



End of Year Report

Program Year Two: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Submitted: July 7, 2023

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Attachments and a copy of this narrative can be found at this link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10dFo5ERzmOeU_63bL6zWGEbUuYBUXW4Q?usp=sharing

Attachments:

- A. Google Map- Outreach tool created by Community Health Worker; updated June 2023
- B. Warren Health Equity Zone (HEZ) Steering Committee Membership 6.30.23
- C. PDG 2- Program Chart July 2022- June 2023
- D. Warren HEZ Communications and Marketing: 2022-2023
- E. 2022-2023 Warren HEZ Events, Programs and Outreach List

Required Documents:

- F. Collaborative Membership
- G. Evaluation Plan
- H. Basic Activities Dashboard
- I. Needs Assessment:
 - Warren Broadband Analysis
 - Housing Trends in Warren & Survey Data
 - Children, Youth and Families Work Group_Data Review
 - Food Systems_Data Presentation
 - RI Kids Count Community Profile
 - Fina Reports- 2022 Needs Assessment

I. Executive Summary

Warren Health Equity Zone with support from its backbone agency, East Bay Community Action Program, employs a place-based approach to build the infrastructure needed to achieve healthy, systemic changes at the community level and to achieve health equity by eliminating health disparities within the town of Warren. [Warren Health Equity Zone - East Bay Community Action Program \(ebcap.org\)](http://ebcap.org)

Warren HEZ was founded in 2021, and has one office at Mary V Quirk Community Center on Main Street in Warren. Warren HEZ received an annual Infrastructure Grant and additional funding from the Rhode Island Department of Health for State Year 2023, increasing its portfolio by two grants: Pre School Development Grant and COVID Disparities funding. This brought the total available funds for year 2 of Warren HEZ to \$244,755.25. A part-time Community Health Worker, Family Navigator and Program Coordinator joined the team. In the period of July 1, 2022- June 30, 2023 our expanded team’s core activities included; establishing and facilitating resident-led work groups, participating as active members in local groups and committees, providing access to resources and PPE through outreach, events and benefits navigation, and coordinating activities that build skills for young children and their parents and caregivers.

II. Demographic Information of HEZ Community Served

HEZ Demographic Description	
Geographic area served (include Zip Codes and/or Census Tracts if possible)	Warren, Rhode Island, 02885 has three census tracts; 305, 306.01 and 306.02.
Description of racial/ ethnic groups served in area and estimated population reached	<p>The Town of Warren’s estimated total population is 11,119 (US Census July 2022).</p> <p>The service area population is predominantly white and non- Hispanic (91.6%) with these ethnically diverse populations growing: Black or African American (2.1%), Latinx (3.8%) and those identifying as two or more races (2.8%).</p> <p>Based on a Housing Trend report prepared by Housing Works RI, the Town of Warren’s median household income (in 2021 dollars, 2017-2021) is \$75,755 and per capita income in last 12 months is \$42,683. RI Kids Count lists the AMI as \$97,798 in their 2023 Fact Book. In both reports his is a significant jump from the \$64,034 reported in 2022 by Warren HEZ.</p> <p>Of the 1,826 children living in Warren, 9 identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, 32 as Asian, 39 as Black, 108 as Hispanic or Latinx and 0 as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 1,464 as white. Seventeen children identify as some other race (not listed on the census) and 157 identify with two or more races. The RI Kids Count 2023 Facebook estimates that 5.3% of children in Warren live in</p>

