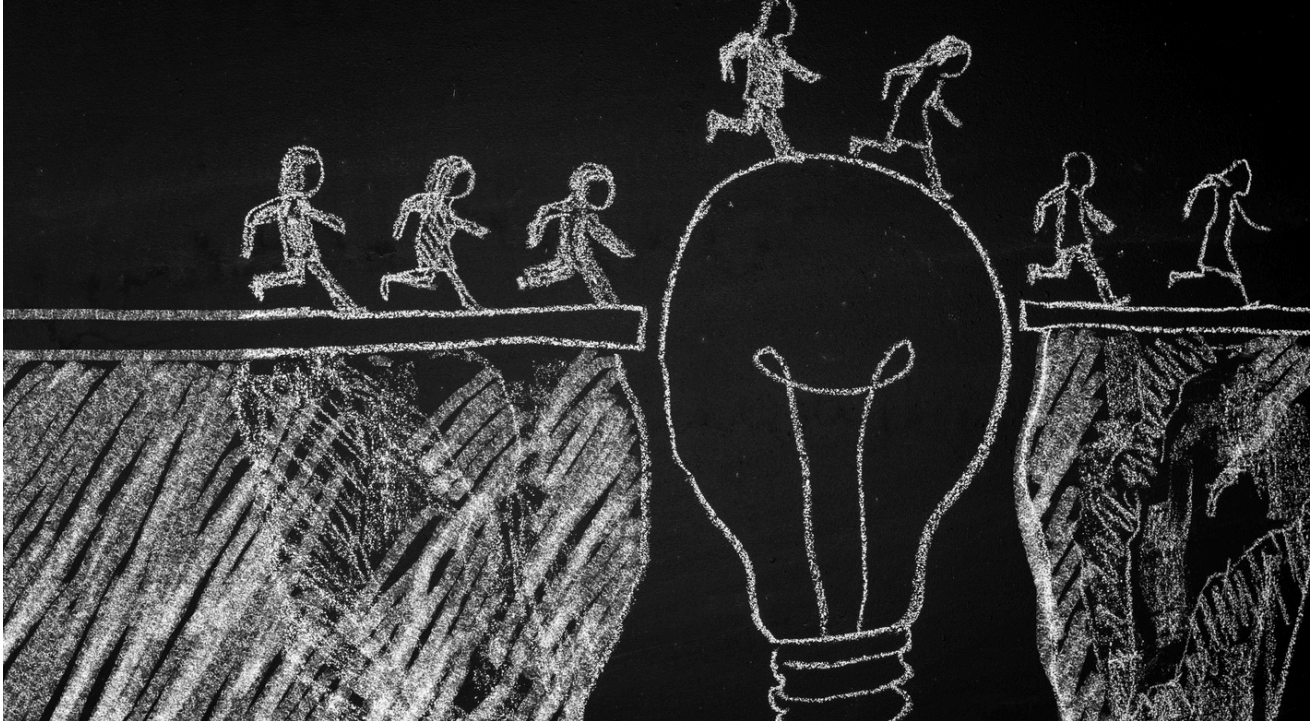




2024 Annual Report



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Cover Photo: RBA Workshop Participants, February 2024

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OUR PROGRESS

Healthy Palmetto serves as the state coalition of organizations that collectively addresses healthy eating, active living, and healthy weight.

We are proud to present the Healthy Palmetto Annual Report for 2024. Since its launch in 2020, Healthy Palmetto has encouraged collaboration among statewide leaders to collectively elevate healthy eating and active living (HEAL) initiatives throughout the state of South Carolina. This year's report showcases innovative strategies and partnerships that have advanced progress toward ensuring that all South Carolinians have access to nutritious food and safe places to be physically active.

The year 2024 marked a pivotal moment for Healthy Palmetto. It was a year to reflect on our achievements, wrap up existing strategies, and thoughtfully plan for the next five years. Together with our partners, we laid the groundwork for a bold vision that will drive continued progress toward health equity and community well-being.

This report highlights the shared efforts and successes of our partners, whose commitment and collaboration have established a strong foundation for the

future. As we move forward, we remain steadfast to build a vibrant and resilient state that prioritizes the well-being of all its residents.

We thank you for your invaluable contributions to this journey. Together, we are not just transforming policies and programs; we are creating lasting change for healthier, more active communities across South Carolina. We look forward to deepening our collaboration and expanding our impact in the years ahead.

In good health,

Healthy Palmetto Backbone Organizations



Vision

A South Carolina where quality of life is a priority, and everyone has an equitable opportunity to thrive.

