

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.