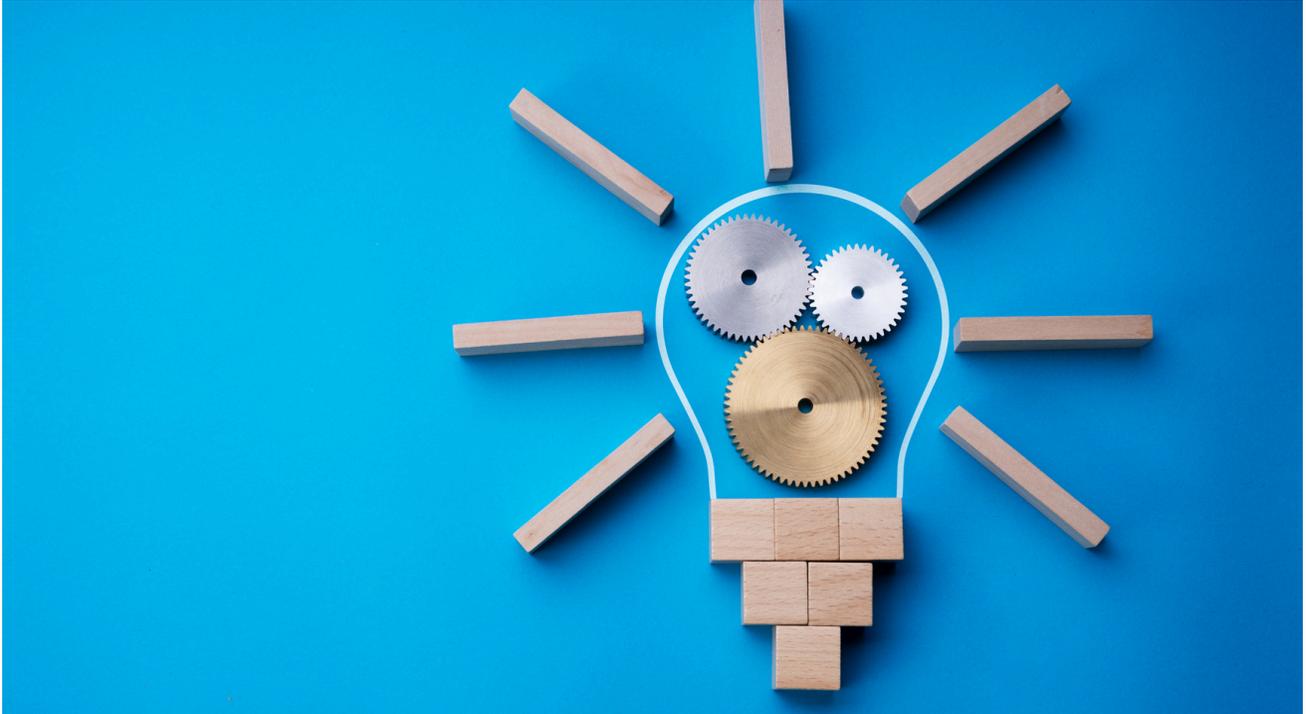


2025 Annual Report



TABLE OF CONTENTS



02

OUR
PROGRESS

03

OUR
PEOPLE

05

OUR
PRIORITIES

06

PRIORITY
ONE

07

PRIORITY
TWO

08

PRIORITY
THREE

09

PRIORITY
FOUR

10

PRIORITY
FIVE

11

PRIORITY
SIX

12

WHAT
OUR
PARTNERS
SAY

OUR PROGRESS

Healthy Palmetto is South Carolina's unified coalition for healthy eating and active living, bringing together more than 30 organizations to align strategies, strengthen partnerships, and advance shared action for a healthier state.

The year 2025 marks a new chapter for Healthy Palmetto. Building on years of collaboration and groundwork, we proudly released the Healthy Palmetto Five-Year Action Plan (2025–2029) - a shared roadmap to accelerate progress in healthy eating and active living across South Carolina. This plan reflects the collective insight, expertise, and dedication of partners from every corner of the state, uniting public health, education, transportation, recreation, and community development sectors around a common purpose: to make healthy choices easier and more accessible for all South Carolinians.

The release of this plan represents more than a milestone - it signals our shift from planning to implementation. Each of our six strategic priorities is now underway, supported by statewide champions who are aligning programs, policies, and resources to drive measurable change. Early actions are already taking shape, from local pilot projects and cross-agency coordination to expanded data sharing and communications efforts that strengthen our collective voice for health.