	<p>households below the Federal Poverty Threshold and low-income families' participation in WIC is 34%. Also noted by RI Kids Count, Child Abuse and Neglect indicators have been higher than the state's average for the last four years. It is currently at 12.6%.</p> <p>10.7% living with a disability under age 65.</p> <p>Renters in Warren experience cost burdens at a much higher rate than homeowners (52 percent vs. 20 percent). In particular, when looking at renters who make less than \$50,000, over three-quarters (76 percent) are cost burdened</p> <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US Census, July 2022 • HousingWorks RI- Town of Warren Housing Trends Report 7.18.2022 • RI Kids Count Fact Book 2023 		
<p>Key areas of RI Statewide SDoH your HEZ is focused on</p>	<p>Warren HEZ has identified 7 key areas within the RI Statewide SDOH. Each key area highlights two or more high priority issues. These priorities were established through the Community Needs Assessment and inform Warren HEZ's working groups.</p> <p><i>Health Equity Indicators- Alignment</i></p> <p>Integrated Health Care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services: Ratio: Number of individuals receiving to number of individuals eligible for SNAP benefits, based on income • Behavioral Health: Ratio: Number of naloxone kits distributed to number of overdose deaths <p>Resiliency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Vulnerability: Index score that reflects the social vulnerability of communities <p>Housing Units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resiliency: Equity in Policy: Ratio: Number of low to moderate-income housing units to number of low to moderate-income households <p>Physical Environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation: Index score that reflects the affordability of transportation for renters <p>Socio-Economics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Cost Burdened: Percentage of cost-burdened renters and owners • Food Insecurity: Percentage of population who are food insecure <p>Community Trauma:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Justice: Number of non-violent offenders under Rhode Island probation and parole (per 1,000 residents age 18 and older) <p><i>Warren HEZ Outreach, Project and Work Group Focus Areas</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="407 1766 1440 1881"> <tr> <td data-bbox="407 1766 852 1881"> <p>INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE</p> <p>1) Social Services</p> </td> <td data-bbox="852 1766 1440 1881"> <p>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>5) Transportation affordability</p> <p>a) Safety of transportation</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE</p> <p>1) Social Services</p>	<p>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>5) Transportation affordability</p> <p>a) Safety of transportation</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) SNAP benefits 2) Behavioral Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Substance misuse, overdose and addiction b) E-Cigarettes and Alcohol c) Behavioral health support services <p>COMMUNITY RESILIENCY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Social Vulnerability Index Rating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) COVID-19 support and recovery b) Climate change 4) Equity in Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Housing Affordability b) Access to healthy, affordable food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Alternative transportation methods <p>SOCIO ECONOMICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6) Housing Cost Burden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Cost of Living 7) Food Insecurity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) National School Breakfast and Lunch Program
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Major Accomplishments

From July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, Warren Health Equity Zone (HEZ) met several important infrastructure milestones such as hiring staff and the establishment of the Steering Committee and four Work Groups. Cross training staff, building evaluation plans and finalizing governance documents were also key accomplishments. Deepening partnerships and applying for grant funds grew as the year progressed.

Warren Health Equity Zone Staff

Warren HEZ has moved from planting seeds in year one to sprouting in year two. This was due in large part to increased funding that allowed for additional capacity from staff. In August 2022, Warren HEZ partnered with the Bristol HEZ to fund and hire a Program Coordinator who coordinates events and outreach across several grants, in addition to some administrative and referral tasks. Elsa Schloemer, a Public Health Major from Roger Williams University (RWU), fills this role and has a background that includes training in Public health Communication and her immediate past employment was as an advocate for low-income elders as part of EBCAP’s Senior Care program. Natalie Chasse was hired as a Family Navigator in October 2022, and is funded by the Pre School Development Grant which serves families of young children who are future students for the Bristol Warren School District. Natalie’s position is also funded and shared with Bristol HEZ, and she is a Public Health Major from RWU who works at a hospital as a nurse’s aide and is a children’s dance instructor.

Our final team mates, Ariel Samayoa and Mackenzie O’Neill joined us in January 2023 in support of the Health Disparities grant. Mackenzie, currently pursuing a graduate degree in Counseling, already works part-time with Bristol HEZ as a Community Health Worker stationed at Mt. Hope High School. She dedicates 8-10 hours weekly to focus on building relationships with youth in Warren and supporting their needs. Ariel (Ari) has a rich set of experiences coming from four years of AmeriCorps VISTA, supporting programs in Massachusetts and Texas, related to Opioid mitigation, development of pandemic notifications that are linguistically and culturally correct, and helping strengthen an interfaith association and their congregations’ access to basic needs. Mackenzie completed their CHW Certificate in summer 2022, Elsa and Natalie completed theirs in Spring 2023, and Ari is scheduled to begin his in Fall 2023.

Many of the Warren HEZ staff positions have peers and counterparts within EBCAP and in the other Bristol and East Providence HEZs. In year two we met quarterly with as a 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 intra agency: 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

Warren HEZ’s new team members have used their creativity to build and pilot tools which help us stay organized and track our progress. Elsa utilizes a simple chart that is added to each appointment in a shared Outlook Calendar to provide information about the event for the outreach workers and to track data. We utilize this for reporting and reflecting after each event. In SFY 24 we will add new questions to track that come from our dashboard, such as documenting our effect on reducing stigma by tracking how many people are choosing to take a Narcan kit for the first time.

