

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2024 – 2026



# Acknowledgments

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# Message from the Executive Director



Each night before bedtime, our family reads books with our son, William. Even though he is 11, we still have plenty of books to read. His mom has been sticking with Harry Potter, but William and I tend to focus on books that have animals as the main characters. Currently, we are reading Dog Squad, a book about a group of dogs who are acting as a super team of heroes on a TV show- and the challenges they face in real life when their TV Superhero skills don't materialize when real life problems arise.

One of my favorite parts of the story is that the dogs regularly talk with one another- and while the dogs have great back and forth conversations, all the dog owners and tv production staff ever hear is "bark! bark! bark!"

As we prepared to kick off the Needs and Resources Assessment and Strategic Planning work required as a part of the SC legislature enabling legislation for SC First Steps- we first began to look at the questions of our community's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities from the lens of what our staff and board identified.

As we reflected- we realized we needed to broaden our conversation- because while we may hear and understand one another perfectly well- we knew the community may be talking a different language- and may have very different needs than we have been tackling.

Over 3 months, the Greenville First Steps Board and Staff conducted focus groups and conversations with 5K classroom teachers, community leaders, faith based and for-profit childcare providers, health care providers, funders, and stakeholders. All told, more than 100 community members participated in these conversations.

Attached here is a summary of those conversations- the community connections that exist in Greenville County and the gaps in service that were identified. From here, the Greenville First Steps Board and Staff will review those common trends and make recommendations on the investments Greenville First Steps will make over next 3 years to measurably improve school readiness outcomes for children and their families.

Thanks to each of you who helped us with the conversations- you were heard, and we will continue to seek opportunities to talk more in the future as we work to shape a Greenville County where all children and families thrive.

**Derek Lewis**  
Executive Director  
Greenville County First Steps

# Needs Assessment Process

## CONVENE

Held two community convenings with 57 participants and developed a vision for young children and their families

November 2022 – February 2023



## UNDERSTAND

Reviewed local data and map assets to understand the state of young children, their families, and the early childhood system

October 2022 – March 2023

## PRIORITIZE

Organized the insight gathered from the convenings and data to prioritize the concerns, needs, and gaps the partnership wants to address and formalized Needs Assessment