Purpose

To unify and mobilize organizations working on healthy eating and active living efforts in South Carolina.

OUR PEOPLE

Healthy Palmetto is made up of agencies, academic institutions, non-profit and private organizations, and funders that have a statewide impact on healthy eating and active living. In 2024, a new structure was established to deepen our collective impact. At the core are two backbone organizations, Wholespire and the SC Department of Public Health, which provide support and leadership.

An Executive Committee oversees decision-making and strategic planning, translating Healthy Palmetto's purpose into priority areas. Complementing their efforts, a dedicated Leadership Council of active partners engages year-round to monitor, implement, and elevate priority initiatives.

**WE ALL HAVE
DIFFERENT
BACKGROUNDS,
BUT WE ALL
SHARE A
SIMILAR VISION.**

*Rowan Goodrich, Leadership Council,
SC Department on Aging*

Additionally, Healthy Palmetto collaborates with a group of Strategic Allies—experts in various fields—who are called upon as needed to lend specialized insights.



BACKBONE ORGANIZATIONS



SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH



wholespire

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CLEMSON
UNIVERSITY

diabetesfreeSC

SCHA
SC HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

SOUTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF
RURAL HEALTH
Investment. Opportunity. Health.

SOUTH CAROLINA
SNAP-Ed
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



CLEMSON
RURAL HEALTH



STRATEGIC ALLIES

AARP of South Carolina
BlueCross Blue Shield of South Carolina Foundation
Child Well-Being Coalition
Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service
Furman University Institute for the
Advancement of Community Health
SC Public Employee Benefit Authority
SC Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

SC Department of Education Office of Health
and Nutrition
SC Department of Public Health Cancer Programs
SC Department of Transportation
SC Institute of Medicine and Public Health
University of South Carolina Prevention
Research Center

Our Priorities

Through a rigorous review process, the Healthy Palmetto Leadership Council selected six priority areas on which to focus statewide efforts from 2022-2024. By elevating the collective expertise of these unique partners, Healthy Palmetto is laying the groundwork for a sustainable model that other priorities can be added to over time.

1

LEARN MORE

Improve Outdoor Environments in Early Care and Education

We support the efforts of Grow Outdoors SC, as they transform early childhood outdoor spaces into diverse, naturalized environments that spark play and learning.

PRIORITY	MEASURES	2022 BASELINE	TARGET	JUNE 2024
Improve Outdoor Environments in Early Care and Education	# of child care facilities that have received a Grow Outdoors SC design plan	40	75	49
	# of child care facilities that have made improvements based on a Grow Outdoors SC design plan	15	35	27



In 2024, Grow Outdoors SC unveiled a **fresh new brand**, complete with a redesigned logo, updated colors, and a revitalized visual identity, reflecting their continued commitment to fostering outdoor experiences for children across South Carolina. A new website, www.growoutdoorssc.org, will be online very soon.

Our Priorities

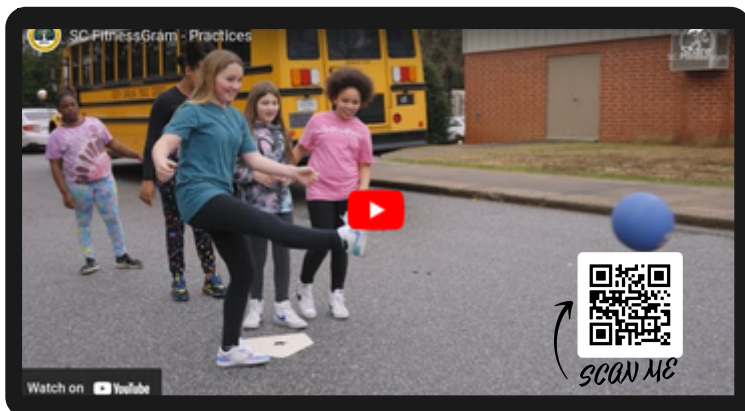
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LEARN MORE

Prioritize Physical Activity in Schools

We support the SC FitnessGram initiative and its partners as they improve student health by enhancing physical education and creating more opportunities for physical activity before, during, and after school.

PRIORITY MEASURES		2022 BASELINE	TARGET	JUNE 2024
Prioritize Physical Activity in Schools	# of school districts that participate in professional development opportunities related to improving PE/PA in schools and # of students reached	62 655,830	65 723,656	67 659,161
	# of SC FitnessGram influencer schools that are fully meeting Healthier Generation physical activity goals	32%	37%	35%
	# of SC FitnessGram influencer schools that are fully meeting Healthier Generation health/physical education goals	52%	57%	55%



SC FitnessGram launched a [four-part video series](#) to help build the movement for physical activity in schools. Produced for multiple audiences, the videos provide valuable insights and practical strategies to help foster healthier, more active lifestyles for children.

