

Prepared By:



Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) 2025 Executive Summary

December 10, 2025



**Nicklaus
Children's**

Where Your Child Matters Most™

Executive Summary

This Executive Summary is intended to satisfy the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) requirement under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(r) and in accordance with the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Background

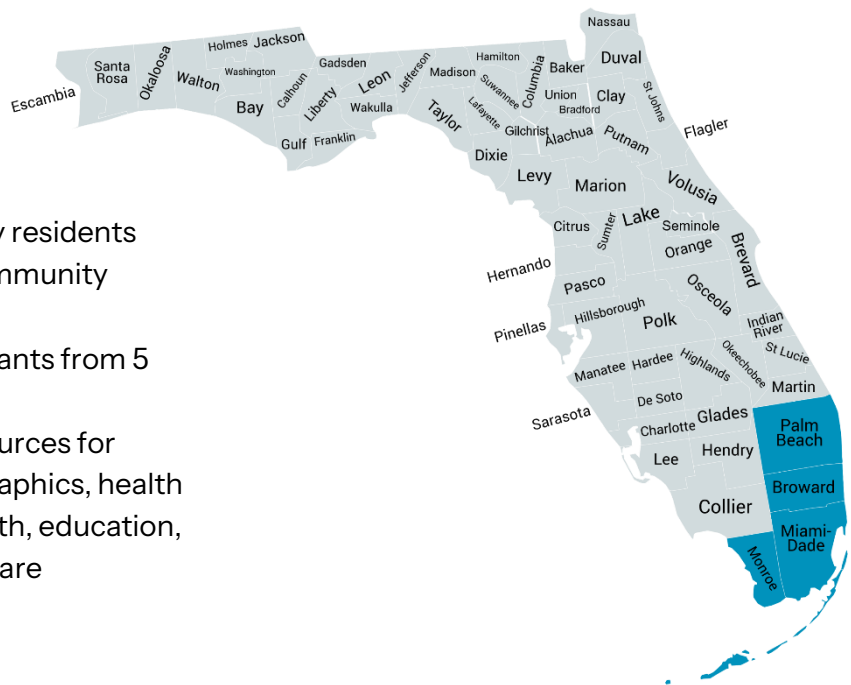
In 2025, Nicklaus Children's Hospital conducted a community health needs assessment (CHNA) of the community it serves in South Florida to gain a deeper understanding of the current health status of children and families in South Florida, identify the current health priorities, and explore community strengths, resources, and gaps to guide future planning and programming.

Nicklaus Children's hired Health Resources in Action (HRiA), a non-profit public health organization specializing in assessment and implementation plan development, to collect and analyze data, and to develop the CHNA report and implementation plan.

Methods

Nicklaus Children's collected data from multiple sources for the 2025 assessment including:

- A survey of 215 community residents
- 5 focus groups with 49 community residents
- Interviews with key informants from 5 community organizations
- Various secondary data sources for indicators such as demographics, health outcomes, behavioral health, education, ALICE metrics, access to care



This report includes data from the four Florida counties that Nicklaus Children's Hospital considers as the primary focus of community benefit activities: Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Monroe.

Findings

The following provides a brief overview of the key findings that emerged from this assessment.

