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# POLK COUNTY

Community Health Improvement Plan  
Version 3.0

**Florida**  
**HEALTH**  
Polk County

*2021-2025 Polk County Community Health  
Improvement Plan (CHIP)  
Version 3.0*

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Written in Collaboration with Polk Vision and the Polk County Community Health  
Assessment (CHA) Workgroup

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## Introduction

*This is version 3.0 of 2021-2025 Polk County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which incorporates revisions made for 2024.*

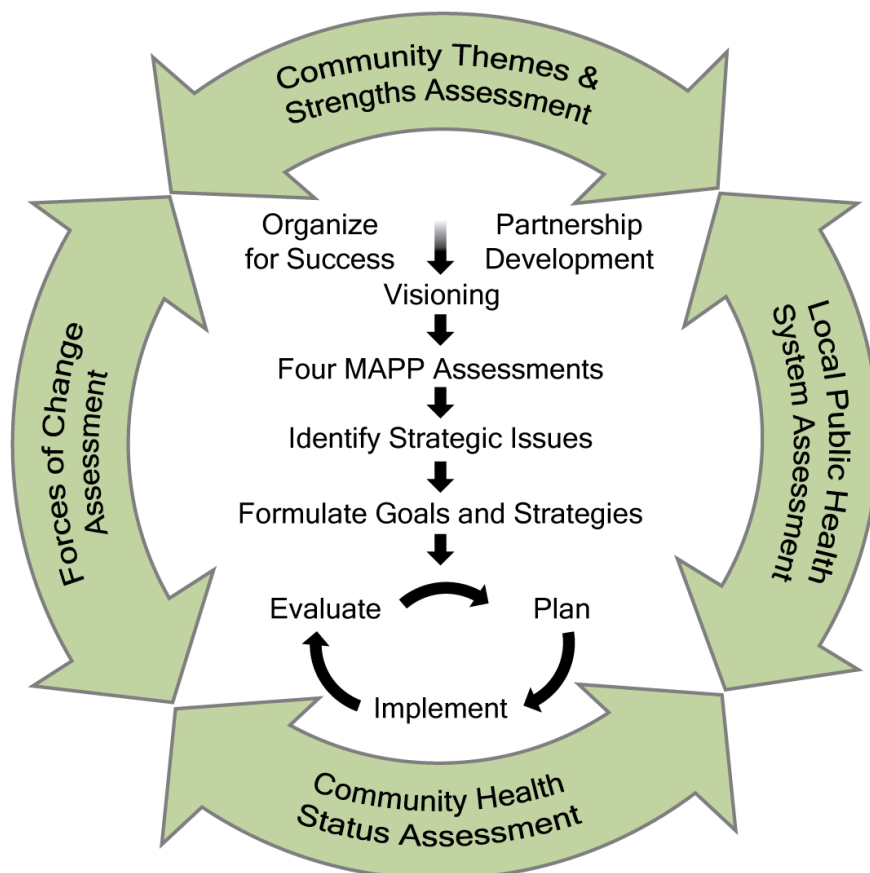
## About this Document

A Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is a long-term, systematic effort to address public health problems based on the results of a community health assessment (CHA). The Florida Department of Health in Polk County conducts a Community Health Assessment (CHA) process every 3-5 years. The most recent Polk County CHA was published in 2020 as the result of a year-long data collection and prioritization process seeking to identify the major health and social issues affecting the health status and quality of life among Polk County residents. The CHA data was utilized to determine the most important health needs for residents of Polk County Florida and where actionable improvements could take place. The 2021-2025 Polk County CHIP outlines the strategies and objectives community partners have developed in response to the priorities established from the 2020 Polk County CHA.



## Methodology

In the fall of 2018, the Florida Department of Health in Polk County mobilized community partners to begin a new CHA process. With help from key community partners, including Polk Vision, a local non-profit that convenes key stakeholders over issues affecting our community, community partner mobilization began on October 25, 2018 with a CHA Kick-Off Meeting. At this meeting, community partners were informed about the upcoming CHA and introduced to the MAPP process. Community partners formally committed to being involved by signing up to participate in data collection and/or to participate in the CHA Workgroup. Polk County's CHA Workgroup was comprised of a diverse group of public, private, non-profit, social services, and governmental entities that make up the public health system in Polk County. The Polk County CHA Workgroup served as a community-based oversight and steering committee for the CHA process. In order to conduct the CHA, the Workgroup utilized a nationally recognized model called Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnership (MAPP).



Because county health departments and non-for-profit hospitals have the same requirements to conduct community health assessments, in 2019, these partners in Polk County worked together for this first time on a single data collection process, rather than each entity collecting their own data. This benefitted all partners involved by allowing for more robust data collection county-wide. Polk County was also included in a regional effort, led by BayCare Health Systems, to unify and streamline the community health assessment process for all county health departments and non-for-profit hospitals across a four-county region, including Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, and Polk Counties. For Polk County, BayCare Health Systems, Lakeland Regional Health, and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County worked together to create a comprehensive community health survey that met the needs of all agencies. A similar survey was used across the other three counties, allowing for regional data collection and comparison.

## The MAPP Process

Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) is a community-driven strategic planning tool for improving community health. MAPP was developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This framework helps communities apply strategic thinking to prioritize public health issues and identify resources to address them.

This process includes four individual assessments - the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment, the Community Health Status Assessment, the Forces of Change Assessment, and the Local Public Health System Assessment - that together make up the larger community health assessment. Findings from each assessment are then analyzed to better understand the assets and needs of a community and assist public health system partners as they focus on aligning resources toward improving the health and well-being of the community.

### Community Themes & Strengths Assessment – Primary Data

This assessment identifies issues that interest the community, perceptions about quality of life, and community assets. Through asking “what is important to our community?” and “how is quality of life perceived in our community?” this assessment provides a deep understanding of the issues that residents feel are important.

