

**Best Practices**

The Florida Recreation and Park Association adopted a comprehensive Strategic Plan in 2015. That Plan is based on four foundational pillars – Health, Community Building, Environmental Sustainability and Resiliency, and Economic Impact/Development.

The Association is in search of Best Practices in each of these four areas, which can serve as a resource for parks and recreation professionals. We realize that “Best Practice” can be broadly applied and the meaning varies depending on the environment and industry one works within.

For the purposes of the FRPA Strategic Plan, the Association’s Board of Directors has adopted and will apply the following definition:

FRPA Strategic Best Practices – Methods, professional guidance, benchmarks and technical expertise centered around a FRPA strategic pillar (Health, Environment, Community Building, Economic Impact) that are evidence-based or proven through experience to support positive results and may be replicated or utilized by other parks and recreation agencies toward achieving a similar desired outcome.

“Evidence-based or proven through experience” indicates that the best practice has had some research, or long term monitoring conducted to show that the practice is having a positive outcome when applied. For example: When applying the best practice of mowing and over-seeding in this manner, for a period of one year, we have been able to extend the life of our turf by 6 months thus reducing expenses $X; OR When integrating physical activity and nutrition education in our after school programming, we partnered with the University of XYZ to measure increased health of participants, and have shown a 24% reduction in BMI of participants.

We realize that there may be a plethora of “success stories” that are not evidence based, but have produced positive results for an agency, and may also have value as a shared resource.

Submissions will be evaluated by the Best Practice Workgroup to determine if the submission meets the criteria of “Best Practice” as we have defined, or if it should be catalogued as a “success story”.



**Best Practice Submission**

Agency: \_\_City of Hialeah- Parks and Recreation Department \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Area of Best Practice:** HEALTH PILLAR: Creating an atmosphere of fitness, physical activity and fun in a safe environment.

**Summary of Best Practice:** (include description of the practice, reason for adopting/implementing best practice, measurement of effectiveness of the practice, what is your evidence that the practice is working, etc.)

The City of Hialeah Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with the Hialeah Healthy Families initiative supported by the Florida Blue Foundation as a part of the Embrace a Healthy Florida initiative, work together to create a healthier Hialeah. With the cooperation and help from these organizations we have been able to identify areas of need throughout our community. Members of the working groups examined strategies to foster lifestyle changes with proper nutrition and fitness, nutrition education and fitness programming for parents and children, opportunities for increasing awareness of healthy food and exercise options, and data and evaluation tools. These strategies led to the creation of programs, such as the Hialeah Tennis club, the EPI Healthy Eating Habits, Hialeah Track and Field program, events such as the Organ Wise Guys Healthy Eating programs and new fitness areas in five different parks throughout our City. Additionally, the City’s Education and  Community Services Department created a healthy eating recipes YouTube channel “Real Recipes with Damaris” to teach our community how to cook traditional Hispanic meals in a  healthier manner.    <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGlq-hF8sN0&list=PLqSbowu6wG3lpVnDHIE7PjEF8z7x_E3pw>

**Frequency Best Practice is Applied:** (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, annually)

These practices are applied differently according to the program. Our programming Sports are done and awareness to healthy foods are programmed daily with the help of our Citys channel 77 and our Recreational staff. Our Organ Wise Guys program is done yearly, in the summer months of June and July

**Who Performs the Best Practice Function within your Agency:** (contracted, in-house parks staff, in-house recreation staff, citizens, etc.) Recreation Staff/ City employees (library staff and Education and Community Services staff)

**Positive Outcome of the Best Practice** (please summarize the evidence based benefit that has been derived by the agency from the best practice)**:**

Our 7 year Hialeah healthy Families initiative , still has one more year to go but the reported success are already showing, here are a few of our collective success.

* A total of 300 students in after-school programs were educated on the advertising practices of big companies and how to offset the negative messages through healthy eating and active living.
* worked to change a bus route to provide access to the flea market that contains a farmers market in the other city.
* Worked with elected officials to advocate and gain support for the implementation of marked crosswalks on streets where children must cross busy roads to walk to and from school.
* Developed and implemented culturally appropriate nutrition education programs focused on healthy meals design, purchase and preparation

**Awards/Recognitions/Designations Received as a Result of the Best Practice** (please share any awards or designations received, or publications that have featured this best practice)**:**

<http://miami.cbslocal.com/2011/08/11/hialeah-launches-initiative-to-combat-childhood-obesity/>

**Grants or Funding Received (if any):**

* Florida Blue Foundation Grants for Marketing, Tennis, Track, outdoor Fitness Machines, Early Prevention and Intervention, Community Gardens, Healthy Nutrition Education.
* Kaboom/ Target build a playground Grant
* Walmart/ NRPA grant
* USA Swimming Make a Splash Grant
* Autism Awareness Grant

**What other Best Practices would you suggest we collect?**

**Submit this Form electronically to** **charla@frpa.org**

Type directly onto this document, and submit as a Word Document. Please DO NOT pdf the form.