Our Priorities

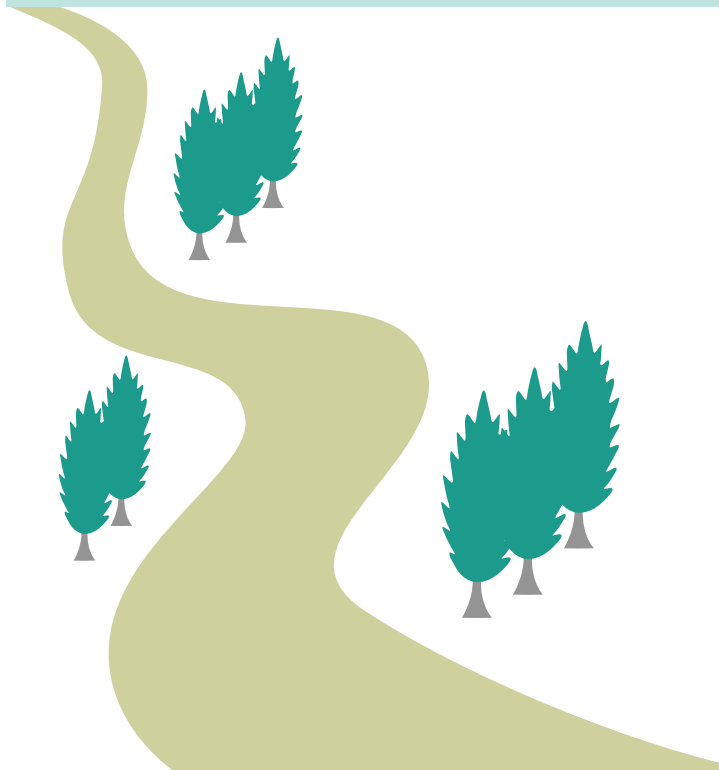
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LEARN MORE

Promote Trail Connectivity

We support the development of the South Carolina Trails Coalition to increase trail connectivity in the state and promote the use of trails through increased knowledge and outreach.

PRIORITY	MEASURES	2022 BASELINE	TARGET	JUNE 2024
Promote Trail Connectivity	# of trails included in SCTrails.net	554	575	801



There was over **\$33 million** in last year's state budget appropriated for local trails.



SCTrails.net added a presence on social media with active accounts on both **Instagram** and **Facebook**.



A workshop with a focus on trails was held for **local public park and recreation directors** in August.



Planning to host the first **SC Trails Conference** in 2025!

Our Priorities

4

LEARN MORE

Expand Awareness of WIC

We are working to expand awareness of the benefits and services of the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program to increase enrollment of eligible participants.

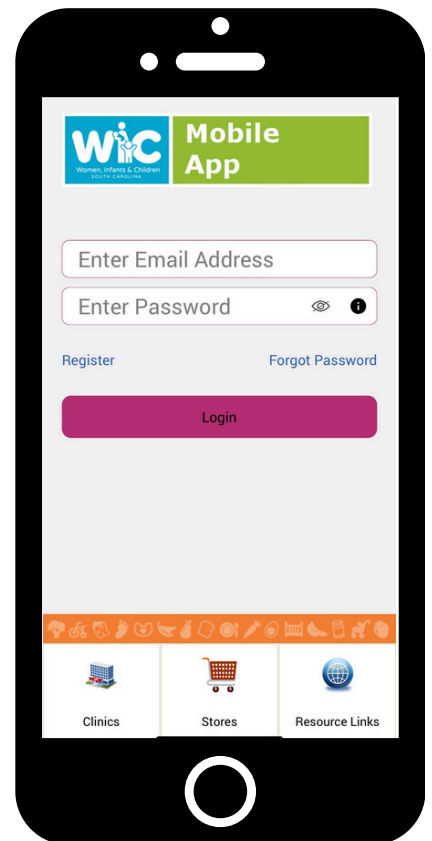
PRIORITY	MEASURES	2022 BASELINE	TARGET	JUNE 2024
Expand Awareness of WIC	% of eligible South Carolina residents participating in WIC	44.5%	50%	55.2%



WIC's caseload broke 100,000 in May 2024 for the first time since March 2017, serving

100,540

participants between May 1 and May 31.



More families are engaging with the WIC mobile app, which has streamlined access to vital resources and information.

More than 89,000 families are actively using the app.