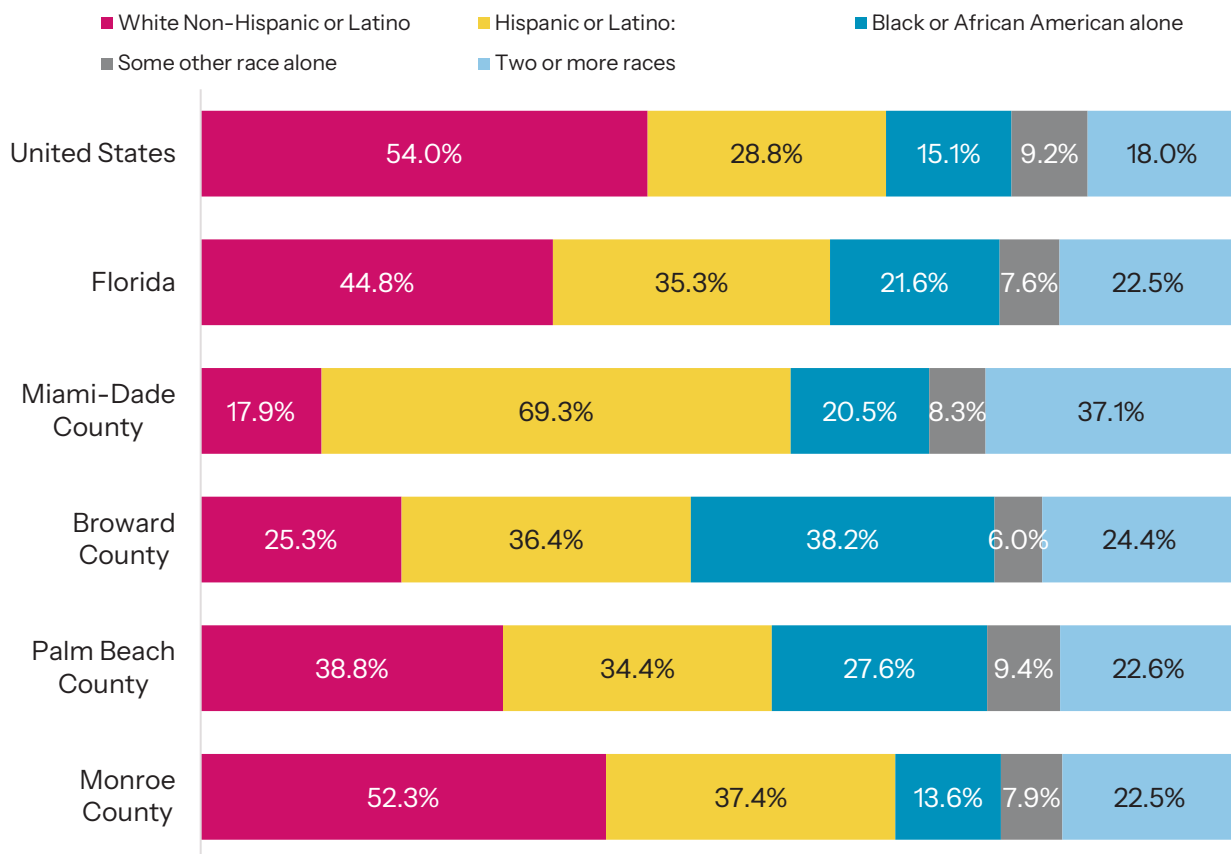
Community Profile

Age Demographics: 1 in 5 residents are aged 19 and under across the region. Broward and Miami-Dade have the highest rates of youth 19 and under and Monroe has the lowest (17%).

Race/Ethnicity: The region is racially and ethnically diverse overall. Miami-Dade has a predominately Hispanic/Latino youth population (69%) while in Broward, 38% of youth are Black/African American.

Language: At least 1 in 5 youth speak a language other than English at home. In Miami-Dade, 69% of youth speak a language other than English, with the most common language spoken at home being Spanish.

Population 19 and Under, by Race/Ethnicity, 2019-2023



DATA SOURCE: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023

Social Drivers of Health



Housing and Cost of Living: Miami-Dade has a near-even split between owners (52%) and renters (48%), with the highest renter share across the region, exceeding state and national rates. Nearly 3 in 5 renters are spending 30% or more of income on housing, an indicator of housing cost burden. Median monthly renter costs peaked in Monroe (\$1,959), nearly 1.5 times the average US renter.



Transportation: Nearly 1 in 10 households in Miami-Dade do not have access to a vehicle, the highest rate in the region.



Food and Nutrition Security: Food insecurity impacts about 1 in 8 residents in Florida and the Nicklaus Children's service area, compared to fewer than 1 in 20 nationally. In South Florida, Miami-Dade has the highest overall rate of households receiving SNAP (23%), and Broward and Palm Beach have the highest rates of households with children receiving SNAP (46% each).



Violence and Safety: Feeling unsafe keeps students outside of school, with Broward reporting the highest rate of absences for safety concerns (12%). 29% of Florida middle and high school students have experienced cyber-bullying with rates highest among female students in Monroe (40%).



Youth Achievement and Enrichment: Youth in focus groups highlighted concerns about the education system being underfunded and the lack of role models and mentorship opportunities. Attendance and graduation disparities exist with absenteeism ranging from 22% in Broward County to 13% in Monroe, and across counties, high school graduation rates were higher for White students and lower for Black students.

