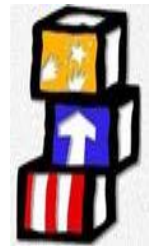




# Pasco County Schools



## Head Start/Early Head Start Community Assessment Updates

2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023

Prepared by



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS  
THE KEY TO HEAD START SUCCESS

## Introduction

In accordance with Head Start Program Performance Standards 1302:11; Determining community strengths, needs, and resources, to design a program that meets community needs and builds on strengths and resources, a program must conduct a Community Assessment at least once over the five-year grant period. The Community Assessment must use data that describes community strengths, needs, and resources and include, at a minimum:

(i) The number of eligible infants, toddlers, preschool-age children, and expectant mothers, including their geographic location, race, ethnicity, and languages they speak, including:

(A) Children experiencing homelessness in collaboration with, to the extent possible, McKinney-Vento Local Education Agency Liaisons (42 U.S.C. 11432 (6) (A));

(B) Children in foster care; and

(C) Children with disabilities, including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies;

(ii) The education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of eligible children and their families, including prevalent social or economic factors that impact their well-being;

(iii) Typical work, school, and training schedules of parents with eligible children;

(iv) Other child-development, child-care centers, and family childcare programs that serve eligible children, including home visiting, publicly funded state and local preschools, and the approximate number of eligible children served;

(v) Resources that are available in the community to address the needs of eligible children and their families; and,

(vi) Strengths of the community.

This Community Assessment presents an overview of the current community conditions for Pasco County Schools Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) state that the information gathered in the community assessment must guide many decisions to design a program that meets community needs and builds upon its strengths and resources (45 CFR §1302.11(b)). Specifically, data analysis must inform decisions regarding:

- Identifying children from diverse economic backgrounds that would be supported by other funding, including private pay in addition to the program's eligible funded enrollment (45 CFR §1302.11(b)(3))

- Establishing ongoing collaborative relationships and partnerships with community organizations to facilitate access to community services that are responsive to children’s and families’ needs, family partnership goals, and community needs and resources (45 CFR §1302.53(a)(1))
- Establishing goals and measurable objectives, including strategic long-term goals (45 CFR §1302.102(a)(1))
- Choosing a program option and developing a program calendar (45 CFR §1302.20(a) (1-2))
- Establishing, modifying, and revising selection criteria (45 CFR §1302.14(a)(1))
- Designing and implementing program-wide coordinated approaches that ensure the full and effective participation of children who are dual language learners, children with disabilities, and their families (45 CFR §1302.101(b) (2-3))
- Identifying community nutrition issues that may impact child health status (45 CFR §1302.42(b)(4))
- Determining whether to reserve enrollment slots for children experiencing homelessness or children in foster care (45 CFR §1302.15(c))
- Petitioning for a waiver to allow eligibility to be determined using a different method or alternative criteria based upon community assessment and other data sources (45 CFR §1302.12(a)(3)) Your community assessment data when examined with internal data from ongoing monitoring and self-assessment, can guide other decisions such as facility and transportation needs.

*It is important to use the community assessment data analysis to establish priorities, develop recommendations, and make decisions within each of these areas.*



## Executive Summary (Update 2023)

The 2022 Kids Count Data Book ranks the State of Florida at 35<sup>th</sup> overall in the nation for the well-being of its children, a drop from ranking 21<sup>st</sup> in 2020. Furthermore, the State of Florida also ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> in Economic Well-being, 13<sup>th</sup> in Education, 35<sup>th</sup> in Health, and 32<sup>nd</sup> in Family and Community, as compared to other states in the United States. The Kids Count Data Book is an annual publication that assesses child wellbeing, nationally and across the 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Using an index of 16 indicators, the 2022 report ranks states on overall child well-being in four domains: (1) economic well-being, (2) education, (3) health, and (4) family and community. Florida Policy Institute (FPI) is Florida's partner in the KIDS COUNT network dedicated to tracking the well-being of children, young adults, and families. According to the Florida Policy Institute achieving a vision of shared prosperity for all Floridians begins with ensuring a bright future for our children and youth. Data-driven policymaking can mitigate the long-standing disparities in outcomes for health, education, economic security, and more. When communities invest in the things that make healthy and resilient communities, all children will have the opportunity to live safe, secure, happy lives. The following data are statewide trends and areas of consideration identified in the Community Assessment update:

### ***Population, Poverty, and Households***

- ✓ Pasco County experienced an increase of 17,000 residents from 2020 - 2021 and 30,788 residents from 2020 to 2022. Zephyrhills reported the most significant increase of 594 residents from 2020 - 2021 and 2022 (1,437 residents). In addition, the unincorporated areas experienced an increase of 28,095 residents in 2022.
- ✓ According to American Community Survey (ACS), there were 16,316 children below three years old and approximately 11,657 children ages 3 – 4 residing in Pasco County. New Port Richey (400), Zephyrhills (636), Elfers (441), and Holiday (841) reported the most significant number of children below age 3.
- ✓ The median age in Pasco County was 44.1, which was higher than the state (42.3) and national (38.4) median age. Several unincorporated towns and municipalities reported a median age of 43.8 – 61.4 years old. Lacochee (25.1) and Trilby (32.7) reported the lowest median age.
- ✓ According to ACS, 18.8% of children ages 0 - 4 lived in a state of poverty in Pasco County. The percentage of children living in poverty in Pasco County (18.8%) was lower than the state rate (19.6%) but higher than the national rate (18.5%). However, Crystal Springs (40.0%), New Port Richey (36.9%), Holiday (34.1%), and Lacochee (39.0%) reported the highest poverty rates.

- ✓ According to the ACS, an estimated 12.2% of all persons lived in a state of poverty in Pasco County, lower than the state (13.1%) and national rates (12.6%). However, Lacochee (26.6%), Crystal Springs (32.6%), and Holiday (20.3%) reported the highest estimates for all persons in poverty within the service area.
- ✓ In Pasco County, the highest poverty rates were among individuals who identified as Some Other Race (16.6%) and Hispanic/Latino (16.1%). In Lacochee, individuals identified as Some Other Race reported a 100% poverty rate. In addition, 100% poverty rates were reported for individuals who identified as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders in Elfers and Trilby. The Hispanic/Latino population in Crystal Springs was 77.0% below the poverty rate.
- ✓ It is estimated that the poverty rate for all families with children under age 5 was 14.0% in Pasco County, slightly higher than the state rate of 13.7% and the national rate of 13.1%. In addition, married couples in Pasco County with children under age 5 reported a 7.2% poverty rate, slightly higher than the state (5.9%) and national rate (4.7%). On the other hand, female-headed households with children under age 5 reported a slightly lower poverty rate (31.7%) than female-headed households in the state (33.9%).
- ✓ Within the Pasco County Schools' service area, married couples (16,919) reported the most significant number of children below age 5, with female households (4,589) reporting the following most significant number of children below age 5. Within the service area, there were approximately 2,258 male households with children below age 5, with the most considerable number being children below three (1,636). Therefore, increase recruitment efforts in New Port Richey, Zephyrhills, Elfers, and Holiday. In addition, the agency may want to consider a home visiting program in Lacochee for children ages 3 – 4.
- ✓ According to ACS, there were 12,291 children in Pasco County with both parents in the labor force. There were 7,259 working families with children under six where only the father worked. An estimated 1,173 households reported the mother only in the labor force. Approximately 253 households reported neither parent working.
- ✓ According to ACS, there were 11,258 children in Pasco County living with one parent. Approximately 3,347 children lived with their fathers, while 7,911 children lived with their mothers, of which 5,814 lived with mothers in the labor force.
- ✓ Approximately 27.2% of grandparents were responsible for raising their grandchildren in Pasco County, lower than the state rate of 29.1% and the national rate of 32.7%. Approximately 65.9% of grandparents in Pasco County were married, and 65.6% were females. Crystal Springs (100%), Lacochee (88.7%), and Dade City (70.5%) reported the highest percentage of grandparents

responsible for their grandchildren, while Lacoochee (172), Holiday (159), and Elfers (145) reported the most significant numbers.