Our Priorities

5

LEARN MORE

Increase Senior Enrollment in SNAP

We support the SC Department on Aging and SC Thrive as they increase enrollment of eligible older adults in SNAP through community-based outreach.

PRIORITY	MEASURES	2022 BASELINE	TARGET	JUNE 2024
Increase Senior Enrollment in SNAP	# of SNAP applications for seniors completed by SC Thrive	500	1,000	9,298
	# of efforts to expand awareness/accessibility of SNAP	0	12	421



SNAP video included in the **Nourish to Flourish** South Carolina Social Media Toolkit.

Nearly 135,000

SC residents 51 years of age or older who are eligible for SNAP are receiving SNAP benefits.



Our Priorities

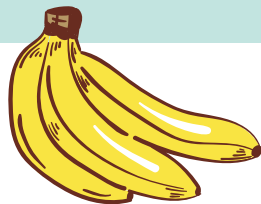
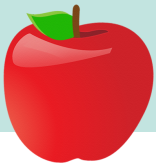
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LEARN MORE

Increase Access to Healthy Food

We support strengthening local food systems in South Carolina; addressing food insecurity through the health care system by expanding screening & referral tools and resources; and exploring strategies to address community design for physical activity and access to healthy food.

PRIORITY	MEASURES	2022 BASELINE	TARGET	JUNE 2024
Increase Access to Healthy Food	% complete for SC landscape assessment for nutrition security screening and referral (supported by the BCBSSC Foundation in support of the goals of Diabetes Free SC)	0%	100%	100%
	% complete for SC Health & Planning Toolkit Addendum	0%	100%	85%
	% complete for Food System Assessment Template	0%	100%	100%



SEVEN

local food policy councils received funding and technical assistance from USC SNAP-Ed. These councils supported the implementation and maintenance of **44 strategies** to improve healthy food access, reaching approximately **20,000** people living on a limited income.

FOOD is MEDICINE...

- created networking opportunities for **134 members**;
- convened nearly **200 partners** for their annual meeting and regularly brought together FiM champions for shared learning opportunities;
- began developing **policy priorities**;
- strengthened professional development for **health care providers**.

OUR PROCESS

At Healthy Palmetto, we're doubling down on our commitment to improving quality of life across South Carolina. In 2022, 35% of adults in our state had obesity, with Black residents disproportionately affected (44%). The economic impact is staggering—over \$7 billion in obesity-related medical costs—and from 2019 to 2021, South Carolina lost more than 10,000 years of life to premature deaths. **These numbers highlight the urgent need for coordinated action.**

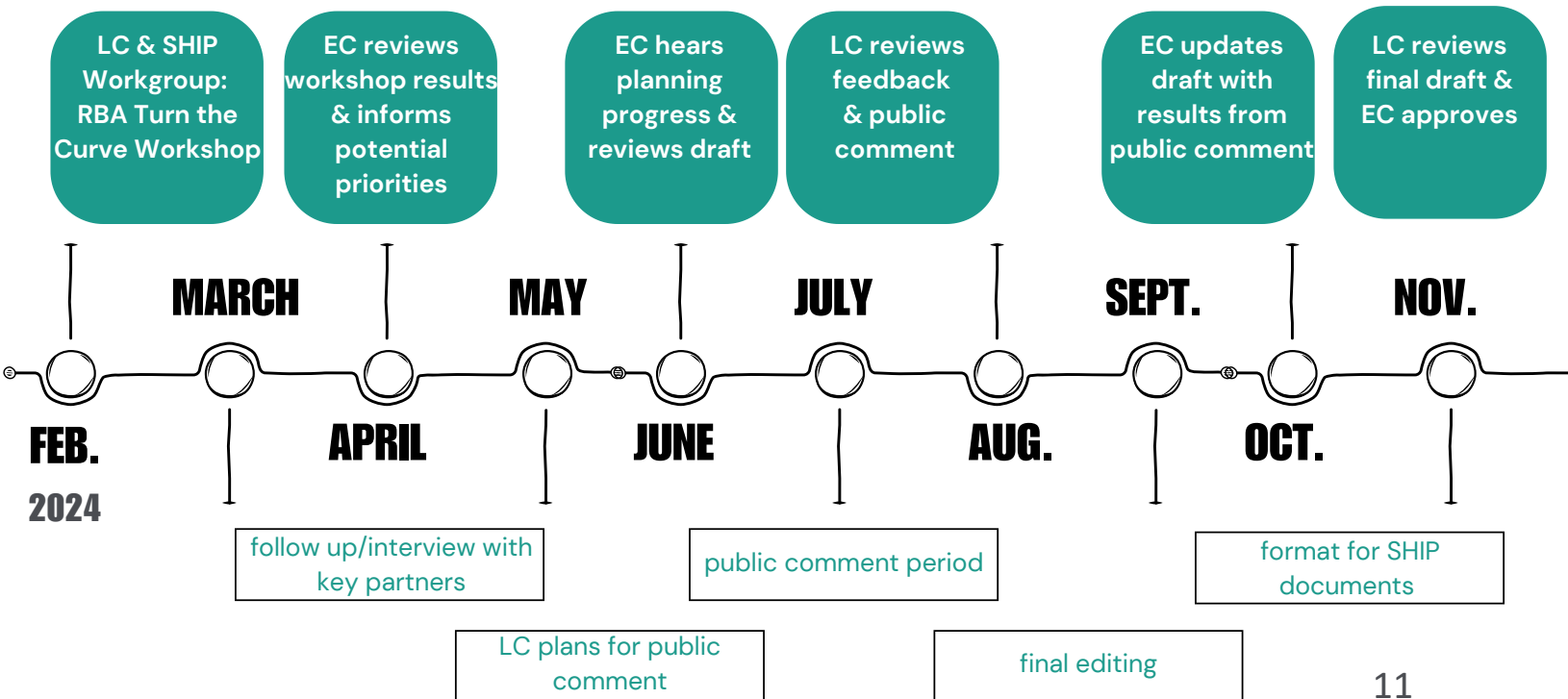
In 2024, we launched a comprehensive planning process to select new priority areas for 2025 to 2029. As a state-level collaborative, we prioritized national, state, and local alignment by incorporating evidence-based strategies from leading reports, including the *Trust for America's Health State of Obesity 2023* and the *National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health*.