February 2023 – March 2023

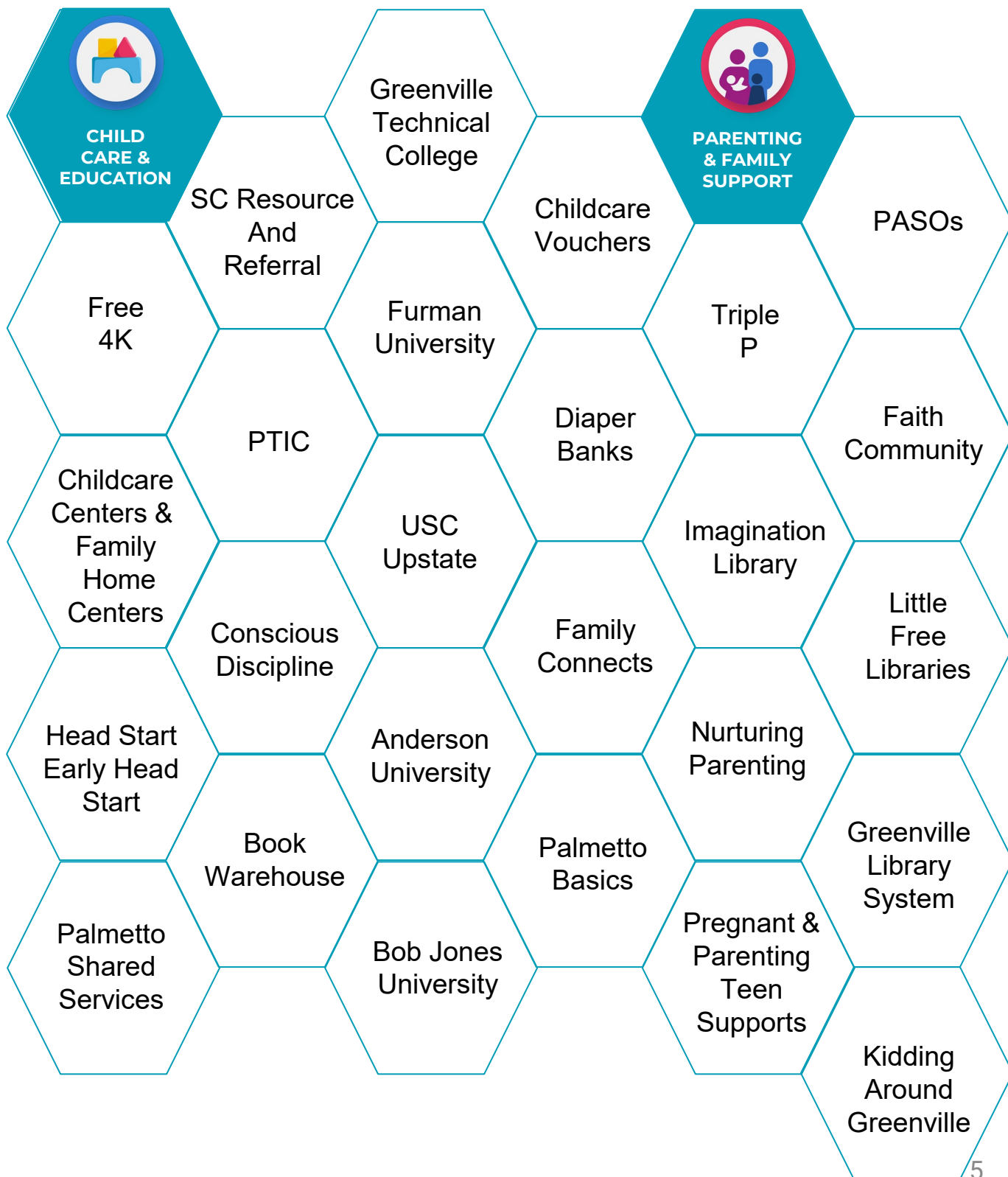
**“I really appreciate the thought that went into the needs assessment community meeting. I appreciate being asked to provide input and hope that Greenville County children and families are more aware of the assets our community has.”**