- ✓ According to a high projection analysis, Pasco County is projected to increase by 172,600 residents from 2025 to 2040, compared to the low projection increase of 42,300 residents from 2025 to 2040.
- ✓ In 2025, of the 31,793 projected child population in Pasco County, ages 0 – 4, an estimated 20,010 children will identify as Non-Hispanic White, 2,791 will identify as Non-Hispanic Black, and 7,363 will identify as Hispanic.

### ***Living Wage and Income***

- ✓ One adult's living wage in Pasco and Hernando County was \$18.08. The living wage in Pasco County for two adults (1 working) and two children was \$39.04, comparable to the living wage for two adults (1 Working) and two children in Florida (\$39.04). Therefore, a living wage for one adult and one child was \$35.93 compared to Florida's \$35.98. The current Florida minimum hourly wage rate is \$11.00. Employers must pay employees Florida's minimum wage rate for every hour worked unless the employer or employee is exempted by state or federal law. Every year on September 30, the minimum wage will increase by \$1.00 per hour until September 30, 2026, when the minimum wage will be \$15.00 per hour. Each year beginning in 2027, the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation is responsible for issuing the next minimum wage by September 30, with the subsequent minimum wage increase taking effect on January 1 of the following year.
- ✓ Pasco County reported an overall cost of living index of 98.0, lower than the state (103.1). Housing is the most significant factor in the cost-of-living difference in Pasco County, although housing cost is lower in Pasco County than in the state. Zip code 33565 reported an overall cost of living index of 105.2, higher than the county (98.0) and state (103.1). Housing, groceries, and miscellaneous were the most significant factors in the cost-of-living difference in Zip code 33565. Zip code 33815 reported an overall cost of living index of 79.7, lower than the county (98.0) and state (103.1). Again, housing and health are the most significant factors in the cost-of-living difference in zip code 33815.
- ✓ The average Per Capita Income for Pasco County was \$31,931 compared to the state average of \$35,216. The Median Household Income reported for Pasco County was \$58,084, lower than the state Median Household Income of \$61,777 and the national average (\$69,021). San Antonio had significantly higher Median Household Income than the county, state, and national averages.

### ***Education and Disabilities***

- ✓ In 2021 – 2022, 46.4% of 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade students attended and completed VPK, compared to 49.1% in 2020 - 2021. The percentage of students attending and completing VPK decreased in 2021 – 2022.

- ✓ The percentage of economically disadvantaged students attending and completing VPK who scored Level 3 and above on the ELA Assessment increased slightly in 2022 to 52.5%. In 2021 - 2022, of the total 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade students attending and completing VPK, 62.9% scored Level 3 and above on the ELA Assessment compared to 47.8% of students who attended but did not complete VPK. The 2021 – 2022 PIR report reflects that most students met or exceeded expectations in each GOLD area at the year's end.
- ✓ The forecast jumps off 2022-23 as the new base and treats the two pandemic-affected years (2020-21 and 2021-22) as outliers to the declining trend in participation rates. This baseline and birth growth suggest that the historical decline in participation rates will level off and slowly improve over the forecast horizon while remaining well below the pre-pandemic level. The new forecast produces a participation rate of 68.4% in the outermost year (2027-28), with both 2026-27 and 2027-28 finally breaking from the longer-term decline. (Voluntary Prekindergarten Estimating Conference Executive Summary, February 16, 2023).
- ✓ Approximately 4.9% of individuals in Dade City and 4.2% in Zephyrhills reported less than a 9th-grade education. An estimated 11.0% in Dade City and 7.0% in Zephyrhills had 9th to 12th-grade education but no high school diploma, lower than the county (16.5%) but higher than the state (6.6%) and national (6.3%) rates. However, 38.9% of individuals in Dade City and 33.6% in Zephyrhills reported having a high school diploma, lower than the county (43.4%) rate but higher than the state (27.9%) and national (26.5%) rates.
- ✓ Approximately 2.9% of individuals in Pasco County reported less than a 9th-grade education. An estimated 16.5% had 9th to 12th-grade education but no high school diploma higher than the state (6.6%) and national rates (6.3%). Elfers (8.7%) and Crystal Springs (16.5%) reported the highest percentages of adults with no high school diploma. An estimated 43.4% of individuals reported having a high school diploma in Pasco County, higher than the state (27.9%) and national (26.5%) rates. The percentage of residents in Pasco County (7.9%) reporting obtaining a Bachelor's and Graduate degree combined was lower than the combined state (31.5%) and national (33.7%) rates.
- ✓ In 2021 – 2022, the home education program enrolled 4,840 students and 3,481 families. For the 2020 - 2021 school year, the numbers provided by the districts indicated that 3,091 families and 4,583 students participated in home education programs in Pasco County.
- ✓ Pasco County Schools reported that 52.2% of English language learners achieved progress in 2021-2022.
- ✓ In school years 2020 – 2021, Pasco County's students exceeded the state percentage in English Language progress but were below the state average in 2021 - 2022.