Three data collection methods were used to collect feedback for this assessment. A community survey was developed to ask residents their opinions about health and quality of life in Polk County. The survey contained approximately 75 questions and was available in both an online electronic format and a printed paper format. The survey was available in English and was also translated to Spanish and Haitian Creole in order to reach populations that might not speak English. The survey was distributed electronically through community partner email distribution lists and databases. Several community partners played a role in encouraging their employees and/or the population they serve to complete the survey. We also worked with several community partners to distribute paper surveys where appropriate, including free clinics and other social support agencies. Overall, we received almost 4,000 survey responses from Polk County residents. When interpreting survey data, it is important to keep in mind that while an effort was made to survey a demographically representative sample of Polk County, not all demographics were accurately represented in the survey sample.

Focus groups were also conducted in order to gather data from hard-to-reach populations. Four focus groups were conducted with help from partnering agencies who convened and hosted the sessions. The focus groups were held at Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center, Heartland for Children, Winter Haven Hospital Center for Behavioral Health, and Sterling Place, an affordable living community for older adults.

Key informant interviews were conducted with community stakeholders who are members of the local public health system. A total of 27 key informant interviews were conducted with leaders from a variety of agencies in Polk County.

## Community Health Status Assessment – Secondary Data

This assessment involves analyzing data about health status, quality of life, and other community indicators. This assessment answers the question, “how healthy are Polk County’s residents?” Indicators on health and quality of life were collected from a variety of data sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS), the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute County Health Rankings, CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), and several others. For the State of Florida, many of these indicators are compiled into a central database by the Florida Department of Health Bureau of Vital Statistics called FL Health Community Health Assessment Resource Tool Set (CHARTS).

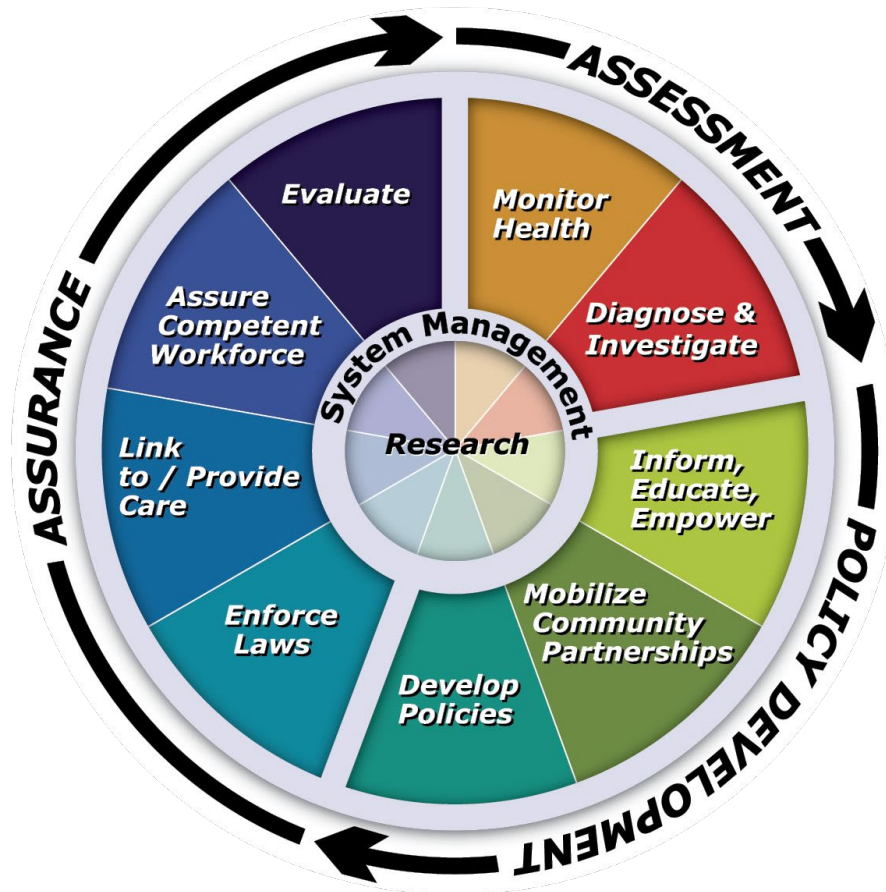
## Forces of Change Assessment

The Forces of Change Assessment identifies factors, including legislation, technology, and other impending changes that are or will be affecting the community and/or the local public health system. This assessment answers the questions: “what is occurring or might occur that affects the health of our community or the local public health system?” and “what specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?”

This assessment occurred on June 17, 2019, at a facilitated meeting with 36 representatives of the local public health system. Participants were given guidelines for the assessment and asked to complete a Forces of Change Brainstorming Worksheet prior to attending the meeting. This Worksheet prompted attendees to begin brainstorming all forces, including trends, factors, and events, occurring at local, state, and national levels that may impact health and quality of life for residents in Polk County and/or the ability of Polk’s local public health system to provide services. Participants were encouraged to think of forces in various categories, including social, technological, environmental, political, economic, legal, scientific, and ethical. After establishing these categories, participants then identified threats posed and opportunities created by each force.

## Local Public Health System Assessment

The Local Public Health System Assessment (LPHSA) measures the capacity and performance of the local public health system and entities that contribute to the public’s health. This assessment answers the question, “how well does the local public health system in Polk County provide the 10 Essential Services of public health?” The Essential Services are ten public health functions that should be undertaken in all communities.



The 10 Essential Services of Public Health were developed by the Public Health Functions Working Group, a committee convened by the Department of Health and Human Services with representatives from U.S. Public Health Service agencies and other major public health organizations in 1994.

