

## Overview of Start Strong Clark County Strategic Plan 2026–2028

**Mission:** *To reduce infant mortality by supporting and empowering families, addressing social determinants of health, and eliminating racial and ethnic disparities.*

**Vision:** *Every baby born in Clark County is healthy at birth and thriving at one year.*

### Our Goals

**1. Reduce Infant Mortality:**

Lower Clark County’s infant mortality rate from **8.2** to **6.9** by 2026, aligning with Ohio’s state average.

**2. Close the Gap:**

Cut the Black-to-White infant mortality disparity in half by 2028.

**3. Focus Areas:**

- a. Increase community awareness and engagement
- b. Strengthen fatherhood involvement
- c. Reduce preterm births
- d. Eliminate sleep-related infant deaths
- e. Boost breastfeeding rates

### Key Strategies

- **Community Engagement:** Build partnerships, expand outreach, and amplify voices through social media and local events.
- **Health Equity:** Ensure culturally appropriate resources and implicit bias training for providers.
- **Fatherhood Engagement:** Connect dads to resources, classes, and mentoring opportunities.
- **Teen Pregnancy Support:** Provide education, trauma-informed programs, and access to prenatal care for adolescents, while promoting prevention strategies in schools.
- **Safe Sleep:** Provide cribs and education to eliminate sleep-related infant deaths.
- **Preterm Birth Prevention:** Offer evidence-based care, reduce substance exposure, and address social determinants of health.
- **Breastfeeding Support:** Create seamless care coordination and increase access to lactation resources.

### Why It Matters

Clark County has seen rising birth rates and persistent disparities. By weaving health equity and community engagement into every initiative, Start Strong is committed to creating a healthier future for all families.