- ✓ Within the service area, data reflects that households with Broadband internet subscriptions (86.4%) were lower than the state (87.2%) and national (87.0%) rates. In Pasco County, the percentage of households with a computer (93.4%) was slightly lower than the state (94.3%) but higher than the national rate (93.1%).
- ✓ Seven hundred forty-eight children were served in 2021 – 2022. According to the Program Information Report, of the children that received an evaluation in 2021 - 2022, 54 students were diagnosed with a disability under IDEA. Approximately 8% of enrollment opportunities were provided to children with special needs, below the Head Start Performance Standards requirement of 10%.
- ✓ In 2022, the Early Steps Program served 561 (50.3%) infants/toddlers below age three in Pasco County. The percentage of infants/toddlers (50.3%) served was higher than the State of Florida (47.1%). In 2021, the Early Steps Program served 483 (50.6%) infants/toddlers below age three in Pasco County. The percentage of infants/toddlers (50.6%) served was higher than the State of Florida (46.3%). The 2021 – 2022 PIR indicated that thirty children were enrolled in the program with an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), indicating they were determined eligible by the Part C agency to receive early intervention services under the IDEA.

### ***Health and Mental Wellness***

- ✓ In Pasco County, the Behavioral/Mental health care provider rate was 94.3 per 100,000 population, which was lower than the state rate of 115.2 per 100,000 population. In 2021, 113 children, ages 1 – 5, received mental health treatment services in Pasco County.
- ✓ In 2020, an estimated 17,664 adults in Pasco County were reported as seriously mentally ill. In 2021, an estimated 439 children (K-12), ages 18 and below, were diagnosed with an emotional/behavioral disability.
- ✓ Data from County Health Ranking in 2022 reflects 5.0 poor mental health days per week for Pasco County, higher than the state and national rate (4.5). According to County Health Rankings, Pasco County residents reported experiencing 4.7 days per week of poor mental health in 2020, higher than the state and the national average (4.0 days). In 2021, residents experiencing poor mental health increased from 4.7 days in 2020 to 5.2 days per week.
- ✓ In 2022, suicide was among Florida's top 14th leading causes of death, resulting in about one death every 2 hours in the state. In Florida, it is the third leading cause of death for people 10-24 years of age, the second leading cause among people 25-35, the fourth leading cause among people 35 to 54 years of age, and the ninth leading cause among people 55 to 64 years of age.
- ✓ The percentage of WIC participants ages two or over, who were overweight or obese, was consistently higher than the state from 2017 - 2019. However, 2020 – 2021 shows Pasco County's overweight and



obesity percentages lower than the state averages. WIC-eligible individuals include pregnant and post-partum women and children ages 0-4. Approximately 60.9% of children and women were WIC eligible in Pasco County, lower than the state rate of 63.0%.