The primary purpose of the LPHSA is to promote continuous improvement that will result in positive outcomes for system performance. Local health departments and their public health system partners can use the results of the LPHSA as a tool to:

- Better understand current system functioning and performance
- Identify and prioritize areas of strength, weakness, and opportunities for improvement
- Articulate the value that quality improvement initiatives will bring to the public health system
- Develop an initial workplan with specific quality improvement strategies to achieve goals
- Begin taking action for achieving performance and quality improvement in one or more targeted areas
- Reassess the progress of improvement efforts at regular intervals

In the past, the LPHSA has been conducted as a day-long facilitated meeting, where attendees voted on how well each Essential Service is being fulfilled. For this CHA cycle, out of respect for each community partners' time, Polk decided to condense the LPHSA into a brief 30-minute survey, rather than hold a facilitated meeting. Participants were asked to rate the activity level for each of the 10 Essential Services in Polk County. A total of 74 responses were received from community partners representing 51 agencies in Polk's local public health system.



## Key Themes Identified through the 2020 CHA Prioritization Process

A professional research and data analysis company, Conduent Healthy Communities Institute, was hired by BayCare Health Systems to assist with analyzing primary data collected from the community survey and key informant interviews, and other secondary data indicators. Through this data analysis, the following 11 health topics were identified as priority areas (listed below in alphabetical order):

- Access to Health Services
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Exercise, Weight, & Nutrition
- Heart Disease & Stroke
- Immunizations & Infectious Disease
- Maternal & Infant Health
- Mental Health & Mental Disorders
- Oral Health
- Respiratory Disease
- Substance Abuse

The results of this data analysis were presented at a county-wide prioritization exercise on July 31, 2019. Over 89 members of Polk County's local public health system participated in this exercise, representing over 34 agencies. After seeing a presentation on the data analysis and key indicators, the attendees participated in a voting exercise, where key health topics were ranked on a scale of 1-10 by *scope and severity*, and *ability to impact*.

### Prioritization Areas

The final ranking of priority health topics was as follows:

1. Mental Health & Mental Disorders
2. Access to Health Services
3. Substance Abuse
4. Exercise, Weight, & Nutrition

The Polk County Community Health Assessment (CHA) Workgroup decided to combine the priority health topics of Mental Health & Mental Disorders and Substance Abuse into one overarching health topic: Behavioral Health. This changed the ranking of priority health topics to the following:

1. Behavioral Health
2. Access to Health Services
3. Exercise, Weight, & Nutrition

## Planning Summary

In 2018, community partners at Polk Vision defined a healthy community as one which ensures conditions in which people are able to practice healthy behaviors within a safe physical environment that supports healthy living, accessible quality clinical care, positive social and family support systems, and economic opportunity. This definition was highlighted to all participants in the CHA process during various workgroup meetings in order to reinforce that the needs of the community are of the utmost importance. Upon completion of the 2020 Polk County Community Health Assessment, meetings with various community partners were held to discuss the county's priority areas, review the results of the 2020 CHA, and create objectives and measures for the 2021-2025 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Teams that worked on the 2016-2020 CHIP reviewed the assessment first. These teams included the Polk Vision Primary Care Team, the Florida Healthy Babies (FHB) Team, the Coalition on Injury Prevention of Polk County (CIP), and the Polk Vision Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Team.

The **FHB Team** is currently working on interventions to reduce the Black Infant Mortality Rate, as well as to reduce the Black-White Infant Mortality Gap. Objectives on their workplan address social determinants of health that contribute to high infant mortality rates, such as focusing on access to Healthy Start and WIC services, promoting safe sleep practices, ensuring families have a safe sleeping environment available, promoting breastfeeding, and providing resources to communities with high rates of infant mortality. The leadership of this team established objectives that fit into both the Access to Health Service & Health Equity and the Behavioral Health Priority Areas of the 2021-2025 CHIP. Objectives were revised with the assistance of community partners in order to accurately reflect the continued efforts of this Team.

**CIP** is an existing community coalition formed in 2002 to provide injury prevention resources and education throughout the county. The group focuses on providing these resources in the areas of child drowning prevention, bicycle/pedestrian safety, and falls prevention for aging adults. The leadership of this community group discussed the results of the 2020 CHA and established objectives that fit into the Exercise, Weight, & Nutrition Priority Area. Objectives were revised with the assistance of community partners in order to accurately reflect the continued efforts of this Team.

In the 2016-2020 CHIP, the **Polk Vision Infrastructure Team** and the **Polk Vision Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Team** worked on increasing sidewalk access to underserved areas of the county and on providing safety education to the community. In December 2020, the members of these two groups elected to merge the teams and create new collaborative objectives. The leadership of this new community group met and established objectives that fit into the Exercise, Weight, and Nutrition Priority Area of the 2021-2025 CHIP.

Upon the completion of the 2020 CHA, it became apparent to the community that there was a great need in Polk County surrounding the topic of Behavioral Health. In response to this community need, Polk Vision, Central Florida Health Care, BayCare, Lakeland Regional Health, the health department, and several other community partners formed a group under the leadership of Polk Vision: the **Polk Vision Behavioral Health Team**. The leadership of these agencies met and established objectives that fit into the Behavioral Health Priority Area of the 2021-2025 CHIP. These goals will be revised as the community completes objectives and discovers more specific areas of need to target. Objectives were revised with the assistance of community partners in order to accurately reflect the continued efforts of this Team. Having recently developed a countywide behavioral health strategic plan in 2022, objective 1.1.1 was revised to reflect the next steps in plan implementation.

**Tobacco Free Polk** is a longstanding community coalition formed to promote policies designed to decrease exposure to environmental tobacco smoke and electronic vapor products (EVPs), as well as work to reduce

youth access to and visibility of tobacco and EVP products in the community. Leadership of this group meets every year to review the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida workplan and policy areas to be worked on in Polk, as well as discuss how each strategy is to be implemented within the county. All workplan activities address one or more of the established objectives relating to tobacco and EVPs within the Behavioral Health Priority Area of the 2021-2025 CHIP.