Ari has developed a Google map, that is still in the piloting phase. It will allow us to see layers of data on top of Warren and Bristol’s geography. Lists with addresses and contact information for events, where we place flyers, and if they are for particular demographics, are uploaded into the google map structure. This visual tool will allow us to see where we are conducting episodic or frequent outreach, where we need to expand and find more bulletin boards for flyers and high traffic areas. Next year we will look at it quarterly to provide snapshots of how we progress in our goal to form relationships and raise awareness of the HEZ collaborative amongst all who live, work, learn and play in Warren. Many of the data points that Ari adds to the google map have come from the very industrious Natalie, who has worked to build a network of broadcasters

of our work. Through her work as a PDG funded Family Navigator, Natalie routinely distributes information to all early learning centers, libraries, medical centers in Warren and Bristol. Her contacts at the School District, Parks Departments and the network of providers in Bristol Warren Thrive by Five and Beyond provide us with spaces, people and social media access that provides us with additional exposure.

Steering Committee & Work Groups

Warren HEZ launched its *Steering Committee* in October 15, 2022. Project Director, Kristin Read, worked to identify and recruit 10 members of its inaugural Steering Committee from a cross sector group of Warren residents and professionals who support residents. (please see appendix Warren HEZ Steering Committee Members as of 2/13/23). The invitation to join the Steering Committee, drew from year one planning activities, in which a small group of residents and stakeholders helped to identify key stakeholders, residents and sectors who should be included. The Steering Committee members have provided guidance, networked and shared introductions to new groups. They have also established the foundation for the HEZ collaborative, by drafting the Warren HEZ Steering Committee Governance Document and approving the launching of four Warren HEZ Priority Working Groups: Food Systems, Children Youth and Families, Safety & Resilience and Housing Affordability.

The Food System and Children Youth and Families groups have benefitted from consultants who are knowledgeable about the topic and area and who have engaged in asset mapping, outreach and facilitation activities to launch the groups. The Safety & Resiliency group was stood up in June, and the climate anxiety activities under this umbrella are being steered in part by Kate Schapira and Elizabeth Rush two writing faculty from Brown University. The *Housing Affordability Priority Work Group* is led by Warren HEZ Project Director, Kristin Read, who is currently engaged in asset mapping activities, and has identified, as a first step, that the HEZ embed itself in ongoing work currently underway by the Town Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board.

In SFY 23 the *Food Systems Priority Working Group* brought together stakeholders representing residents, the food pantries in Warren and Bristol, school-based food pantries in the school district, the summer lunch program, and community-based groups such as the Town's Social Service Office, Hope & Main and East Bay Recovery Center; all who distribute food in a variety of ways. The group, with support from consultant Karen Griffith, has already responded to a request that there be a list published on the Town's website that provides a quick glance at where to find food. This will be piloted online in SFY 24, and eventually it will be paired with a brief rack card and a QR code. It will be shared with folks and spaces such as hairdressers and libraries who are perceived as trusted resources to enable them to respond more easily to a resident in need. Other interests that will be explored in the new grant year are: composting and collaborating with small farms, assisting with school-based community gardens and pantries, and standardizing data collection practices at St. Mary of the Bay Food Pantry in Warren and the East Bay Food Pantry in Bristol.

- Data sources and community input was reviewed and discussed, such as: the number of low-income residents in town, number of children living in poverty, the town’s ranking of food insecurity among children as most important in an ARPA survey to determine how to spend dollars, low participation in SNAP/WIC, and a study showing that Warren residents live in a low-income low access area based on ease and access to markets providing affordable nutritious food. This study is included in the Continuous Assessment Documents

In year one, the Warren HEZ Project Director consistently heard from the community that there were not sufficient spaces for youth and was privileged to convene a group of stakeholders who were struggling with reports of youth who were being disruptive and sometimes destructive in town. This feedback led to an initial focus on teens and young adults for the *Children, Youth and Families Priority Working Group*. The work group has a core group who have attended and includes: Warren Prevention Coalition, Warren Mentoring Program, Warren Police Department, Youth Librarian, EBCAP’s Youth Center, Bristol HEZ Community Health Workers, Bristol/Warren Regional School District and local group home administrator. Consultant, Amy Griffin, with guidance from the EBCAP HEZs Evaluator, Jill Glickman, developed a data dive ppt presentation and facilitated conversations which allowed the members of the work group to move through relevant data and share impressions and provide context.

