Children's Services Council of Leon County
STRATEGIC PLAN (2026–2030)
Goal Statements, Draft Objectives and Strategies

The following strategic goals, objectives, and strategies are grounded in measurable community indicators that reflect the long-term well-being of children, youth, and families in Leon County. Together, they provide a framework for guiding investments, strengthening partnerships, and advancing a coordinated system of care from 2026–2030.

The goals and associated indicators represent the primary outcomes CSC Leon seeks to influence over the life of this strategic plan. The objectives and strategies identify priority areas of focus based on current research, community needs, stakeholder input, and local data. While these strategies provide an initial roadmap for action, they are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive. As conditions change, new opportunities emerge, and additional data become available, CSC Leon may refine, expand, or adapt implementation strategies to better achieve the desired outcomes.

CSC Leon recognizes that meaningful progress on these indicators cannot be achieved by any single organization acting alone. Success will depend upon strong partnerships among public agencies, nonprofit organizations, schools, healthcare providers, businesses, faith communities, families, and residents working toward shared outcomes. As a funder, convener, and catalyst for change, CSC Leon will support collaboration, align investments, promote shared accountability, and help strengthen the systems that contribute to positive outcomes for children, youth, and families.

To support transparency and continuous improvement, CSC Leon will annually report performance-based results from its investments and funded programs. These results will help demonstrate how funded strategies contribute to progress toward the broader community indicators outlined in this plan. While individual program outcomes alone will not determine community-level change, they provide important evidence regarding which investments are producing results and where adjustments may be needed.

Success will ultimately be measured not by the completion of individual activities, but by progress toward the community-level indicators identified within each goal area. This approach allows CSC Leon and its partners to remain responsive, innovative, and focused on results while maintaining accountability for improving outcomes for children, youth, and families throughout Leon County.

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KINDERGARTEN READINESS	
Intent	Ensure children enter school healthy, supported, and prepared to learn by strengthening early childhood systems from prenatal care through PreK. This frames the work as systems-level and longitudinal, not just academic.
Goal Number & Statement	**(1.) Increase kindergarten readiness rates in Title I schools by at least 5 percentage points by 2030.**
Measurement Tool/Indicator	PM1 Unified Scaled Score Performance of 707 or better, by school
Baseline	**35.7% (Fall, 2025)**
TOC Alignment	• Increase the number of children who enter kindergarten socially, emotionally, and academically ready. (SSL: 1) • Reduce infant and maternal mortality, increasing infant health, improving oral health, and improving early identification of health problems. (HCYF: 1)
Primary Community Partners	• Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition • Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend • First 1,000 Days (Local Chapter) • Early Head Start and Head Start Providers • Leon County Schools (Early Learning & Title I)
Objective 1	**(1.1) Build a Shared, Prenatal-to-PreK Service Continuum**
Strategies	a. Map services and identify gaps using the Kindergarten Readiness Pillars. b. Promote the use of common screening and assessment tools across early childhood partners where appropriate. c. Strengthen referral pathways among prenatal, health, and early learning partners. d. Integrate Family Resource Center navigation into early learning settings.
Objective 2	**(1.2) Strengthen Prenatal and Early Childhood Health Supports**
Strategies	a. Expand prenatal care, perinatal navigation and maternal health supports. b. Increase developmental and maternal mental health screenings. c. Improve connections to intervention and specialty services.
Objective 3	**(1.3) Improve Access to Quality Early Learning**
Strategies	a. Expand childcare access for ALICE families (defined as those who earn above the federal poverty level but below the threshold required to meet basic household needs). b. Support childcare provider sustainability and growth. c. Strengthen recruitment and retention of early childhood educators.
YOUTH SUCCESS	
Intent	Support school-age children and youth in achieving academic success, building resilience, and preparing for meaningful postsecondary and workforce pathways. This captures literacy, mental health, engagement, and workforce without fragmenting them.
Goal Number & Statement	**(2.) Increase the percentage of 3rd graders in Title I schools reading on grade level by at least 5 percentage points by 2030.**