The results of the 2020 CHA also revealed a need to form a food security council to help align feeding efforts across the county. Under the facilitation of Polk Vision, the **Polk County Food Security Council** was formed. Membership includes the health department, Polk County Public Schools, United Way of Central Florida, Central Florida Health Care, UF/IFAS, Polk County Indigent Health Services, Volunteers In Service to the Elderly (VISTE), and many other community agencies. The appointed leadership of this council met to establish objectives that fit into the Exercise, Weight, & Nutrition Priority Area of the 2021-2025 CHIP. Targets will be revised as the community completes objectives and discovers more specific areas of need. Objectives were revised with the assistance of community partners in order to accurately reflect the continued efforts of this Team.

## CHIP Goals and Objectives Overview

The tables below provide an overview of the 2021-2025 Polk County Community Health Improvement Plan goals and objectives for each of the identified priority areas. For more details on the goals and objectives, including key partners, alignment, and policy change needed, see pages 13-26.

### PRIORITY 1: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

#### Mental Health

**Goal 1.1:** Improve mental health of Polk County residents.

**Objective 1.1.1:** By December 31, 2025 implement 6 tactics of the Polk Vision Behavioral Health Team tactical plan (2023 baseline: 1 of 6 tactics implemented).

#### Substance Use

**Goal 1.2:** Reduce tobacco use, vaping and secondhand smoke exposure among Polk County residents.

**Objective 1.2.1:** By December 31, 2025 reduce the percent of women who smoke while pregnant from 3.9% (2021) to 2.0%.

**Objective 1.2.2a:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County adults who are current smokers from 17.8% (2019) to 14.8% (FL 2019).

**Objective 1.2.2b:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County adults who currently use chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus from 4.9% (2019) to 2.2% (FL 2019).

**Objective 1.2.3b:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County middle and high school students who have used an electronic vapor product in the past 30 days from 15.3% (2022) to 11.4% (FL 2022).

**Objective 1.2.3c:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County middle and high school students who have ever used an electronic vapor product from 24.9% (2022) to 21% (FL 2022).

**Objective 1.2.3d:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County middle and high school students who, in the past 30 days, were around someone who was smoking cigarettes or using an electronic vapor product from 60.3% (2020) to 55%.

## PRIORITY 2: ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES & HEALTH EQUITY

**Goal 2.1:** Increase access to health services and health equity in Polk County.

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**Objective 2.1.1:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the number of sleep-related infant deaths from 11 (2019) to less than 10 sleep-related infant deaths.

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**Objective 2.1.2:** By December 31, 2025, increase the percentage of mothers who initiate breastfeeding from 83.3% (2019) to 85.0%.

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**Objective 2.1.3:** By December 31, 2025, attend and participate in 80% of community advocacy meetings (2021 baseline: attended and participated in 100% of community advocacy meetings).



## PRIORITY 3: EXERCISE, NUTRITION, AND WEIGHT

**Goal 3.2:** Increase food security among Polk County residents.

**Objective 3.2.1:** By June 30, 2024, create a countywide tactical plan to address food security in Polk (2023 baseline: no plan).

**Goal 3.3:** Reduce unintentional fatal injuries among Polk County residents.

**Objective 3.3.1:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the number of infant fatalities due to unintentional injury from 6 (2019) to 3.

**Objective 3.3.2:** By December 31, 2025, decrease near-drowning instances among children  $\leq 9$  reported to 911 from 19 (2020) to 12 calls.

**Objective 3.3.3:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the rate of all falls deaths among Polk County adults aged 65 and older from 63.2 per 100,000 (2019) to 51.0 per 100,000.

**Objective 3.3.4:** By December 31, 2025, decrease the number of total motor vehicle crashes with a pedestrian or cyclist from 524 (2023) to 499.

**Objective 3.3.5:** By December 31, 2025, decrease the three-year average severe crash outcomes for cyclists from 1.8 (2015-2018) to 1.3 per 100,000 and decrease the three-year average severe crash outcomes for pedestrians from 6.3 (2015-2018) to 4.8 per 100,000.

# PRIORITY 1: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

## Mental Health

**Goal 1.1:** Improve mental health of Polk County residents.

### Strategy Lead:

Jessica Napoleon, FDOH-Polk, Public Health Planner

The Strategy Lead is either a member of each key partner group/agency or receives direct reports from a member of each key partner group/agency. The Strategy Lead reports progress on objectives to FDOH-Polk Performance Management Council at quarterly meetings.

### Key Partners:

AdventHealth, BayCare, Central Florida Behavioral Health Network, Inc., Central Florida Health Care, City of Winter Haven, Corizon Health, Crescendo Consulting Group, Florida Department of Children and Families, Florida Department of Health in Polk County, Heartland For Children, Lakeland Regional Health, Lakeside Pediatrics, Peace River Center, Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida, Polk County Board of County Commissioners, Polk County Public Schools, Polk County Sheriff's Office, Polk Vision, Polk Vision Behavioral Health Team, Tri-County Human Services, United Way of Central Florida.

### Aligned With:

2020-2022 BayCare Polk County CHNA Implementation Plan, 2023-2025 BayCare Polk County CHNA Implementation Plan, Healthy People 2030, Florida Department of Health 2022-2026 State Health Improvement Plan, Lakeland Regional Health 2022-2025 CHNA, Polk County 2020 Community Health Assessment, and Polk Vision Behavioral Health Team Tactical Plan.

### Policy Change Needed:

- Identify and address gaps in the Polk County behavioral health system
- Strategies to recruit, train and retain behavioral health professionals

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**Objective 1.1.1:** By 12/31/2025, implement 6 tactics within the Polk Vision Behavioral Health Team tactical plan (2023 baseline: 1 of 6 tactics implemented).

**Objective Leads:**

Alice Nuttall, Associate Vice President, Lakeland Regional Health & Holly Vida, Behavioral Health Program Manager, Polk County Health and Human Services Division

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Behavioral Health Intercept Map, Behavioral Health Strategic Plan, Polk Vision Behavioral Health Team Tactical Plan.