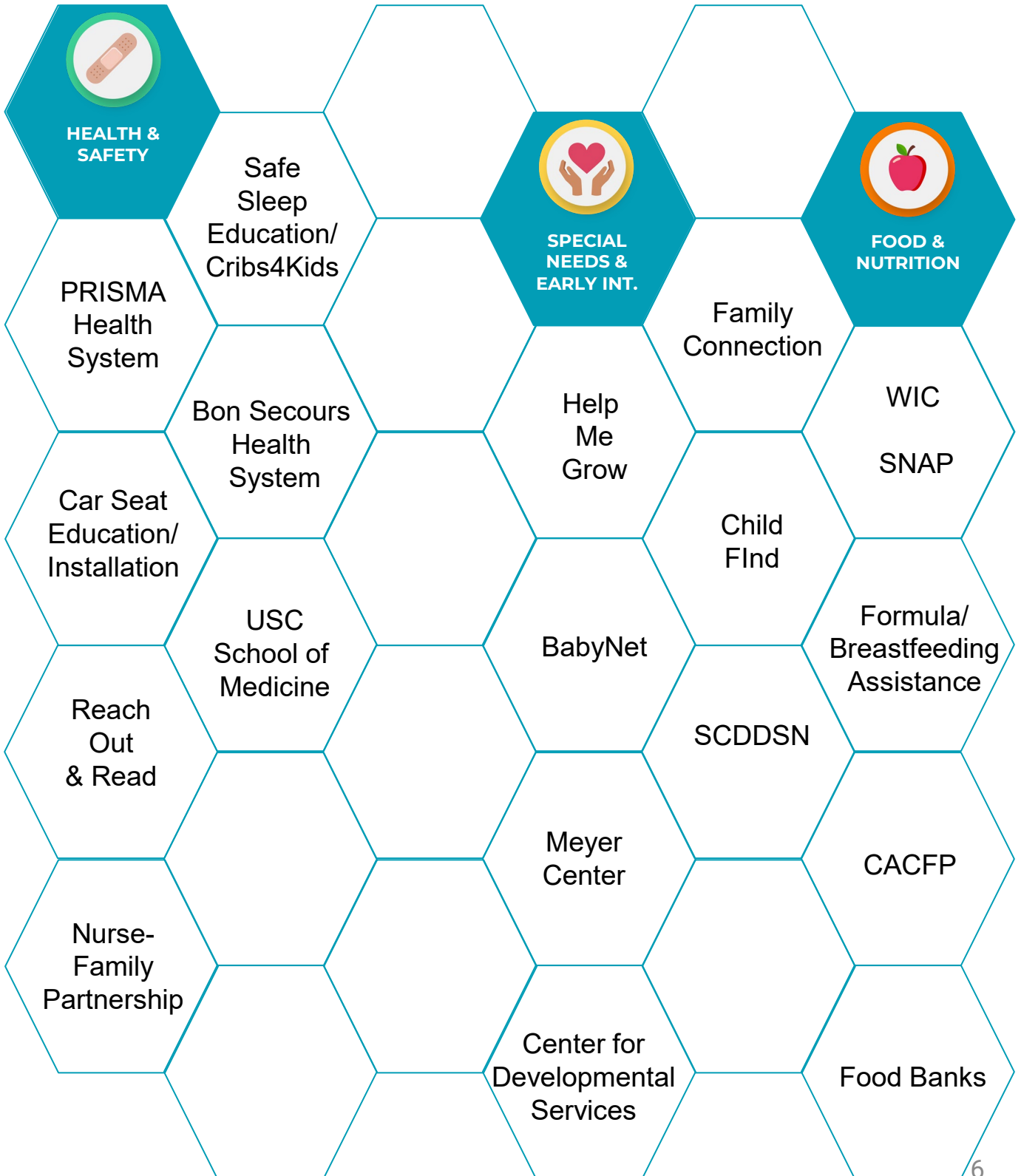
-Community Member

**“Today got my wheels spinning about how First Steps might be able to help more children and families.”**

-Educator

# Asset Map (continued on next page)





# Priorities: Summary

## 1. Parenting Supports

Parenting supports ensure caregivers have access to the resources and tools they need when and where they need them.

## 2. Childcare Deserts

Access to affordable quality childcare ensures parents/caregivers and their children have a safe and stable environment for learning.

## 3. Early Literacy

Access to books and other reading materials as well as training about the importance of and the instruction of literacy and language development are critical to kindergarten readiness.

