Listening Project – Children are Born and Remain Healthy.

Parent/Caregiver - Input on Health

- ◆ Health/Mental Health
  - ○ *Make hospital/healthcare more accessible in rural areas*
  - ○ *Dental screenings*
  - ○ *Health insurance*
  - ○ *Someone for kids to talk to – an outlet*
  - ○ *Healthcare resources for adults*
  - ○ *24-hour EMS*

When asked what services, programs, or opportunities are needed for children and families in their community, the most frequent responses were economic subsidies/funding and health care (including dental care, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, counseling), each cited by 16% of respondents. The third-most cited area was education supports (tutoring, summer school) at 14%.

Prenatal Care

86.8% - With our youngest child, my partner or I received great prenatal care (309 of 356).

20.0% of parents/caregivers stated they had a hard time getting prenatal appointments (38 out of 190 survey respondents for this question).

Barriers to Health Care

I have challenges getting good health care services for my children that include:

23.7% - Lack of free time to take them to appointments (201 of 847).

22.6% - Appointment times don't fit my family's schedule (191 of 847).

21.5% - Lack of money to pay for health care (182 of 847).

21.5% - Lack of health care center or doctors in my neighborhood (182 of 847).

18.9% - Lack of transportation (160 of 847).

7.0% - Language barriers (59 of 847).

Parents/caregivers were complimentary of the healthcare options provided by the UF system. Services already provided include a pop-up dental clinic, dental health bus, and

mobile health unit. Unfortunately, they also shared the need for additional healthcare in Alachua County as these services are not easily accessible because of the lack of transportation and the length of time it takes to get an appointment.

Providers who accept Medicaid are not close to communities where services are most needed. When services such as occupational and speech therapy are needed, it often takes months to be seen by a provider. Referrals are needed to access UF services, which requires additional appointments and increases the wait time to access services.

Participants suggested adding more dental buses and pop-up clinics that provide services operating in neighborhoods. As of this study, many parents struggle to provide transportation to access available services. Many are forced to seek private options or healthcare outside of Alachua County because of the long waiting lists for providers. Limited healthcare options in the county often force students to miss school to attend appointments.

Areas Parents Need Help*:*

Of these areas, the ones where I could use the most help with my children are:

37.5% - Access to enrichment and out-of-school time programs (318 of 847).

36.8% - Getting mental health counseling for one or more of my children (312 of 847).

36.5% - Learning how to better manage my children's behavior (309 of 847).

34.5% - Help with literacy and other academic support (292 of 847).

33.6% - Access to dental care (272 of 810).

33.3% - Getting healthy food for my children (282 of 847).

32.6% - Access to quality childcare (276 of 847).

30.8% - Career exploration and development (261 of 847).

29.3% - Keeping my children healthy (248 of 847).

27.2% - Keeping my children safe (i.e., violence prevention) (230 of 847).

26.1% - Getting help supporting my special needs child (221 of 847).

Youth - Input on Health

60.4% - I have been to the dentist in the past year (93 of 154).

69.1% - I have had a regular checkup with a doctor in the past year (103 of 149).

63.2% - I have had my vision checked by a doctor in the past year (96 of 152).

28.1% - In the past year, I've felt sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row and stopped doing usual activities (43 of 155).

When asked what afterschool or outside-of-school activities they would be interested in, the most frequent youth response was some kind of sport:

- *Sports (general, archery, figure skating, majorettes, baseball, girl's basketball, fitness club, cheer, softball, soccer, volley ball)*
- *Rugby*
- *Football (including tackle football for girls)*
- *Basketball*
- *Community Pool/Swimming*
- *Track*
- *Dance classes*
- *Gymnastics*

Provider/Community Member – Input on Health

Areas Providers/Partners Identified as of Most Concern to Families/Youth

Response	% Providers	% Partners
Mental Health & Wellbeing	66%	**64%**
Housing Adequacy/Security	48%	**57%**
Quality education for school-age students	41%	43%
Enrichment and Out-school-time Programs	39%	43%
Family Strengthening & Supports	39%	36%
Violence / Safety	39%	**57%**
Food Security	36%	32%
Quality Child Care	36%	43%
Literacy & Other Academic Supports	34%	36%
Connect Families to Resources (Basic Needs)	28%	29%
Substance Abuse Prevention	25%	43%
Special Needs Children (i.e., Developmental Delays and Disabilities)	19%	43%
Connect Families to Resources (Basic Needs)	28%	29%
Career Exploration & Preparation	23%	25%
Delinquency / Truancy	17%	25%

Community Meeting Input

Participants could also provide written comments about each of the four priorities. There were no consistent themes among these comments. Examples of comments that resonated with input from survey and focus group sources included:

All children are born healthy and remain healthy.	♦ *Wellness bus checkups* ♦ *Mental health checkups* ♦ *Better eating while pregnant*

Trust Focus for the next Three to Five Years

Participants in the focus group for partners and providers identified several priorities for the Trust for the next three to five years. The most mentioned was a focus on providing mental health services. Services suggested include Adverse Childhood Experience training and support for families and Trust partners, services to help combat gangs in the county, stress and trauma supports, general social emotional supports, bullying prevention, and increased behavioral supports. Education was another area of focus. There are increased disparities and gaps in education, especially in the wake of COVID-19. Providers/partners want to see the gaps closed and equal access to programs, opportunities, and services for all students. Tutoring, additional

supports for students with disabilities, and an increased focus on early learning services are needed to close the achievement gaps.

It is important for the Trust to listen to all areas and sections of the community to truly understand and be able to address access issues, barriers, and needs. Strategies to improve access for all children include efforts to remove language barriers, increase parent education, and make technology more accessible. There are concerns for the safety of children. Participants suggested the Trust fund and support services focused on violence prevention, including gun violence and combatting the increased presence of gangs. Increased parent education around the threat of violence and prevention is needed to further combat violence and its impact. "The Trust should be concerned with the disparities in education, recreation, and technology. The Trust should also be concerned with youth and community safety as it relates to young people. There should be a huge emphasis on empowering grass root agencies in the area."

Providers/partners indicated that the Trust needs to create a clear strategic plan. As part of the planning process, barriers created by the current funding process need to be removed. The current system makes it difficult for partners to access funds, be reimbursed, and submit invoices. Added flexibility in the processes, funding evidence-based solutions, funding only qualified partners, and spreading funding across all Trust goals is needed.

Additional indicators were suggested that could be categorized in one or more goal areas. The suggested additional indicators include the following:

♦ Mental health ♦ Infant mortality rate ♦ Access to quality healthcare ♦ Teen pregnancy rate ♦ Hospitalizations of mothers during pregnancy ♦ Access to recreation and physical activity ♦ Rate of children with disabilities ♦ Rate of children attending preschool ♦ Rate of children without access to before/afterschool care ♦ Truancy rate for children in school ♦ Adverse Childhood Experience data ♦ Abuse and Neglect Investigation rates ♦ Suicide indicator ♦ Arrests of caregivers ♦ Rate of sex offenders in community ♦ Rate of gun violence ♦ Rates of Substance abuse