## Substance Use

**Goal 1.2:** Reduce tobacco use, vaping and secondhand smoke exposure among Polk County residents.

### Strategy Lead:

Jessica Napoleon, FDOH-Polk, Public Health Planner

The Strategy Lead is either a member of each key partner group/agency or receives direct reports from a member of each key partner group/agency. The Strategy Lead reports progress on objectives to FDOH-Polk Performance Management Council at quarterly meetings.

### Key Partners:

Central Florida Area Health Education Center, CivCom, Florida Department of Health in Polk (FDOH-Polk) Healthy Start, FDOH-Polk medical clinics, FDOH-Polk WIC, Florida Healthy Babies Team, Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk counties, InnerAct Alliance, Lakeland Police Department, LIFE Limbs, Polk County Public Schools, Polk County Sheriff's Office, Polk County Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT), StandUP Polk Coalition, Tobacco Free Polk Partnership, UthMpack

### Aligned With:

2020-2022 BayCare Polk County CHNA Implementation Plan, 2023-2025 BayCare Polk County CHNA Implementation Plan, Healthy People 2030, Florida Department of Health 2016-2021 Agency Strategic Plan, Florida Department of Health 2017-2021 State Health Improvement Plan, Florida Department of Health 2022-2026 State Health Improvement Plan, Florida Department of Health in Polk County 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, Lakeland Regional Health 2018-2021 CHNA, Lakeland Regional Health 2022-2025 CHNA, Polk County 2020 Community Health Assessment, Polk County 2021-2025 Florida Healthy Babies Plan, Tobacco Free Polk Workplan

### Policy Change Needed:

- Adoption of Smoke-Free policies in worksites, multi-unit housing, and college campuses.
- Creation of community-friendly educational information on tobacco cessation targeting expectant mothers and women of childbearing age.
- Inclusion of Tobacco Free Florida's tobacco cessation resources in discharge paperwork for new parents at Polk's birthing hospitals and birthing centers.
- Local tobacco retailer licensing.
- Tobacco 21

- Utilization of tobacco cessation referrals in HMS within FDOH-Polk clinics.

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**Objective 1.2.1:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of women who smoke while pregnant from 3.9% (2021) to 2.0%.

**Objective Lead:**

Jenna Levine, FDOH-Polk, Director of Public Health Planning

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress.

Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Percent of Resident Live Births to Mothers Who Smoked During Pregnancy (CHARTS)

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**Objective 1.2.2a:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County adults who are current smokers from 17.8% (2019) to 14.8% (FL 2019).

**Objective Lead:**

Monica Livingstone, CivCom, Community Engagement Manager

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress.

Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Sources:**

Tobacco Free Polk Partnership meeting minutes, Percent of Adults Who Are Current Smokers (BRFSS, CHARTS)

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**Objective 1.2.2b:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County adults who currently use chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus from 4.9% (2019) to 2.2% (FL 2019).

**Objective Lead:**

Monica Livingstone, CivCom, Community Engagement Manager

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress.

Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Sources:**

Tobacco Free Polk Partnership meeting minutes, Percent of Adults Who Currently Use Chewing Tobacco, Snuff or Snus Some Days or Every Day (BRFSS, CHARTS)



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**Objective 1.2.3b:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County middle and high school students who have used an electronic vapor product in the past 30 days from 15.3% (2022) to 11.4% (FL 2022).

**Objective Lead:**

Monica Livingstone, CivCom, Community Engagement Manager

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Sources:**

Tobacco Free Polk Partnership meeting minutes, Percent of Students Who Have Used an Electronic Vapor Product in the Past 30 Days (FYTS, CHARTS)

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**Objective 1.2.3c:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County middle and high school students who have ever used an electronic vapor product from 24.9% (2022) to 21% (FL 2022).

**Objective Lead:**

Monica Livingstone, CivCom, Community Engagement Manager

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Sources:**

Tobacco Free Polk Partnership meeting minutes, Percent of Students Who Have Ever Used an Electronic Vapor Product (FYTS, CHARTS)

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**Objective 1.2.3d:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the percent of Polk County middle and high school students who, in the past 30 days, were around someone who was smoking cigarettes or using an electronic vapor product from 60.3% (2020) to 55%.

**Objective Lead:**

Monica Livingstone, CivCom, Community Engagement Manager

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Sources:**

Tobacco Free Polk Partnership meeting minutes, Percent of Students Who, in the Past 30 Days, Were Around Someone Who Was Smoking Cigarettes or Using an Electronic Vapor Product (FYTS, CHARTS)

## PRIORITY 2: ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES & HEALTH EQUITY

**Goal 2.1: Increase access to health services and health equity in Polk County**

### Strategy Lead:

Taylor Freeman, FDOH-Polk, Public Health Planner

The Strategy Lead is either a member of each key partner group/agency or receives direct reports from a member of each key partner group/agency. The Strategy Lead reports progress on objectives to FDOH-Polk Performance Management Council at quarterly meetings.

### Key Partners:

AdventHealth, BayCare, Children's Home Society, Circuit 10 Child Abuse Death Review Team, FDOH - Healthy Start, Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Team, Healthy Families, Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk Counties, Inc., Lakeland Regional Health, Melanin Families Matter, Polk County Breastfeeding Network, Safe Kids Suncoast Coalition, Safe Sleep Task Force, WIC, Winter Haven Women's Hospital

### Aligned With:

Healthy People 2030, Healthy Start Coalition Service Delivery Plan, Florida Department of Health 2016-2021 Agency Strategic Plan, Florida Department of Health 2017-2021 State Health Improvement Plan, Florida Department of Health 2022-2026 State Health Improvement Plan, Florida Department of Health in Polk County 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, Florida Department of Health in Polk County 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, Lakeland Regional Health 2018-2021 CHNA, Lakeland Regional Health 2022-2025 CHNA, Polk County 2020 Community Health Assessment, Polk County 2021-2025 Florida Healthy Babies Plan, Safe Kids Suncoast 2021 Strategic Objectives, Safe Kids Suncoast 2022 Strategic Objectives, Safe Kids Suncoast 2023 Strategic Objectives, Safe Kids Suncoast 2024 Strategic Objectives

### Policy Changes Needed:

- Community advocates needed to increase trust between agencies and community members and to educate community members on how to best advocate for their needs.
- Standardization of safe sleep practices used and modeled in hospitals upon birth.