"I'd love to see more structure for youth, so they don't fall on the wrong paths. When they're older, they'll make their own choices, but while they're young, we need to guide them. Also, when we see successful Haitians, those with businesses and means, we should support them. That way, we help grow our community, and they can help us in return."

– Focus Group Participant

Healthcare Access

Common Barriers: About 1 in 5 survey respondents reported no barriers to accessing healthcare. The most common barriers were cost and long wait times (39% each).

Systemic Barriers: Focus groups highlighted systemic issues such as language barriers, lack of insurance, high costs, and experiences of discrimination especially amongst people with disabilities, Black, and immigrant families. Negative experiences with providers are also a barrier to re-engaging with healthcare.

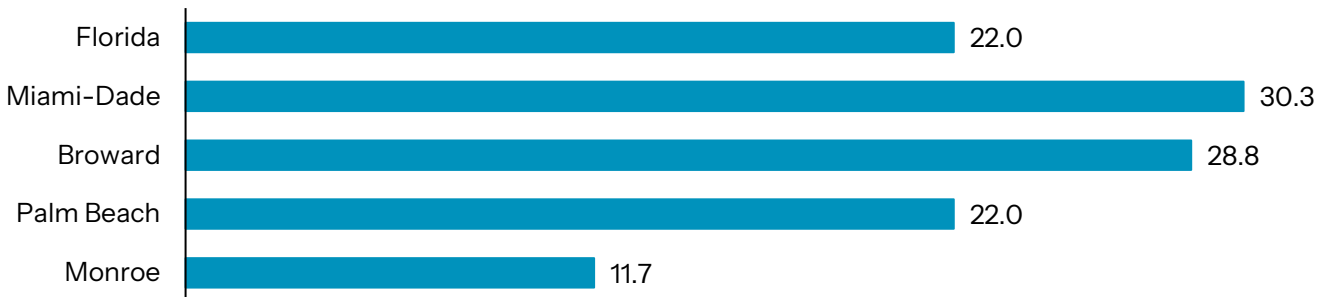
Health Insurance: Nearly half of Miami-Dade youth (48%) have public insurance, compared to 40% statewide and 39% nationally.

Access and Availability: Miami-Dade has the highest rate of licensed pediatricians in South Florida (30 per 100,000), while Monroe has the lowest (12 per 100,000).

“Language and cultural barriers often make it difficult for families to access or navigate health services.”

– Focus Group Participant

Total Licensed Pediatricians, 2022-2023



DATA SOURCE: Florida Department of Health, Division of Medical Quality Assurance via FLCharts (Rate per 100,000 Population)

Community survey respondents suggested multiple ways to improve care including:

- Access to mental healthcare and early intervention supports
- Increased screenings/preventive care
- Affordable care
- More access to specialty care
- Non-traditional hours
- Navigation and approach to care
- Expanded geographic access to healthcare care (including specialists)

“Have an open line of communication between child/parent to doctor, willingness to ensure information being presented is understood and clarified, follow up, and not have an extended wait time for an appointment.”

– Community Survey Respondent

Community Health Outcomes and Behaviors

Maternal and Child Health

- Miami-Dade has the lowest share of mothers receiving adequate prenatal care in the region (54%).
- From 2015 to 2024, full immunization rates among 2-year-olds declined statewide and regionally; in 2024, Miami-Dade led at 81% while Broward has the lowest at 73%.

Health Behaviors

- Daily physical activity is lowest among students in Broward (15%) and Miami-Dade (16%), compared to Palm Beach (23%) and the state overall (20%).
- Male students were active at about twice the rate of female peers.
- About 3 in 11 students in the four counties were overweight or obese, slightly below the state rate of 3 in 10.

Chronic Conditions

- The major physical health issues focus group participants discussed include obesity, weight management, diabetes, and respiratory illnesses.
- Cancer incidence among youth (ages 0–19) is highest in Miami-Dade (26 per 100,000), exceeding the state rate (21 per 100,000).
- About 1 in 12 students statewide report asthma, with Black students showing the highest rates—up to 13% in Miami-Dade and Monroe, roughly twice those of White and Hispanic peers.
- Youth diabetes hospitalizations are highest in Monroe among ages 12–18.