Our approach was deeply collaborative, engaging a statewide workgroup, gathering extensive input from our Leadership Council and Executive Committee, and hosting a public comment period as well as interviews with key partners.



No stone was left unturned. This process not only reflects our shared vision but also ensures that the plan we launch in February 2025 will drive meaningful, measurable impact across South Carolina.

STAY TUNED AS WE UNVEIL SIX NEW PRIORITIES IN 2025.




What Our Partners Say

The 2024 Healthy Palmetto Partnership survey was administered in October. A total of 41 partners were invited to complete the survey, and a total of 23 surveys were completed. The results are as follows:




Respondent Profile




23 completed surveys

out of the 41 surveys distributed to partners, for a response rate of 56%.




17 sit on executive committee or leadership council

representing a total of about 77% of survey respondents.



Public Health & Healthcare

are the primary fields of exactly 50% of respondents' organizations.



95% are very engaged or somewhat engaged

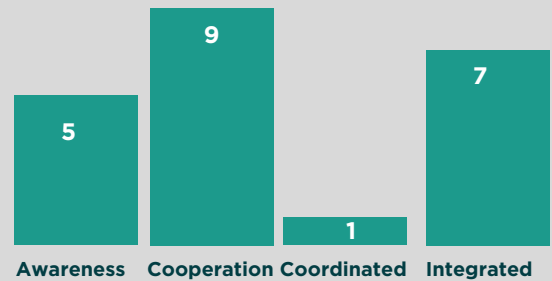
50% of respondents indicated they are "very engaged."

Method of Interaction

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of interaction with those organizations they collaborate with. Respondents could choose from:

- Awareness:** aware of what the organization does.
- Cooperation:** we informally exchange information/attend meetings together.
- Coordinated:** we synchronize activities for mutual benefit.
- Integrated:** we have a mutual, binding relationship that supports work in related content areas.

The majority of respondents indicated their organizations are either **cooperative (41%)** or **integrated (32%)**.



Partner Interactions



Most respondents indicate contributing to HP by:

Attending quarterly meetings (86%) & regular communication (73%)



Partnerships with HP most have resulted in:

Exchange of resources (68%) & improved services/supports (36%)



Partners believe their most important contributions to HP include:

Community connections (64%), Data resources (50%) and subject matter expertise (45%)



Partners believe HP work should address these outcomes:

Improved resource sharing (45%) & communication (36%), and reducing health disparities (32%)



Partners believe the aspects contributing to the success of HP are:

Ability to bring together diverse stakeholders (86%), resource sharing (73%), & exchanging information (68%)

Goal Achievement

Respondents were asked to share how successful they believe Healthy Palmetto has been in accomplishing a list of goals. Results of those responses are below:



Thank you for your ongoing support to create environments that support healthy eating and active living in South Carolina.