- Standardization of agency education information regarding safe sleep environments and practices.
- Implementation and achievement of Baby Friendly Hospitals, Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Centers, and the Florida Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Award.

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**Objective 2.1.1:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the number of sleep-related infant deaths from 11 (2021) to less than 10 sleep-related infant deaths.

**Objective Lead:**

Tonya Akwetey, Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk Counties

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Sources:**

Polk Maternal & Child Health Death Review Data (Healthy Start Coalition)

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Count (CHARTS)

Deaths due to Strangulation & Suffocation in Bed (CHARTS)

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**Objective 2.1.2:** By December 31, 2025, increase the rate of WIC clients that are partially or fully breastfed for at least 26 weeks from 48.05% (Q4 2022) to 50.55%.

**Objective Lead:**

Paula Vincent, FDOH-Polk/WIC

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Sources:**

Percentage of WIC Clients Breastfed for 26 Weeks (FL-WISE)

Percentage of Mothers Who Initiate Breastfeeding (CHARTS)

Percentage of WIC infants and children <24 months who were ever breastfed in Polk County (FL-WISE)

Percentage of Non-Hispanic Black WIC infants and children <24 months who were ever breastfed in Polk County (FL-WISE)

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**Objective 2.1.3:** By December 31, 2025, attend and participate in 80% of community advocacy meetings (2022 baseline: attended and participated in 100% of community advocacy meetings).

**Objective Lead:**

Lynn Marshall, Ed.D., Melanin Families Matter, and Taylor Freeman, FDOH-Polk

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Melanin Families Matter Meeting Minutes

## PRIORITY 3: EXERCISE, NUTRITION, & WEIGHT

### Goal 3.2: Increase food security among Polk County residents

#### Strategy Lead:

Jessica Napoleon, FDOH-Polk, Public Health Planner

The Strategy Lead is either a member of each key partner group/agency or receives direct reports from a member of each key partner group/agency. The Strategy Lead reports progress on objectives to FDOH-Polk Performance Management Council at quarterly meetings.

#### Key Partners:

Central Florida Development Council, Central Florida Health Care, City of Haines City, Florida Department of Health in Polk County, Health Council of West Central Florida, KidsPACK, Lake Wales Care Center, Polk County Board of County Commissioners, Polk County Public Schools, Polk Vision, United States Department of Agriculture, United Way of Central Florida, University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension Polk County, and Volunteers in Service to the Elderly (VISTE)

#### Aligned With:

2020-2022 BayCare Polk County CHNA Implementation Plan, 2023-2025 BayCare Polk County CHNA Implementation Plan, Healthy People 2030, Florida Department of Health 2016-2021 Agency Strategic Plan, Florida Department of Health 2017-2021 State Health Improvement Plan, Florida Department of Health 2022-2026 State Health Improvement Plan, Florida Department of Health in Polk County 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, Lakeland Regional Health 2018-2021 CHNA, Lakeland Regional Health 2022-2025 CHNA, Polk County 2020 Community Health Assessment

#### Policy Change Needed:

- Development of formal setting for feeding agencies to coordinate and align efforts.
- Universal free meals in schools.
- Food prescription programs.

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**Objective 3.2.1:** By June 30, 2024, create a countywide tactical plan to address food security in Polk (2022 baseline: no tactical plan)

#### Objective Leads:



Nicole Walker, UF/IFAS Extension Polk County & Rod Crowley, United Way of Central Florida

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Polk County Food Security Council Meeting Minutes & Statement of Purpose

**Goal 3.3: Reduce unintentional fatal injuries among Polk County residents.**

**Strategy Lead:**

Taylor Freeman, FDOH-Polk, Public Health Planner

The Strategy Lead is either a member of each key partner group/agency or receives direct reports from a member of each key partner group/agency. The Strategy Lead reports progress on objectives to FDOH-Polk Performance Management Council at quarterly meetings.

**Key Partners:**

Alzheimer's Association, BayCare Kids Wellness and Safety Center, CARD - USF, Children's Home Society, Circuit 10 Child Abuse Death Review Team, City of Lakeland Parks and Recreation, Florida Department of Children and Families, FDOH Polk- Healthy Start, Florida Poison Center, Florida Presbyterian Homes, Heartland for Children, Lakeland Police Department, Lakeland Regional Health, Polk County Fire Rescue, Polk County TPO, Reliance Medical Centers, RSVP Polk, Safe Kids Suncoast Coalition led by Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, Semper Fish Aquatics, Senior Connection Center, Senior Helpers, United Way of Central Florida Children's Resource Center

**Aligned With:**

2020-2022 BayCare Polk County CHNA Implementation Plan, Florida Department of Health 2016-2021 Agency Strategic Plan, Florida Department of Health 2017-2021 State Health Improvement Plan, Florida Department of Health 2022-2026 State Health Improvement Plan, Florida Department of Health in Polk County 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, Healthy People 2030, Heartland for Children Circuit 10 Local Task Force Work Plan, Lakeland Regional Health 2018-2021 CHNA, Lakeland Regional Health 2022-2025 CHNA, Polk County 2020 Community Health Assessment, Polk County 2021-2025 Florida Healthy Babies Plan, Safe Kids Suncoast 2021 Strategic Objectives, Safe Kids Suncoast 2022 Strategic Objectives, Safe Kids Suncoast 2023 Strategic Objectives

**Policy Change Needed:**

- Expansion of the legislative protocol requiring specific amounts of safety barriers between a home and a pool.
- Expansion of water safety regulations to include rental homes, such as AirBnB's, in safety precautions.
- Implementation of more Age Friendly areas within cities. Implementation of county-wide bike and pedestrian safety curriculum in Polk Schools to replace the gap from the loss of Safe Routes to School funding.
- Promotion of transitioning to Age Friendly homes.
- Requirement of learning CPR for new parents.