As we embark on this next phase, we do so in a time of change. Shifts in federal funding and organizational structures have presented new challenges for many of our partners, yet they also remind us of the resilience and adaptability of this network. Healthy Palmetto remains steadfast in our commitment to supporting and connecting statewide leaders who share a common vision where every person in South Carolina has the opportunity to eat and live well, move easier, and thrive.

Together, we are transforming ideas into coordinated action and action into lasting impact.

In good health,

Healthy Palmetto Backbone Organizations



Vision

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

Purpose

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

OUR PEOPLE

Healthy Palmetto's strength lies in its people - the partners and champions who bring our vision to life. Our network is made up of dedicated professionals from state agencies, universities, nonprofits, and community organizations who lend their expertise, creativity, and leadership to improve healthy eating and active living across South Carolina.

In 2025, we welcomed new representatives from several partner organizations, each bringing fresh perspectives and renewed energy to our shared mission. At the same time, we experienced natural transitions as partners moved into new roles or chapters in their professional journeys. These changes reflect the dynamic, collaborative spirit that defines Healthy Palmetto, and we are grateful for the lasting contributions of all who have been part of this work.

Healthy Palmetto's partner network continues to demonstrate remarkable adaptability, ensuring that our statewide effort remains vibrant, innovative, and



We extend our heartfelt appreciation for our colleagues from USC SNAP-Ed, whose partnership helped strengthen community-based nutrition education and capacity building across South Carolina. While changes in federal funding have shifted their involvement, the impact of their work continues to shape our collective efforts.

aligned with the evolving landscape of public health. Guided by our backbone organizations - Wholespire and the South Carolina Department of Public Health - and supported by the Executive Committee, Leadership Council, and Strategic Allies, Healthy Palmetto remains grounded in the principle that together, we can do more than any one organization can do alone.



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
Palmetto Walk Bike
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 2025-2029

Grounded in a collective commitment to our expected results and a shared understanding of our indicators, Healthy Palmetto has selected six 2025 - 2029 Strategic Priorities.

To establish these priorities, we asked:

- 1) What strategies are most likely to directly impact the issues outlined in our indicators?
- 2) Where can we leverage existing momentum and leadership in our state?
- 3) What can we feasibly advance in the next five years?
- 4) What strategies are proven to work and align with existing priorities and plans?
- 5) What strategies offer alignment opportunities between the state and local levels?
- 6) What opportunities would benefit from state-level coordination and collective support?

As a state-level collaborative, Healthy Palmetto uniquely identifies opportunities for alignment between statewide and local community efforts and ensures that prioritized strategies are rooted in evidence and informed by national priorities and plans. Starting with this foundation of vetted, evidence-based strategies allowed us to

1 - INCREASE THE REACH OF NUTRITION SUPPORTS

2 - EXPAND ACCESS TO FOOD IS MEDICINE INTERVENTIONS

3 - PROMOTE COMMUNITY MOBILITY AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

4 - IMPROVE EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION ENVIRONMENTS

5 - PRIORITIZE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

6 - INCREASE ACCESS TO OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

emphasize impact while allowing space for state and local adaptation. Our strategic priorities were selected based on this collective decision-making process and extensive conversations with each identified lead partner to explore their existing efforts and capacity.

Our 2025–2029 priorities are rooted in years of sustained momentum, shaped by long-standing partnerships, innovation, and shared commitment. By leveraging proven strategies and the collective impact of past initiatives, we are deepening our reach and strengthening efforts to promote nutrition and physical activity across South Carolina.

Our Priorities

1

LEARN MORE

Increase the Reach of Nutrition Supports

We support efforts to increase awareness of, accessibility to, and participation in programs that improve access to nutritious food.

PRIORITY LEADS	MEASURES	BASELINE	2025
Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Nutrition Program	% of current WIC participation among eligible women, infants and young children	55%	58%
SC Department on Aging	# of tagged nutrition related services and supports in the GetCareSC database	60	88
	# of partners and stakeholders utilizing the Nourish to Flourish SC social media tool kit	5	11
University of South Carolina - SNAP-Ed	# of counties receiving support and technical assistance for Summer Meals	0*	12
	# of local Summer Meals sites	1130	1085
	% of local partners implementing PSE changes to increase the quality and reach of Summer Meals programs	0%*	11%
		<i>*Measures initiated in 2025.</i>	



The 2025 WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program redemption rate reached 82.6% from a total food allocation of \$60,268.00, demonstrating the program’s effectiveness in helping WIC families access fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables.

Our Priorities

2

LEARN MORE

Expand Access to Food Is Medicine Interventions

Food is Medicine programs seek to establish food and nutrition interventions within healthcare settings, emphasizing improved health outcomes and intentionally addressing food and nutrition insecurity.