### ***Maternal Characteristics***

- ✓ According to the ACS, in Pasco County 2.8% of women, ages 15 – 19, gave birth within the past 12 months compared to the State of Florida at 2.1% and the United States at 2.7%. Approximately 69.6% of births in Pasco County were to women aged 20 - 34 compared to 70.0% in the State of Florida and 71.1% in the United States. An estimated 27.6% of births were to women aged 35 - 50, compared to 27.9% in Florida and 26.2% in the United States.
- ✓ In 2020, Pasco County reported an estimated 4,968 births. Most women who gave birth within the last 12 months within Pasco County identified as White Alone, not Hispanic (77.7%). Mothers who identified as Hispanic or Latino (23.7%) represented the second-largest ethnic group.
- ✓ In Pasco County, 26.4% of women who gave birth were below the 100% percentile of the poverty level, with 23.2% in Florida and 20.9% nationally. Between 100% - 199% of the poverty level percentile, 18.4% reflected Pasco County, 22.6% represented the State of Florida, and 19.6% in the United States. In Pasco County, 55.2% were 200% or more above the poverty level, compared to 54.2% in Florida and 59.4% in the United States.
- ✓ In Pasco County, 9.1% of births were to women with less than 12 years of education, lower than in the State of Florida at 11.2% and the United States at 10.6%. In addition, in Pasco County, 3.5% of births were to women who received public assistance, compared to 4.0% in Florida and 4.2% in the United States.
- ✓ In Pasco County, 75 or 1.6 per 1,000 person births were to women with no prenatal care during 2020, lower than the state rate of 2.4 per 1,000 persons.
- ✓ In Pasco County, 415 or 8.4 per 1,000 person births in 2020 were low birth-weight, slightly lower than the state rate of 8.7 per 1,000 persons.
- ✓ In 2020, 35 infant deaths (7.0 per 1,000) were reported in Pasco County, higher than the state rate of 5.8.

## Housing and Homelessness

- ✓ Fair market rent increased in 2022. For example, fair market rent for four bedrooms was approximately \$2,133 in Pasco County, compared to \$2,177 for the state.
- ✓ In 2022, a household must earn \$25.90 per hour to afford a 2-bedroom rental unit in Pasco County, compared to \$26.38 for the state. In addition, the average hourly housing wage will increase in 2022. Across Florida, there is a shortage of affordable rental homes available to extremely low-income households (ELI), whose incomes are at or below the poverty guideline or 30% of their area median income (AMI). Many of these households are severely cost-burdened, spending more than half their income on housing. Severely cost-burdened low-income families are more likely than other renters to sacrifice necessities like healthy food and healthcare to pay the rent and experience unstable housing situations like evictions.
- ✓ The average monthly rent by bedroom size is comparable for Pasco County, Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater Metro and Florida.
- ✓ According to the 2022 Florida Housing Profile, there is a shortage of 411,846 affordable and available rental homes, and 80% of extremely low-income renter households with severe cost burdens.
- ✓ According to Orange County news articles, investment firms purchase thousands of single-family homes around the U.S. and Central Florida, making it harder for local buyers to close on homes. Over the past decade, Florida's real estate has risen 282.35%, which equates to an annual home appreciation rate of 6.14 percent, according to the data collected by NeighborhoodScout. Data compiled from Floridarealtors.org shows that from the beginning of the year to March, 2,770 cash sales in the Orlando, Kissimmee, and Sanford metropolitan statistical areas, representing a 30% increase from last year. Investors are putting their money into single-family homes because that market is appreciating. An article in Money Watch writes that “a housing bubble may be brewing” (Ivanova, 2022).
- ✓ Rents rising by double digits nationwide are positively ballooning across Florida, fueled by a surge of people who relocated to the state during the pandemic.
- ✓ In February, Realtor.com designated Miami as America's least affordable living place. Average monthly rents in the metro area, at \$2,930, are on par with San Francisco and Los Angeles, double the affordable level for people in the region given local incomes. Miami's typical rent takes up 60% of a household's income. That figure is 45% in Tampa and 37% in Orlando. (Housing policy experts consider rents affordable at no more than 30% of pre-tax income.) Miami, Orlando, and Tampa have also had the fastest-growing rents in the country over the past year.

- ✓ Many recent high-profile corporate moves to Florida, including Goldman Sachs, Elliott Management, and Virtu Financial, have boosted Florida's profile, while the pandemic's shift to remote work turbocharged relocations. Nationally, there is a historic shortage of housing. Rents and home prices are soaring at their fastest rate in years, raising the financial burden on millions of working- and middle-class households struggling to afford a place to live. A shocking bout of inflation following the economic spasm caused by the pandemic adds to those pressures. This affects long-time residents, especially low-paid service industry workers, and older residents on a fixed income. Maybe more rent control and a more significant investment in public housing will solve some of the housing crisis. *(NeighborhoodScout) (Realtor.com)*
- ✓ In Pasco County, the homeowner's vacancy rate was reported at a rate of 2.0 compared to 1.8 for the state and 1.2 for the national rate. The rental vacancy rate was reported as 5.7 in Pasco County compared to 7.9 for the state and 5.7 for the national rate. The median rent in Pasco County was estimated at \$1,164, lower than the state median of \$1,301 but comparable to the national median (\$1,163).
- ✓ In 2021, there were 686 homeless students in Hernando County School District and 1,550 in Pasco County School District. The majority of students were sharing housing and living in motels.
- ✓ According to the 2021 Pasco County Continuum of Care, 75 homeless residents were chronic substance abusers, and 70 were severely mentally ill. In addition, there were approximately 134 homeless persons in households with at least one adult and one child.