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**Objective 3.3.1:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the number of infant fatalities due to unintentional injury from 12 (2021) to 6.

**Objective Leads:**

Ginger Williams, FDOH-Polk/Healthy Start, and Bernice Bass, FDOH-Polk/WIC

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Unintentional Fatal Injuries, Ages <1, By Mechanism (FL CHARTS)

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**Objective 3.3.2:** By December 31, 2025, decrease near-drowning instances among children ≤ 9 reported to 911 from 22 (2022) to 12 calls.

**Objective Lead:**

Taylor Freeman, FDOH-Polk

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Drowning incidence calls to 911 among children ≤ 9 (PCFR Annual Calls Data)

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**Objective 3.3.3:** By December 31, 2025, reduce the rate of all falls deaths among Polk County adults aged 65 and older from 63.2 per 100,000 (2019) to 51.0 per 100,000.

**Objective Leads:**

Tasha Saca, Florida Presbyterian Homes, Inc.

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Total Deaths from Unintentional Falls, Age 65+, Single Year (FL CHARTS)

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**Objective 3.3.4:** By December 31, 2025, decrease the number of total motor vehicle crashes with a pedestrian or cyclist from 524 (2023) to 499.

**Objective Lead:**

Courtney Simmons, BSN, RN, R.T.(R), TNCC, Lakeland Regional Health

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Total Crashes with a Bicyclist or Pedestrian, Polk County (Signal4 Analytics)

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**Objective 3.3.5:** By December 31, 2025, decrease the three-year average severe crash outcomes for cyclists from 1.8 (2015-2018) to 1.3 per 100,000 and decrease the three-year average severe crash outcomes for pedestrians from 6.3 (2015-2018) to 4.8 per 100,000.

**Objective Lead:**

Ryan Kordek, Polk TPO and Kathleen Wright, Florida Virtual School

Objective leads hold regular team meetings with all key partners to provide updates and work on accomplishing objectives. An action register is maintained to document progress. Objective leads report quarterly to strategy leads; strategy leads report quarterly to PMC.

**Data Source:**

Severe crash outcomes for pedestrians, Polk County (Signal4 Analytics)

Severe crash outcomes for cyclists, Polk County (Signal4 Analytics)

## Community Partners

- David Acevedo, Children's Home Society of Florida
- Tonya Akwetey, MPH, Healthy Start of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk Counties, Inc.
- Aisha Alayande, Heartland Core Wellness and Aisha Alayande, Inc.
- Lieutenant Anthony Allaire, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Chief Mike Allen, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Christy Apisa, United Way of Central Florida
- Donnie Arbeau, Heartland Regional TPO
- Stephanie Arguello, MPH, AdventHealth
- Tara Auclair, MBA, Crescendo Consulting Group
- Linda Baker, FDOH - Polk Tobacco Program
- Chuck Barmby, AICP, CTP, City of Lakeland
- Marisa Barmby, AICP, Central Florida Regional Planning Council
- Denise R. Barnes, MA, FCIC/CARD - USF
- Bernice Bass, FDOH - Polk, WIC
- Alexis Bautz, Florida Presbyterian Homes
- Lisa Bell, MPH, BayCare Health Systems
- Arlene Bishop-Arrindell, LCSW, CAP, Corizon Health
- Steve Bissonnette, Volunteers in Service to the Elderly (VISTE)
- Stacy Bolton, Lakeland Regional Health
- Gwinnell Brant, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Celena Brown, Lakeland Midwifery Care
- Millie Brown, FCCM, Florida Department of Transportation
- Charlie Burdette, CATT RATH Senior Connection
- Deborah Cantero, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, Florida Southern College
- Jillian Capper, MSN, RN, Polk State College
- Sarah Case, Next Level Planning & Permitting
- Yazmin Castellano, CARD - USF
- Ermelinda Centeno, Central Florida Health Care
- Gretchen Ceranic, United Way of Central Florida/Success by 6
- Ashley Cerjan, Polk Vision
- Sairah Chachad, MD, Lakeside Pediatrics
- Deborah Chesna, CPM, FCCM, Florida Department of Transportation
- Annette Chilton, MBA, IBCLC, Lakeside Pediatrics/La Leche League of Lakeland
- Jennifer Cipriano, Lakeland Regional Health
- Natalya Clemens, Heartland for Children
- Andrea Clontz, MHA, Polk County BoCC
- LaTasha Cohen, MHS, Central Florida Behavioral Health Network, Inc.
- Lisette Collins, The Poison Center
- Linda Comer, PhD, RN, CNE, Florida Southern College
- Melissa Conrad-Morrow, LM, Celebrate Birth
- Hailee Cornett, CivCom
- Mary Crowe, PhD, Florida Southern College
- Rod Crowley, United Way of Central Florida
- Juli Davis, FDOH - Polk
- Julia Davis, AICP, Polk County Transportation Planning Organization