PRIORITY	LEADS	MEASURES	BASELINE*	2025
	Food is Medicine SC (FiMSC)	# of partner organizations receiving training, technical assistance, or support in collaboration with FiMSC	0	9
		# of individuals participating in FiMSC professional development	0	175

**Measures initiated in 2025.*

Growing Capacity Through Partnership



Funding from the SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare enabled FiMSC to strengthen its training and technical assistance capacity via the FiM TA Collaborative. In 2025, these efforts served 175 individuals and engaged nine partner organizations.

FiMSC leadership attended the Food is Medicine Implementers Workshop at Harvard Law School's Center for Health Law & Policy Innovation, where they connected with other states, exchanged ideas, and learned innovative approaches to building capacity and integrating nutrition into healthcare in South Carolina.

Our Priorities

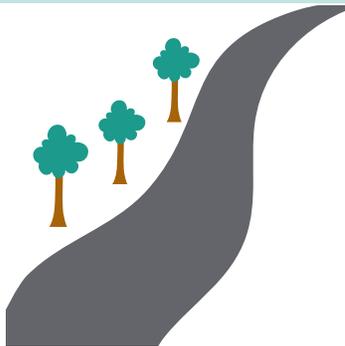
3

LEARN MORE

Promote Community Mobility and Active Transportation

We support coordinated efforts that equip local communities to assess and improve community mobility. This also includes necessary efforts at the state level to build partnerships, strengthen shared understanding, and align resources across multi-sector partners.

PRIORITY LEADS	MEASURES	BASELINE	2025
SC Department of Public Health	# of people trained in core content	0	110
Wholespire	% of communities participating in training and moving into action planning	0	100% (7 of 7)
	strength of statewide collaboration (scale 1-5)	NA <i>(Collaborative developed in 2025)</i>	4.4



An innovative partnership was formed with Francis Marion University's Occupational Therapy program and the City of Florence to advance walkability awareness among future allied health clinicians.



The Palmetto Active Transportation (PAT) Team was formed and created the State Walkability and Active Transportation Collaborative Action Plan.



More than 30 partner organizations comprise PAT, including state agencies, academic institutions, nonprofits, and councils of governments.

Our Priorities

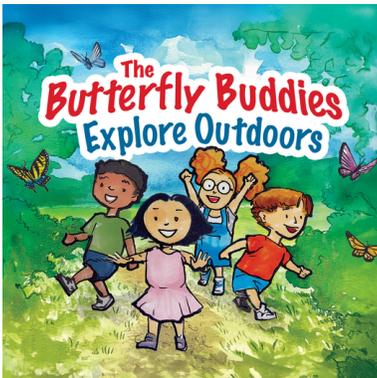
4

LEARN MORE

Improve Early Care and Education Environments

We continue to support the efforts of Grow Outdoors South Carolina (Grow Outdoors SC), an initiative to transform early childhood outdoor spaces into stimulating, naturalized environments that spark play and learning.

PRIORITY LEADS	MEASURES	BASELINE	2025
Grow Outdoors South Carolina	# of facilities that have received a Grow Outdoors SC plan	49	69
	# of facilities that have made improvements based on a Grow Outdoors SC plan	27	31



A book to introduce child care providers and families to the rich experiences children enjoy while playing and learning in a naturalized outdoor environment was created for Grow Outdoors SC.



Grow Outdoors SC launched a brand-new website in 2025, which has already attracted **1,600** unique visitors this year.

Visit growoutdoorssc.org!



Our Priorities

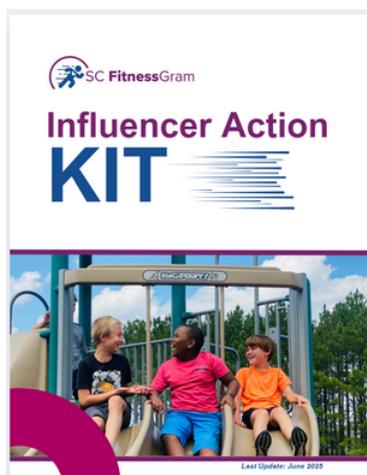
5

LEARN MORE

Prioritize Physical Activity in Schools

We continue to 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 LEADS	MEASURES	BASELINE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR	2025 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR
SC FitnessGram	% of school districts actively participating in SC FitnessGram	88%	88%
	# of school districts participating in physical education /physical activity professional development opportunities	67	69
	% of schools in compliance with the physical education and physical activity minutes outlined by the SC Students Health and Fitness Act	30%	36%



Influencer Action Kit Launched

This go-to guide is helping influencers spread the word about the importance of health-related fitness for South Carolina students. Whether the audience is parents, educators, decision-makers, or community members, this kit is making it easier for advocates to spread the right messages.