Based on the data dive, the following subtopics were selected to drive the action plan in SFY 24: Disordered Eating & Obesity; Child Abuse & Neglect *includes witnessing domestic violence or alcohol/drug related incidents in the home; Chronic School Absenteeism; School Boredom; Out-of-School Suspensions; Recreation Spaces. Throughout the first quarter of SFY 24 Warren HEZ staff will meet with youth to explore their perspective on which subtopics are most relevant to them and brainstorm methods for meeting their needs. New working group members and presenters who have insights and influence in these subtopics will be recruited to join us moving forward.

- Data sources which were reviewed and discussed can be seen in the appendix titled *“Children, Youth and Families Work Group_Data Review*.

The *Safety & Resiliency Work Group* was the last Warren HEZ work group that received an okay from the Steering Committee to launch in July 2023. This group is an umbrella for areas of focus such as Mobility, Emergency Response & Climate Change Preparedness. This group will explore opportunities to improve biking, walking, driving, parking in town, access transportation; engage volunteers in Emergency Response and create spaces to cope with Climate Anxiety as a strategy for feeling better prepared. The membership of this group will first pull from residents involved in the successful climate anxiety series “Where Warren Meets the Water”. As a result of the three-part workshop series held in March-May, led by nonfiction professors Kate Schapira and Elizabeth Rush, residents made ongoing commitments to engage in three key actions: form a Safety & Resiliency Work Group, coordinate Listening Sessions in the Water Street neighborhood and collaborate with the Fire Department to communicate important approaches to improve a citizen’s response to an emergency.

- Data sources which have informed the structuring of this Working Group are the results from the Community Strengths and Needs Survey and elements from the “Warren’s Market to Metacom Climate Resilience and Economic Development Plan” [Useful Links | Market to Metacom \(arcgis.com\)](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6243398bbb804cc794fbdfbf2e5a71c0/page/Useful-Links/) <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6243398bbb804cc794fbdfbf2e5a71c0/page/Useful-Links/>. The “Where Warren Meets the Water” workshop participants generated a wish list of information they needed. Kate Schapira and her intern have worked to identify the answers, check them with the Town Manager. The list of questions and answers, with an invitation for viewers to ask more questions or give answers, will be placed on the Town of Warren’s website. Please see Appendix “*Where Warren Meets the Water*” Information Wishlist).

Three Community Conversations were held in 2022-2023, with the objectives to thank those who had contributed feedback in the 2021-2022 needs assessment, invite more community members to learn about the Warren HEZ and to more fully define the identified priorities based on their impressions and lived experiences. The first Conversation was held at the Historic Warren Armory located off Main Street, the second at the Libby Lane Senior Center and a chalk talk variation at the Youth Center in Town Hall. By far the most successful event was the community conversation at the Senior Center. Seniors had a lot to say about the way that the town of Warren has evolved, continues to grow, and ways that we should improve the health of our community. We hope to host a minimum of three *Community Conversations* or *Speak Outs* annually.

Backbone Agency

Warren HEZ benefits from having East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP) as their backbone agency, and being part of a trio of HEZs supported by EBCAP. Our paid staff are better prepared to answer the immediate basic needs of residents due to access to expanded training, ability to partner with other departments on referrals, and to tap existing local medical, dental and behavioral health aggregate data to identify skills, competencies and systems needed to be more effective. Warren HEZ is able to fund shared positions with the other EBCAP supported HEZs, and we receive significant in-kind support such as shared meeting space, equipment, staff consultation, sophisticated HR, IT and Financial practices and systems and informed supervision. Brooke Conneally, a communications specialist funded in part by the three HEZs, is instrumental in helping get our and our community’s messages seen and heard. Please see the attachment titled “*Warren HEZ Communications and Marketing: 2022-2023*” which provides some highlights from this program year. In addition, Project Director Kristin Read has worked closely with EBCAP’s grant writer, Jim Dealy to submit three grants.