Mental Health

- Female high school students report mental illness more often than males (35% vs. 20% statewide), with the widest gaps in Miami-Dade (26% female vs. 10% male) and Palm Beach (30% female vs. 17% male).
- Nearly 1 in 10 middle schoolers in Miami-Dade and Palm Beach reported suicide attempts, about three times higher than high school peers, with females attempting at more than twice the male rate statewide (10% vs. 4%).
- Focus groups cited social media, screen time, and academic stress as key factors in poor youth mental health.

Substance Use

- Palm Beach high schoolers report the highest rates of ever drinking (35%) and marijuana use (9%).
- Misperceptions about addiction are most common in Broward and Miami-Dade, where nearly 1 in 5 students think people cannot become addicted to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or smokeless tobacco.

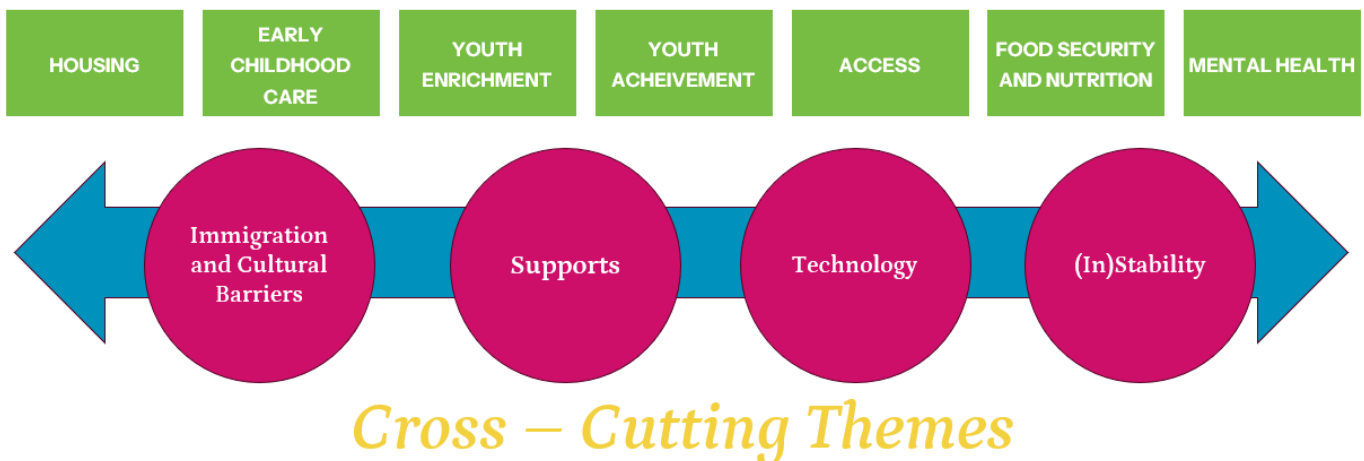
Overall Mortality

- In Florida, the leading causes of death are perinatal conditions (329 per 100,000) for youth under 1, and unintentional injuries, such as suffocation, drowning, motor vehicle accidents, firearm incidents, and drug poisoning, for youth aged 1–24.

Intersectionality of Priority Areas

The key themes identified in this assessment—housing, early childhood care, youth enrichment and achievement, healthcare access, food security and nutrition, behavioral and mental health, chronic disease, maternal and child health, and violence and safety—do not operate in silos. Instead, they intersect and overlap in ways that amplify both barriers and opportunities for health.

These connections are shaped by cross-cutting themes—immigration and cultural barriers, availability of supports, technology access, and community stability—that either strengthen or weaken the capacity of families to navigate systems. Taken together, this intersectionality underscores the importance of coordinated, multi-sector strategies. By addressing root causes, communities can reduce duplication, close gaps, and build more resilient paths to health and equity.



Conclusion

Based on responses gathered from key informant interviews, focus group participants, and community survey respondents, as well as social, economic, and health data from surveillance systems, seven major initial issue areas were identified for the Nicklaus Children's Hospital service areas (listed below in alphabetical order):

- Access
- Early Childhood Care
- Food Security and Nutrition
- Housing
- Mental Health
- Youth Achievement
- Youth Enrichment

After a multistep prioritization process that entailed discussion with and voting by a broad group of local partners, Nicklaus Children's Hospital will focus on the following priority areas:

- Food and Nutrition Security
- Access to Information, Resources, and Healthcare
- Children's Mental Wellness

Nicklaus Children's Hospital will address these priority areas as part of ongoing community engagement efforts to address health disparities.