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Measurement Tool/Indicator	PM3 FAST ELA Unified Scaled Score of 485 or higher, by school.
Baseline	**44.5% (Spring, 2025)**
TOC Alignment	Increase school performance and reduce juvenile crime among school-age children and youth. (SSL: 2)
Primary Community Partners	• Leon County Schools (Title I & Academic Services) • United Way of the Big Bend • Big Bend After School Alliance (collective OST providers) • WFSU Public Media
Objective 1	**(2.1) Expand Literacy-Rich OST Programming**
Strategies	a. Invest in evidence-informed reading supports. b. Align OST literacy efforts with classroom instruction. c. Expand tutoring and volunteer literacy initiatives.
Objective 2	**(2.2) Reduce Barriers to School Attendance**
Strategies	a. Expand attendance interventions through FRCs and partners. b. Identify chronic absenteeism early. c. Address transportation, housing, health, and safety barriers.
Objective 3	**(2.3) Strengthen Caregiver Engagement in Early Literacy**
Strategies	a. Equip caregivers with tools and strategies to support learning at home. b. Leverage WFSU and community literacy campaigns. c. Expand access to books and reading opportunities.
Goal Number & Statement	**(3.) Increase the percentage of Leon County youth ages 10-17 reporting positive mental health by 10 percentage points by 2030.**
Measurement Indicator	Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) table for depression, or suicidal ideation and behavior in the past 12 months
Baseline	**59.6% (2024)**
TOC Alignment	• Increasing resiliency and reducing the number and consequences of adverse childhood events. (HCYF: 2) • Increase school performance and reduce juvenile crime among school-age children and youth. (SSL: 2)
Community Partners	• Whole Child Leon/Pediatric Hub • Apalachee Center • DISC Village • Big Bend After School Alliance (collective OST providers)
Objective 1	**(3.1) Improve Early Identification and Support**
Strategies	a. Increase access to behavioral health screening and referral. b. Strengthen school and community partnerships around mental health. c. Improve coordination of services for youth needing additional support
Objective 2	**(3.2) Increase Protective Factors and Resilience**
Strategies	a. Support evidence-informed approaches that reduce violence exposure and strengthen youth safety and connectedness. b. Promote mentoring and positive youth-adult relationships. c. Support programs that build coping, problem-solving, and life skills.

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Goal Number & Statement	**(4.) Increase postsecondary enrollment and employment among Leon County young adults by 10% by 2030.**
Measurement Indicator	• Postsecondary enrollment rate for residents ages 18–24 (ACS S1401) • Employment rate for residents ages 20–24 (ACS S2301)
Baseline	• **71.4% (2024) - Postsecondary enrollment rate** • **64.1% (2024) - Employment rate**
TOC Alignment	• Increase occupational skills, career pathways, and economic opportunities for youth. (SNFC: 1) • Increase school performance and reduce juvenile crime among school-age children and youth. (SSL: 2) • Increase opportunities for safe, stable, secure and affordable housing. (SNFC: 3)
Community Partners	• ASPIRE Capital Region • Tallahassee/Leon County Talent Development Council • CareerSource Florida • Tallahassee-based Chambers of Commerce
Objective 1	**(4.1) Expand Work-Based Learning and Early Career Exposure**
Strategies	a. Expand internship and work-based learning opportunities. b. Engage employers through Chamber partnerships. c. Support apprenticeships and career exploration experiences.
Objective 2	**(4.2) Increase Postsecondary Enrollment and Credential Attainment**
Strategies	a. Support career advising hubs and workforce navigation. b. Expand dual enrollment and certification pathways. c. Increase FAFSA completion and workforce aid navigation.
Objective 3	**(4.3) Increase Stability for "Opportunity Youth"**
Strategies	a. Develop targeted pathways for disconnected youth. b. Coordinate housing, legal, and workforce supports. c. Embed coaching, mentorship, and career navigation into programs.
FAMILY WELL-BEING	
Intent	Strengthen family stability and protective factors to reduce crisis intervention and promote safe, nurturing environments for children and youth. This connects maltreatment prevention, FRC utilization, and food security under one stability lens.
Goal Number & Statement	**(5.) Increase the number of families actively engaged with Family Resource Centers by 25% by 2030.**
Measurement Indicator	Number of families who demonstrate ongoing participation with a Family Resource Center through repeat utilization of services, programs, activities, or navigation supports, reported by individual center.
Baseline	**TO BE DETERMINED (2025)**
TOC Alignment	• Enhance the ability of caregivers to meet the needs of at-risk children and youth. (SNFC4)

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	• Increase opportunities for safe, stable, secure, and affordable housing. (SNFC3)
Community Partners	• FRC Managing Entity • Leon County • CareerSource Capital Region • Faith-based organizations • Service organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, Junior League, etc.)
Objective 1	**(5.1) Increase Awareness, Access and Utilization of FRC Services**
Strategies	a. Assess opportunities to expand Family Resource Center access in underserved areas of Leon County. b. Conduct targeted outreach in FRC service areas. c. Expand referral partnerships with schools and providers. d. Increase visibility through community events and trusted messengers.
Objective 2	**(5.2) Strengthen Family Voice, Representation, and Community Leadership**
Strategies	a. Maintain active advisory councils that reflect the diversity of families served. b. Regularly collect and utilize family feedback. c. Create recurring opportunities for families to inform service design and community priorities.
Objective 3	**(5.3) Promote Family Stability and Self-Sufficiency**
Strategies	a. Connect families to employment and workforce opportunities. b. Expand financial literacy and benefits navigation supports. c. Increase access to legal, educational, and economic mobility resources.
Goal Number & Statement	**(6.) Reduce the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases in families living in neighborhoods served by Family Resource Centers by 10% by 2030.**
Measurement Indicator	Verified child abuse and neglect victims per 1,000 children under age 18 residing within Family Resource Center service areas, measured as a rolling three-year average.
TOC Alignment	• Enhance the ability of caregivers to meet the needs of at-risk children and youth. (SNFC: 4) • Increasing resiliency and reducing the number and consequences of adverse childhood events. (HCYF: 2)
Baseline	**TO BE DETRMINED (2024/2025)**
Community Partners	• Healthy Families/Healthy Start • FRC Managing Entity • Safe Families for Children • Faith-based organizations
Objective 1	**(6.1) Build a Coordinated Prevention Continuum to Complement (not duplicate) Statutory Child Welfare Functions.**
Strategies	a. Map prevention and intervention resources. b. Strengthen referral pathways across systems. c. Align family-support protocols among partners.
Objective 2	**(6.2) Strengthen Caregiver Skills and Family Resilience**