Partners- In Town, East Bay and Statewide

Warren Health Equity Zone has become a known and trusted partner. Staff sit in meetings and on boards, extending offers to partner and providing leadership. The Warren Churches Association has strengthened over this year and Ari Samayoa attends these meetings. He has helped to locate mental health resources for their congregations, such as Grief and Bereavement Presentations and Series. The Warren Prevention

Coalition welcomes Elsa Schloemer to their monthly, and provides us with dedicated time on their agenda to share our news. Kristin Read is a member of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board which is administering a fund of \$250,000 to develop and keep low income housing stock. And, Natalie helps co-facilitate a small group during the Bristol Warren Thrive by Five and Beyond, provider network meetings.

In recognition of the Warren HEZ's connection and resources for families with students, we have been asked to partner in a variety of ways, for big kids and little ones too. We are a site for Roger Williams University students who are completing capstones or internships, and a bridge for clubs interested in connecting with the community. The Brain Club spent one Saturday supporting Warren Prevention Coalition and the Warren Police Department for "Drug Give Back Day". George Hail Library, in addition to utilizing us as a site for referrals, has reached out to us for curriculum, expertise and will host a Climate Change board for us to broadcast neighbors' reflections. Kristin Read, was asked to facilitate an action planning series for members of Bristol Warren Thrive by Five and Beyond (BWTB5B) post the RI Kids Count Data in Our Backyard presentation in spring 2022. Through the process, the network of providers has committed to harnessing their energies to 'push the needle' and partner for collective impact in the areas of Chronic Absenteeism and Better Utilization of Early Learning Resources (Home Visiting, WIC, Head Start).

In year one a clear avenue to engage with the school-based community was not apparent. In year two we are excited to be included in events, partnering to host events in their halls and cafeterias, and members of school district and HEZ are sitting on each other's committees. Kristin Read is part of the Hugh Cole School Improvement Team and part of the Health and Safety Committee for the Bristol Warren Regional School District. School Counselors and Physical Fitness instructors inform our Work Groups. The Town's Parks & Recreation Department has included us in grants and conversations with funders around Mentoring and the Governor's Learn365 program. One small but significant way we are working to support teens and schools, is by serving as a community service site and seeking other volunteer sites, for students who are seeking places to complete their hours as part of an agreement with the Juvenile Hearing Board. Perhaps due to stigma or uncertainty about how to structure a volunteer experience, many non-profit locations in town have refused attempts by adults or kids to open their doors to a student for a meaningful experience, and in the prescribed timeframe.

The Town of Warren administrators are keen allies. We have been invited to meet with an administrator of the Opioid Settlement fund and included in a grant to promote the Affordable Connectivity Program potential outreach needs and efforts. Most recently the Town Manager has generously provided access to the Town's website for our collaborative to post important information. The Food Systems Work Group has been given the okay to share their Food & Resources Directory and a Climate Anxiety Wish List on the town's website. We hope to increase participation in the upcoming elections. In 2022 we used our social media channels to advertise the need for poll workers, explain

what might have appeared to be complicated steps, and to encourage citizens to exercise their right to vote.

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.

Grant Funded Activities

Warren HEZ received additional funding from the Rhode Island Department of Health for State Year 2023, increasing its portfolio by two grants: Pre School Development Grant and COVID Disparities funding. The addition of these funds allowed for part time Community Health Workers and a Family Navigator to elevate our engagement. *See 2022-2023 Warren HEZ Events, Programs and Outreach List* for a lengthy but not exhaustive look at where and when our team was in action.

Specific deliverables were agreed upon through two components of the *Preschool Development Grant (PDG)*. With these funds and staff, Warren HEZ knit together a continuum of experiences for parents and caregivers of children birth to five whose home school lies within the Bristol/Warren Regional School District (BWRSD). The Family Navigator worked to create a list of parent and caregiver training options that would support families from pregnancy, into infancy and toddler age, to preschool and kinder. Being able to pivot when mode of delivery for the programs and/or timeline were not a good fit was important. *See appendix titled "PDG2 Activities Chart"*. A complementary activity was the creation of a crowd-sourced Children's Activities Calendar in a paper and electronic version. <https://www.bristolwarren thriveby5.org/event-calendar>

