

# BRIDGES Take Action

What's on your mind?

Lake Worth West Resident Planning Group recently hosted two BRIDGES Take Action – Oscar-themed events (one in English and one in Spanish) to inspire our residents to tell us how our programs are received in the community and what our staff can do better to help families thrive in Palm Beach County. The events were also to thank the 118 members/clients who participated in a survey process.

The events came after an evaluation by Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County that found many of the children attending our BRIDGES programs aren't as proficient in reading and aren't as ready for kindergarten as children in other parts of Palm Beach County. For example, in Palm Beach County, 90% of kindergarteners were screened as "ready," whereas 77% of Lake Worth West kindergarteners were ready.



That's no major surprise, considering our BRIDGES programs exist to raise children's reading levels and get children prepared for school. As part of BRIDGES, there are monthly educational

workshops on topics, such as improving reading and better parenting.

Rhonda Rogers, executive director of Lake Worth West Resident Planning Group, said our staff is making progress in getting children better prepared for school. But, she said, there are barriers – including language challenges, domestic violence incidents, and immigration concerns – that can stand in the way of children succeeding in school.

“Many of our families are going through a lot of things, but we’re working with them and helping their children get better prepared for school,” Rogers said. “These children are resilient and they will accomplish many good things.”

At the BRIDGES Take Action events, residents came to celebrate BRIDGES and have fun, as well as, of course, to offer ideas on making our workshops stronger and improving the community. Lake Worth West Resident Planning Group is now working on an action plan to address those issues.

“We set up the BRIDGES Take Action events to listen, take notes and commit to action – and that’s exactly what we’ll do,” Rogers said.