Our Priorities

6

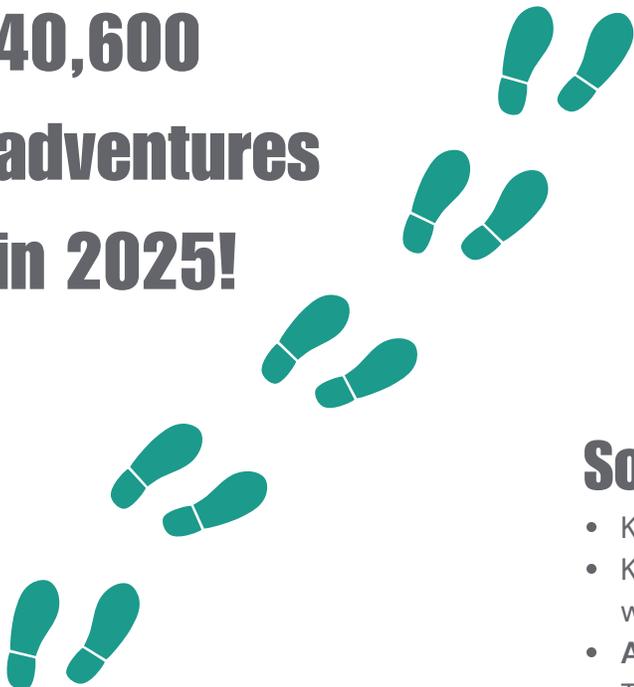
LEARN MORE

Increase Access to Outdoor Opportunities for Physical Activity

We continue to support collaborative efforts to advance opportunities for physical activity in outdoor spaces.

PRIORITY LEADS	MEASURES	BASELINE	2025
SC Kids in Parks (KiP)	# of TRACK Trail locations	43	72
	# of TRACK Trail adventures completed by children and families	171,450 <i>(from 2014-2024)</i>	212,050

40,600
adventures
in 2025!



Something to Celebrate

- KiP opened the **first** Fitness TRACK Trail.
- KiP has hosted a total of **35 community meetings**, with 11 more to go.
- **All SC counties** with the exception of one have a TRACK Trail or a TRACK Trail in progress.

Visit kidsinparks.com!

WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

The 2025 Healthy Palmetto Partnership survey was administered in October to ensure that our collaboration continues to grow in ways that reflect the voices of everyone involved. The results are as follows:



Respondent Profile



13 completed surveys

out of the 27 surveys distributed to partners, for a response rate of 48%.



11 respondents sit on the executive committee or leadership council

representing a total of about 85% of survey respondents.



Public Health & Recreation and/or Environment

are the primary fields of nearly half (46%) of respondents' organizations.



100% of respondents are very engaged or somewhat engaged

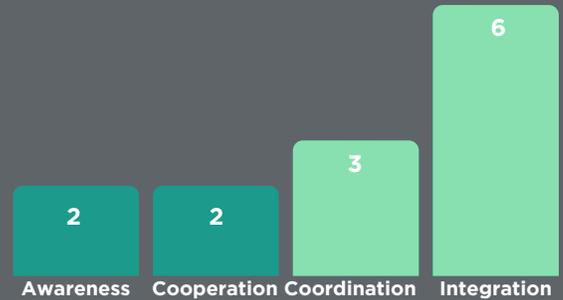
62% of respondents indicated they are "very engaged".

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.
- Coordination:** we synchronize activities for mutual benefit.
- Integration:** we have a mutual, binding relationship that supports work in related content areas.

The majority of respondents indicated their organizations' method of interaction is either **integration (46%)** or **coordination (23%)**.



Partner Interactions



Most respondents indicate contributing to HP by:

Attending quarterly meetings (100%), regular communication & resource sharing with members and stakeholders (77% each)



Partnerships with HP most have resulted in:

Exchange of resources (92%) & Improved services/supports (62%)



Partners believe their most important contributions to HP include:

Advocacy & Data Resources (54% each) & Community Connections (46%)



Partners believe HP work should address these outcomes:

Improved communication (46%) & reducing duplication (38%)

there was a 4-way tie between improving health outcomes, resource sharing, public awareness & reducing duplication (23% each)



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

Bringing diverse stakeholders together (100%), resource sharing, regular meetings & shared mission/goals (77% each)

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.

