting staff, long-term planning, and financial projections. Additional resources for the administrative functions necessary to secure long-term grants, including funding to support grant-writing, dedicated evaluation funding, and the above-mentioned office space, would be highly beneficial. As the HEZ Initiative continues its progress towards our long-term goal of sustained systems change, it is important that we are able to utilize funding that supports these goals, rather than primarily focusing on funding that supports programming and engagement. BHEZ looks forward to supporting the identification of these funding sources, diversifying and increasing our funding streams, and to witnessing the long-term positive impact that this goal will have on our residents.

X. Report Summary

BHEZ is fortunate to have a dedicated and passionate steering committee and many reliable community partners. The BHEZ Steering Committee members continue to increase participation in the governance of the HEZ, including being invited to review financial statements on a regular basis, increased collaborative decision-making and forming of a sub-committee to evaluate and refine the BHEZ Mission and Vision Statements. With the assistance of our growing list of community partners, the Bristol HEZ continued to expand its scope and engaged more residents than ever this year.

Bristol HEZ also continued to build trust within the community due to continuous outreach efforts, partnerships with municipal leadership, and the provision of supplies and resources. BHEZ remained dedicated to continuing to meet the community where they are, both physically and mentally, and the continued guidance and support from RIDOH around virtual engagement, safe in-person engagement, and distribution of PPE and at-home test kits over the course of the year, particularly that of our Project Officer, has been invaluable.

Evaluation continues to be a focus for BHEZ. In partnership with the Warren and East Providence Health Equity Zones, we have hired a HEZ evaluator and continue to discuss embedding the evaluator role more fully within EBCAP. We have identified data collection and evaluation as an opportunity for collaboration and joint learning.

BHEZ was able to partner with Warren HEZ to hire a shared Project Coordinator and Family Navigator positions, which assisted with some of the outreach and administrative functions such as attendance at events, scheduling and reporting. The infrastructure support from EBCAP continues to be an invaluable asset and BHEZ hopes to further expand our partnership with the Town of Bristol in the coming year. We also continue to work towards affecting policy change to improve safety on the Mt. Hope Bridge and to make our community more accessible for all. As BHEZ approaches Year 9, it looks forward to continuing to engage partners in creating a community that is healthy, just, and inclusive, by responding to community members, cultivating partnerships, and advocating for equity.

APPENDIX A: PHOTO RELEASE FORMS

(English/Spanish)

Please contact us if a different translation is needed

PHOTO/INTERVIEW RELEASE FORM

Date: _____

I hereby grant the **State of Rhode Island** permission to use my likeness in photograph(s)/video in any and all of its websites, publications, and in any and all other media. I will make no monetary or other claim against the State of Rhode Island for the use of the photograph(s)/video.

Name print)_____

Signature_____

(must be a parent or guardian if subject is younger than 18 years of age)

Relation to subject (if subject is a minor)_____

Address_____

City, State, ZIP code_____

Email_____

Phone_____

Event_____

Photographer _____

FORMULARIO DE AUTORIZACIÓN PARA EL USO DE FOTO Y/O ENTREVISTA

Fecha: _____

Por este medio autorizo al **Estado de Rhode Island** para usar mi imagen en fotografía(s) y video(s) en cualquiera o todos sus sitios en el internet, publicaciones y cualquier otro medio de prensa. No haré ningún reclamo monetario al Estado de Rhode Island por el uso de mi fotografía(s)/video.

Nombre (Letra de imprenta) _____

Firma _____

(Debe ser firmado por un padre o tutor si la persona en la foto o video es menor de 18 años)

Parentesco con la persona (Si es menor de edad) _____

Dirección _____

Ciudad, Estado, Código postal _____

Correo electrónico _____

Número de Teléfono _____

Evento _____

Fotógrafo _____