- The following data was compiled from the RIDE website and used as confirmation of need for early program experiences and parent skills building. "Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) scores for third grade students at Hugh Cole Elementary point to a clear need to engage families in high quality early childhood programming to support their child's academic success. Only 4% of economically disadvantaged students and 24% of non-disadvantaged students met or exceeded Math Proficiency on RICAS; and 14% of

economically disadvantaged students or 40% of non-disadvantaged students met or exceeded English Language Arts Proficiency on RICAS. (2020-21)”

Through the COVID-19 Health Disparities grant, the Warren HEZ collaborative is able to boost the efforts of State and community leaders to combat and rebound from the impact of COVID-19 by developing and implementing local response activities, coordinating the distribution of resources, and engaging in recovery and resiliency efforts. In this previous program year the Warren HEZ Community Health Workers provided the following services: Medicaid renewal office hours at the local senior center, assistance once per week at the local food pantry, distribution of 42 Narcan boxes to community members and businesses, helped 67 community members with accessing services, and attended over 50 community outreach events. Because of COVID, many community members had questions about Medicaid re-enrollment, appealing and accessing their SNAP benefits, seeking food pantry services, applying for unemployment and finding employment.

Our communications platforms enabled us to take part in responding to Public Health Crisis and Emergencies, such as Medicaid Unwinding, MPX and Tick Borne Illnesses. In monthly mailings, posts, shares and on our outreach tables we promote awareness and resources to those with whom we interact. We have identified emergency response as one of the pillars for our Safety & Resiliency Work Group, with the expectation that we can grow the circle of people who are connected and can respond to emergencies presented by climate or medical or other.

In this last year of the Health Disparities grant, we hope to reach populations that have barriers, such as; translate materials, make resources more available to those who lack transportation, support those who have criminal records as they seek second chance employment and housing, and to continue searching and accommodating for barriers to health equity that we see within the Warren community.

Evaluation

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, and Work Group Development

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.

An overarching goal of this year's evaluation effort is to provide each of EBCAP's three HEZs 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.

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.

HEZ Success Stories / Narratives

1. A resident walk into The East Bay Recovery Center, Railroad Avenue office looking for someone to help them sign up for SNAP. They knew that Warren HEZ had team members able to help. The **referral is for a resident** who needed help learning about services because he could not read or write proficiently. He had been working in a woodshop in Warren for decades. After getting laid off from his job and dealing with an injured foot, he did not know where to go for help for healthcare, food access, a doctor's

appointment, and a job. The HEZ immediately reached out to schedule an appointment for a SNAP application at a restaurant near to his home, listened to his needs, explained to him where the food pantry was, and we moved forward from there. He relied on the very little unemployment income he had. Warren HEZ workers helped connect him to many various services to improve his quality of life:

- we helped him refile unemployment claim for an extended period of time,
- we linked the resident to SNAP and Medicaid,
- provided a Lifeline government cell phone (and returned it once because it arrived non-functional).
- linked him to EBCAP Health Services for an appointment,
- assisted with transportation by providing a free bus pass through a pilot project,
- looked for and received a donated bicycle from Recycle A Bike,
- and we referred him to EBCAP’s career center to help him apply for jobs.

We worked with this community member from November and on throughout the year into June, touching base with him at the Food Pantry every week to see how he was doing and making sure his needs were met. And, when possible worked with his neighbor to provide him with some support as well. This community member was so grateful to “know that there are great people in the town who were willing to help him in a time of crisis”. We would not have been able to provide him with this level of ongoing help without an active Health Equity Zone team in our town. – Shared by Elsa Schloemer, Warren HEZ Project Coordinator.

2. Climate Change is a Health Equity issue not just for our country and the wider world, but also for our small town. The town of Warren is approaching rising sea levels in the next 7 years, and plans to relocate houses and businesses on Market Street and parts of Metacom Avenue due to flooding. This would mean the loss of valued businesses and places such as Jamiel Park, Market Street Pub, Malik’s Liquors, Amaral’s Fish and Chips, Cumberland Farms, the Auto Body, and possibly more. This is a source of anxiety, for many people. The Warren HEZ initiated 3 sessions of a Climate Anxiety Workshop at the local George Hail Library, to empower residents in their awareness of this issue and others that impact the health and wellbeing of Warren. In conversation with our friend Kate Schapira from Brown University since August, we planned and contemplated the logistics of how-to spring residents into action and involvement. We decided that with free food, \$25 gift cards, and the option to come to one, two, or all three workshops, residents would be intrigued to learn about this issue and connect with their neighbors.