- Larry Davis, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Donna Dinkins, Helping Hand Nursing Services
- Kathy Dobson, Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida
- Tammy Durden, FDOH - Polk
- Charlene Edwards, Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk Counties, Inc.
- Angie Ellison, InnerAct Alliance
- Brenda Francis, LPN, LM, CPM, NU Life Midwifery Services
- Chandra Frederick, Polk County BoCC
- Taylor Freeman, FDOH - Polk
- Captain William C. Galloway, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Daniel Gay, Semper Fish Aquatics
- Wynton Geary, Senior Connect Center
- Scott Good, MSIA, MBA, Crescendo Consulting Group
- Georgiana Goodson, Senior Helpers
- Tracy Grey, Heartland for Children
- Cathy Hatch, Polk County BoCC
- Sarah Hawkins, MS, CHES, AdventHealth
- Sandra Hernandez, Healthy Families
- Lakeisha T. Hood, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Jane Ierardi, MD, Nemours Children's Health System
- Lisa Indovino, MA, LCI, CPST, Florida Suncoast Safe Kids led by Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
- Amy (AJ) Jackson, City of Lakeland Parks and Recreation
- Joy Jackson, M.D., FDOH - Polk
- Gwinnell Jarvis, MPA, CPM, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Jeanne Jenkins, PhD, MSN, MBA, RN, Florida Southern College
- Joy Johnson, Polk County BoCC
- Chantale Jones, FDOH - Polk/Tobacco Free Polk
- Jenna Kaczmariski, Kazmarski LLC
- Heather Kaufman, Tri-County Human Services, Inc.
- Audrey Kelley-Fritz, Ed.S, Polk County Public Schools
- Teresa Kelly, Health Council of West Central FL
- Alison Kennedy, Florida Presbyterian Homes
- Ryan Kordek, CPM, GISP, Polk County Transportation Planning Organization
- Cynthia Kreiger, BSN, RN, IBCLC, LCCE, BayCare Health System/Winter Haven Women's Hospital
- Marcia Lawrence, Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk Counties, Inc.
- Eric Labbe, AICP, City of Winter Haven
- Rosa LaLonde, Polk County Fire Rescue
- Nick Le, MS, City of Lakeland Parks and Recreation
- Jenna Levine, MPH, CPH, FDOH - Polk
- Monica Livingstone, CivCom
- Laura Lockwood-Herrscher, AICP, Patel, Greene, and Associates, LLC
- Kim Long, Polk Vision
- Jesina Lopez, RN, Corizon Health
- Pam Luce, Polk County Public Schools
- Sean Malott, Central Florida Development Council

- Amanda Mann, RN, LM, Lakeland Midwifery Care
- Major Kim Marcum, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Lynn Marshall, Ed.D, Melanin Families Matter
- Renisa Martinez, Florida Suncoast Safe Kids led by Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
- Sam McCain, StandUP Polk and UthMpcat
- Tracey McKinney, DNP, APRN, NNP-BC, CCNS, C-ONQS, Lakeland Regional Health
- Melanie Michael, DNP, FNP-C, CPHQ, FNAP, Florida Southern College
- Katelyn Michaud, MPH, Crescendo Consulting Group
- Edward Mingus, Florida Bicycle Association
- Diana Moorer, MSN, FNP-C, Florida Southern College
- Jessica Napoleon, MPH, MCHES, FDOH - Polk
- Lieutenant Ivan Navarro, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Nick Nicholas, DSM Technology Consultants
- Amy Nickerson, Polk Vision
- Andrea Nikolai, UF/IFAS Extension Polk County
- Kassandra Noel, Central Florida Health Care
- Alice Nuttall, MBA, RN, BA, Lakeland Regional Health
- Desiraé Ofori, Community Volunteer
- Christy Olson, EdD, LMHC, Polk County Public Schools
- Savannah O'Steen, MPH, CPH, Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk Counties, Inc.
- Kadian Parchment, Heartland for Children
- Carla Parry, RN, BSN, IBCLC, Lakeland Regional Health Theo Petritsch, Landis Evans & Partners
- Coleen Pizzuti, United Way of Central Florida, Family Fundamentals
- Antionette Pollard, LMHC, RYT, Pieces To Peace Counseling
- Marianne Power, RN, LM, Lakeland Midwifery Care
- Rob Quam, MSW, Lake Wales Care Center
- Sheila Rainey, Florida Suncoast Safe Kids led by Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
- Angelo Rao, City of Lakeland
- Robert Rihn, Tri-County Human Services, Inc.
- Luis Rivas, LCSW, Central Florida Behavioral Health Network, Inc.
- Amy Royal, KidsPACK
- Tasha Saca, Florida Presbyterian Homes
- Vicky Santamaria, AdventHealth
- Stephanie Schultz, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Pamela Schwartz, DO, Innovative Gynecology and Obstetrics PA
- Greg Scott, PMP, ACIP, RSP1, Polk Transportation Planning Organization
- Cindy Sharp, Lakeland Police Department
- Steven Shealey, PE, MPA, Pennoni Associates
- Kirsten Sheehan, Polk Vision
- Michelle Shiver, RSVP Polk
- Carina Shrestha, Senior Connection Center
- Courtney Simmons, Lakeland Regional Health
- Vereuch Simmons, Heartland for Children
- Scott Sjoblom, City of Bartow
- Bill Skelton, Polk County Roads & Drainage Division
- Christine Smith, FDOH - Polk, WIC

- Dorothy Smith, Polk County Fire Rescue
- Roselyn Smith, FDOH - Polk, Healthy Start
- Lauren Springfield, Lakeland Regional Health
- Gwen Stanislawski, Lakeland Police Department
- Brandon Starling, Heartland for Children
- Timothy Starnes, Florida Department of Children and Families
- Toby Tiller, Polk County Public Schools
- Ed Trail, City of Haines City Public Infrastructure
- Todd Vargo, AICP, City of Lakeland
- Ismary Vento, Health Council of West Central FL
- Holly Vida, Central Florida Health Care
- Paula Vincent, FDOH - Polk, WIC
- Morgan Volpe, City of Winter Haven
- Nicole Walker, UF/IFAS Extension Polk County
- Jane Adams Waters, City of Haines City
- Tara Watson, Polk Vision
- Larry Williams, Peace River Center
- Amanda Wilson, MS, Florida Department of Children and Families
- Kathleen Wright, Florida Virtual School
- Elizabeth Zabel, BayCare Health System
- Marc Zimmerman, Polk County Tourism & Sports Marketing