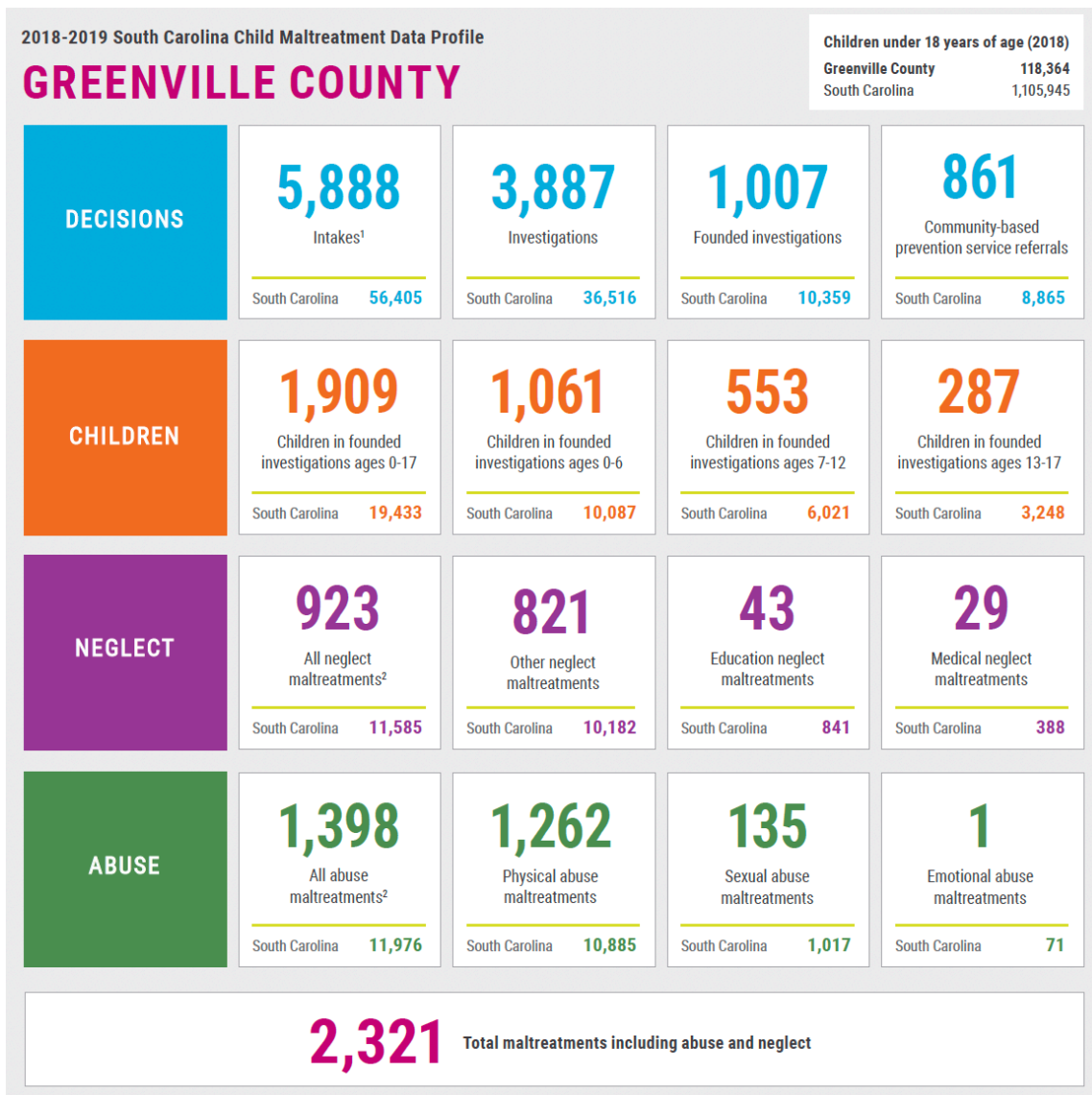
## 4. Infant Mortality

After years of seeing a decline, Greenville County has seen a rise in infant mortality, especially in non-Hispanic Black infants.

# Priority One: Parenting Supports

## 1,061 Greenville County children aged 0-6 in DSS founded investigations

SC DSS Data – Children in Founded CPS investigations during SFY 2018-2019 based on the date the intake was accepted for investigation