At our first workshop, we expected about 8 residents to come but were surprised with 18 people! The conversation was exciting and inquisitive. Many residents returned and some came for all three workshops. Solutions, worries, observations, and problems were discussed. We established a Safety & Resiliency Working group based on this project, to encourage ongoing participation from residents regarding transportation safety,

emergency responses, and Climate Change. Our town planner Kate Michaud was invited to attend and listen into our sessions. We also created weekly listening sessions in Jamiel Park to discuss the Market Street to Metacom plan. Town residents will have conversations about the rising waters every Thursday evening at 5:30pm to 7pm in Jamiel Park. This resident group is helping to launch a new Safety & Resiliency Priority Working Group. – Shared by Elsa Schloemer, Warren HEZ Project Coordinator.

3. 2nd Annual Week of the Young Child. The Warren HEZ partnered with Bristol HEZ, Mary V. Quirk Head Start, the local Girl Scouts Troop, George Hail Free Library, Warren Police Department, and Warren Fire Department to host a celebration of early childhood education and educators. The event, “Week of the Young Child: Kickoff” was held at La Piñata in Warren on April 8th. Local families attended to participate in activities such as line dancing led by students from Rockwell Elementary school, the librarian crossed the street for story time, volunteers hosted printing/painting and activated giant games, Touch a Truck with a fire truck and police car, and more! There were also tables with authentic Mexican snacks and drinks, a popular guacamole demonstration and a chance for HEZ and partners to share information about benefits navigation, children’s programming, Head Start, and Girl Scout curriculum. – Shared by Natalie Chasse, Bristol/Warren Family Navigator

4. Relationship with Local School District: Through the PDG 1 & 2, Warren HEZ’s Family Navigator has started a relationship with the Bristol Warren Regional School District. Over the school year, the School District’s Title XI liaison and PAT program sent referrals to the Family Navigator. The school district also shared upcoming events with the local families to keep parents and caregivers informed. In the Spring, Warren HEZ was present at Science Night and a Math & Literacy Night where we distributed “Maker’s Kits” and set up a materials buffet of recycled materials. The idea was to activate imaginations over April break, and decrease perceived anxiety in children due to high amounts of screen time. At the end of the school year, the HEZ partnered with local kindergarten teachers and Head Start preschool teachers to host a Transition to K event to support caregivers through the transition. – Shared by Natalie Chasse, Bristol/Warren Family Navigator

HEZ Action Plan Dashboard: See attached Action Plan Dashboard

HEZ Evaluation Plan: See attached Evaluation Plan

Partner Summary: See attached Collaborative Membership

Community Needs Assessment Summary / Update: See attached Needs Assessment Documents

Looking Forward to the coming year (FY24)

In year 3, Warren HEZ will activate the collaborative in new and exciting ways, develop action plans and measurements for each work group, engage new stakeholders in the collaborative who have diverse expertise and lived experience, and partner on a regional evaluation effort. We will need to focus on grant writing to fund key roles such as Community Health Workers and the Family Navigator. Additionally, we will continue to support residents through targeted outreach and events with an emphasis on emergency and climate change preparedness for residents of 305 census tract, an area with a medium-high Social Vulnerability Index risk level.

Warren HEZ asks for continued support in seeking grant dollars to sustain the focus on PDG and COVID disparities. And, participation in a burgeoning Climate Change Community of Practice is very timely for Warren. RIDOH's good counsel from the Program Officers and access to key staff within RIDOH who are focused on Warren's priority continue to be a valuable resource.

Report Summary

Warren HEZ begins its third year in a strong position to build on their evaluation efforts. And we are excited by the possibility to lend support to the local pantries to standardize their data collection, helping us meet a goal to create local level data. A challenge will be to gather more accurate statistics about the income levels and housing needs of members within the 305 Census Tract. The AMI is not representative of everyone within our town's boundaries.

The work groups are exciting places to bring residents and stakeholders into the Collaborative. The plan to build trainings around collective impact and to establish action plans with measurable goals will enlarge our reach significantly.

Internally, Warren HEZ hopes to a) leverage more intra agency relationships, b) firm up tracking tools for reporting measures and finances, and c) increasing our fundraising while we 'friendraise' will be critical to maintaining our progress.