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Strategies	a. Expand parenting education and coaching. b. Increase fatherhood and peer support opportunities. c. Improve access to caregiver mental health supports.
Goal Number & Statement	**(7.) Reduce the number of youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability in Leon County by 5% by 2030.**
Measurement Indicator	• Number of children and youth experiencing homelessness reported through the Big Bend Continuum of Care Point in Time Inventory. • Number of students identified as experiencing homelessness under the McKinney-Vento Act by Leon County Schools ("*Families in Transition*").
Baseline	• **146 (2026) – BBCoC Point in Time** • **939 (2022-2023) – Families in Transition**
TOC Alignment	Increase opportunities for safe, stable, secure, and affordable housing. (SNFC3)
Community Partners	• Big Bend Continuum of Care • Leon County Schools • Legal Services of North Florida • Tallahassee Housing Authority
Objective 1	**(7.1) Improve Identification and Referral of Housing-Insecure Youth and Families**
Strategies	a. Strengthen coordination among schools, housing providers, and social services. b. Improve referral pathways to stabilization services. c. Increase awareness of available resources.
Objective 2	**(7.2) Expand Housing Stabilization Supports**
Strategies	a. Support eviction prevention and housing navigation efforts. b. Increase connections to emergency and transitional housing resources. c. Coordinate legal, financial, and supportive services.
Objective 3	**(7.3) Strengthen Community Coordination**
Strategies	a. Support collaborative planning among housing partners. b. Improve data sharing and trend monitoring. c. Align investments with identified community needs.
Goal Number & Statement	**(8.) Reduce the percentage of food-insecure children in Leon County by 10% by 2030.**
Measurement Indicator	Percentage of children experiencing food insecurity as reported through Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap.
Baseline	**22.2% (2023)**
TOC Alignment	Increase food security for children, youth and families. (SNFC: 2)
Community Partners	• Second Harvest of the Big Bend • Big Bend After School Alliance (collective OST providers) • FRC Managing Entity
Objective 1	**(8.1) Strengthen Community Food Access Partnerships**
Strategies	a. Coordinate food distribution in high-need neighborhoods. b. Expand SNAP and WIC outreach. c. Improve referral pathways between food and family-support providers.

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Objective 2	**(8.2) Expand Meal Access Through OST Programs**
Strategies	a. Increase meal and snack provision in CSC-funded programs. b. Expand summer and non-school-day meal access. c. Pilot innovative food access models.
CAPACITY BUILDING	
Intent	Build and sustain a coordinated system of care that strengthens the effectiveness, accountability, and long-term sustainability of organizations serving children and families. This brings together training, performance improvement, collaboration, and internal staffing to build a stronger overall system.
Goal Number & Statement	**(9.) Establish baseline organizational capacity metrics for community investment partner compliance by the end of 2026 and ensure partners achieve a compliance score of at least 85% by the end of 2028.**
Measurement Tool/Indicator	CSC Leon Organizational Capacity Assessment and Compliance Framework measuring performance across governance, financial management, data reporting, contract compliance, and program operations.
Baseline	**TO BE DETERMINED**
TOC Alignment	Strengthen the capacity, coordination, and sustainability of community-based organizations to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.
Community Partners	• United Partners for Human Services • Leon County • FSU/FAMU • Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence • Community Foundation of North Florida • Jim Moran Institute
Objective 1	**(9.1) Establish an Organizational Capacity Assessment Framework**
Strategies	a. Develop a standardized organizational assessment tool. b. Establish partner baselines and annual review processes. c. Use findings to guide technical assistance and investments.
Objective 2	**(9.2) Strengthen Organizational Proficiency**
Strategies	a. Provide targeted coaching and technical assistance to emerging and smaller organizations. b. Launch a pilot organizational certification series. c. Support continuous improvement planning.
Objective 3	**(9.3) Strengthen Organizational Sustainability and Performance**
Strategies	a. Strengthen organizations' ability to collect, analyze, and use data for continuous improvement. b. Expand research, evaluation, and continuous improvement capacity across the system of care. c. Support diversified funding and cross-agency collaboration.

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	d. Ensure CSC Leon maintains the staffing, expertise, and infrastructure needed to support community partners, evaluate outcomes, and lead system-level initiatives.

Additional Notes:

For future procurements, CSC Leon will require and/or give preference to proposals that demonstrate meaningful collaboration among community partners.

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