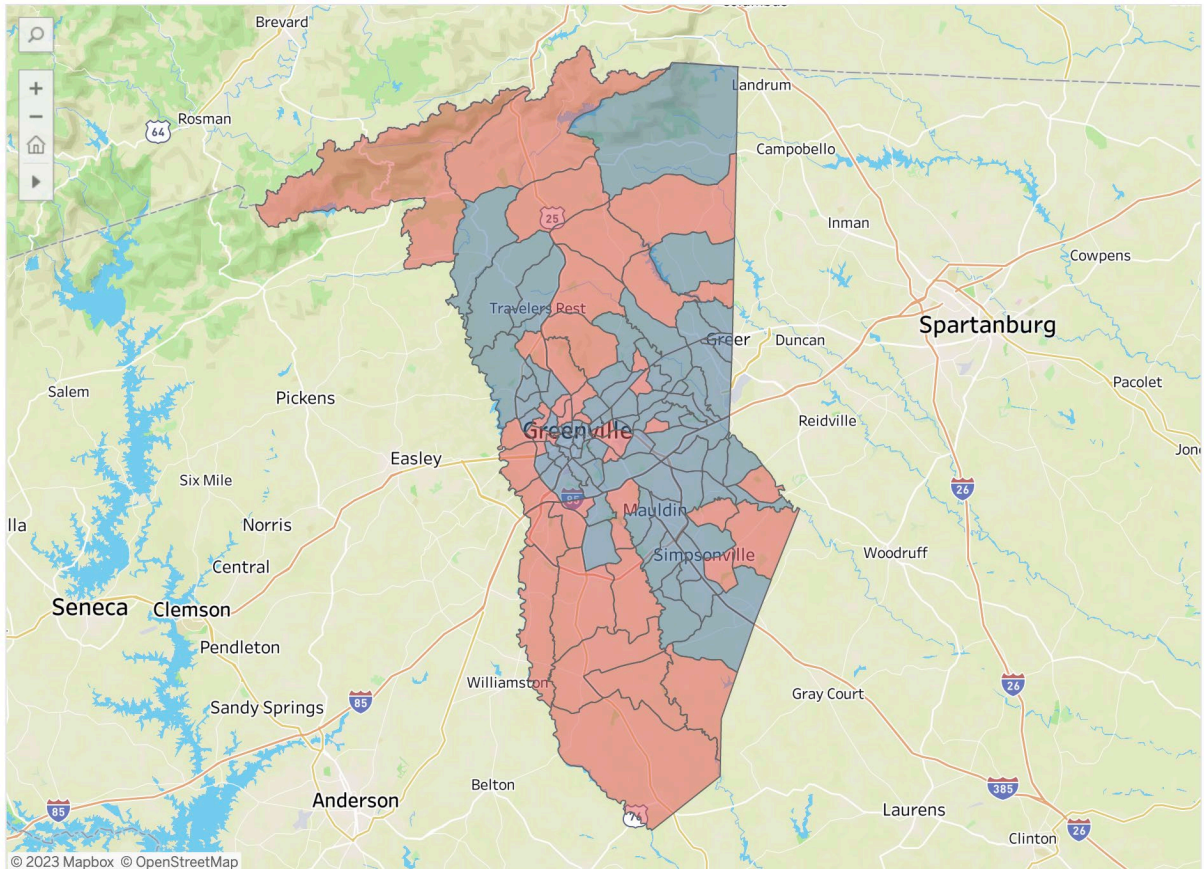


# Priority Two: Childcare deserts

## 34% of census tracts are considered childcare deserts in Greenville County.

Provider location and center capacity obtained from [sccchildcare.org](https://www.sccchildcare.org) on October 16, 2022. Definition of a childcare desert obtained from the Center for American Progress, “A childcare desert is any census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no childcare providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed childcare slots” (<https://www.childcaredeserts.org/>). Population under age 5 by census tract obtained from the American Community Survey 2016-2020 Five Year Estimates (Table B01001). US Census Bureau. Calculations done by Chelsea Richard of South Carolina First Steps (October 16, 2022).

Child care desert?  
■ No    ■ Yes



# Priority Three: Early Literacy

## 32% of Greenville County Schools kindergarteners demonstrated early literacy readiness on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

SCReportCards.com

### Language and Literacy

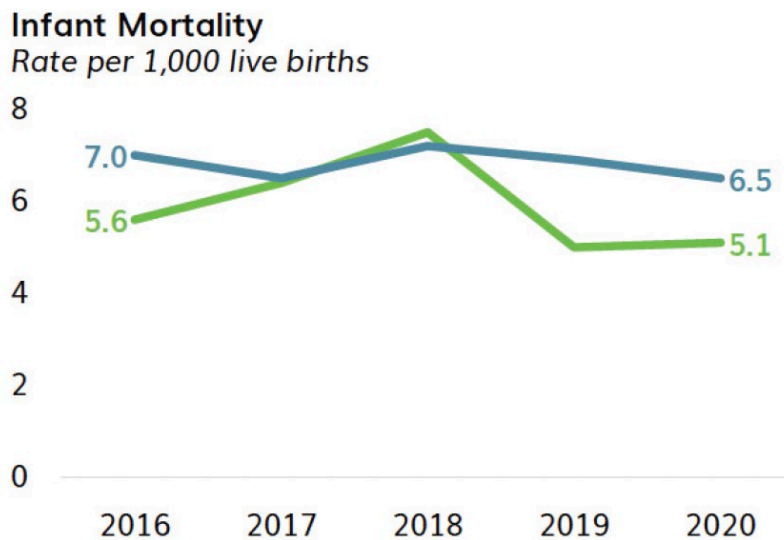
	Fall 2017	Fall 2021
Greenville County School District	33.3%	32.7%
South Carolina Statewide	33.9%	29.8%

Elementary School	Fall 2017	Fall 2021	Elementary School	Fall 2017	Fall 2021
AJ Whittenberg	42.2%	46.1%	Legacy Early College	16.8%	10.8%
Alexander	6.8%	62.0%	Mauldin	30.6%	34.0%
Armstrong	16.0%	19.6%	Mitchell Road	39.0%	39.7%
Augusta Circle	63.8%	79.5%	Monarch	45.6%	45.6%
Bell's Crossing	51.9%	46.0%	Monaview	12.8%	8.2%
Berea	22.1%	10.8%	Mountain view	50.0%	55.4%
Bethel	37.0%	39.8%	Oakview	42.0%	46.7%
Blythe	56.7%	36.2%	Paris	50.5%	25.3%
Brook Glenn	8.5%	10.5%	Pelham Road	35.9%	37.8%
Brushy Creek	21.3%	55.0%	Plain	41.0%	26.4%
Bryson	34.6%	39.2%	Robert E Cashion	22.0%	29.1%
Buena Vista	48.1%	47.9%	Rudolph Gordon	41.8%	34.1%
Chandler Creek	20.3%	30.1%	Sara Collins	48.9%	46.2%
Cherrydale	14.9%	5%	Simpsonville	38.9%	39.0%
Crestview	17.2%	29%	Skyland	44.6%	54.7%
Duncan Chapel	24.8%	17.8%	Slater Marietta	16.1%	5.9%
East North Street	32.3%	16.0%	Sterling	24.4%	19.5%
Ellen Woodside	29.5%	37.8%	Stone	67.4%	53.7%
Fork Shoals	31.9%	28.2%	Sue Cleveland	34.1%	15.1%
Fountain Inn	35.1%	25.2%	Summit Drive	33.9%	27.6%
Gateway	39.0%	57.0%	Taylor's	29.6%	25.9%
Greenbriar	27.0%	28.0%	Thomas E Kerns	19.3%	18.2%
Grove	15.3%	6.2%	Tigerville	28.6%	47.6%
Heritage	31.5%	47.9%	Welcome	12.8%	9.6%
Hollis	8.7%	15.2%	Westcliffe	6.1%	18.4%
Lake Forest	14.0%	22.4%	Woodland	27.6%	33.8%

# Priority Four: Infant Mortality

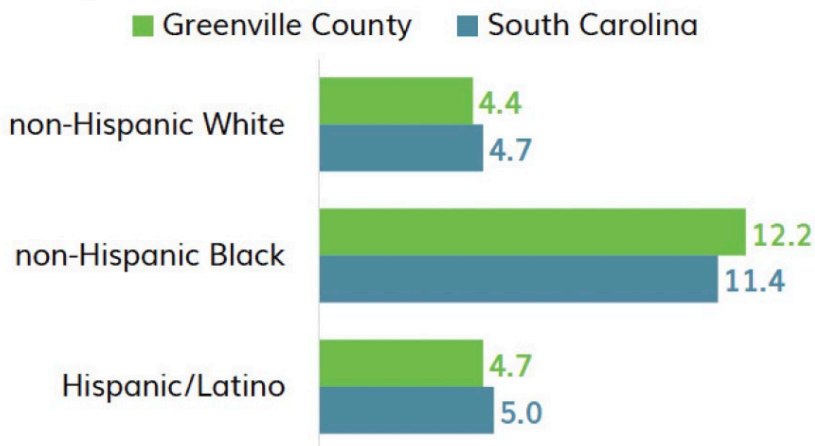
## 5.1 Infant Mortality rate per 1,000 live births in Greenville County

Data from SCDHEC Vital Statistics, 2016-2020



### 5-Year Infant Mortality by Race/Ethnicity

Rate per 1,000 live births



Source: SC DHEC Vital Statistics, 2016-2020.

# Next Steps



## PLAN

Write the partnership's three-year Strategic Plan using the Needs Assessment

March 2023 – May 2023

## APPLY

Utilize the Strategic Plan to inform the partnership's Annual Formula Funding Grant Application

May 2023, May 2024, May 2025



## IMPLEMENT

Execute the programs and services outlined in the Strategic Plan

July 2023 – June 2026

## MONITOR

Track the partnership's progress on implementing programs to fidelity and on achieving the Strategic Plan

July 2023 – June 2026