### ***Childcare and Welfare***

- ✓ In Pasco County, there are approximately 16,316 available children ages 0 – 3, of which 3,067 would be potentially eligible for Early Head Start services. There are an estimated 11,657 available children ages 3 – 5, of which 2,192 would be potentially eligible for Head Start services. Because of high child poverty rates and the number of eligible children, future Early Head Start expansion may be considered in zip codes 33815, 33565, 33597, and Lacoochee, Crystal Springs, and New Port Richey areas.
- ✓ Approximately 53.2% of 3 and 4-year-old children were enrolled in a public school in Pasco County, lower than the state (54.0%) and the national average (58.1%). The percentage of children enrolled in private school was 46.8% which was somewhat comparable to the state rate (46.0%) but higher than the national rate of 41.9%.
- ✓ In 2021, the rate per 100,000 Children in Foster Care (Aged 5-11 Years) in Pasco County was 832.6 compared to Florida at 484.8. In 2020, 337 children ages 5 – 11 were in foster care in Pasco County. The rate per 100,000 population was 778.2, higher than the state rate of 447.4. In 2019, 290 children

ages 5 – 11 were in foster care in Pasco County. The rate per 100,000 population was 690.0, higher than the state rate of 453.7. Data shows that the number of children in foster care were higher in 2018 than in previous years. However, the 2019 count does show a decrease in children in foster care. Research suggests that children do best when living safely at home with their family of origin. When living at home with a parent is not reasonably safe, the best alternative is to live with another family member who can provide a safe and nurturing home. Suppose no family member can provide a safe home that meets the child's needs. In that case, the child should receive care and services in an appropriate foster home until timely permanency can be achieved through reunification, transfer of guardianship, or adoption. Foster care should only be used as a short-term intervention.

- ✓ In 2021, an estimated 387 children, ages 5 – 11, experienced child abuse in Pasco County, representing a rate of 859.3. This was higher than the state rate of 539.9. In addition, the child abuse rate in Pasco County has been consistently higher than the state rate since 2017.
- ✓ Pasco County Sheriff's Office reported approximately 4,060 domestic violence incidences in 2018, 4,165 in 2019, and 4,253 in 2020. Data from New Port Richey, Zephyrhills, and Dade City Police Departments reflected declining domestic violence incidences from 2019 to 2020. A total of 4,631 domestic violence offenses were reported for Pasco County in 2020, an increase of 68 incidences from 2019.

### **COVID-19**

- ✓ Approximately 3.6% of children aged six months to 4 years have received the COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, 26% of children ages 5 – 11 received the vaccine. New cases and new case positivity rates have declined for the past ten weeks in Florida.
- ✓ The John Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center stopped collecting demographic data on September 2, 2022.
- ✓ A total of 16,612,817 (77.3%) Floridians have taken at least one dose of the COVID vaccine. Approximately 65.2% of residents in Florida have been fully vaccinated.
- ✓ Pasco County COVID-19 Community Level is designated as a "medium".
- ✓ 389,313 (70.3%) Pasco County residents have taken at least one dose of the COVID vaccine. Approximately 61.2% of residents in Pasco County have completed the primary series.
- ✓ An estimated 82.5% of the state's population reported having taken at least one dose of the COVID vaccine, and 69.4% have completed the primary series.
- ✓ From February 24, 2023, to March 2, 2023, 39 people aged six months and older were vaccinated. Approximately 222 COVID cases were reported, with a new case positivity rate of 9.5%.

- ✓ Pasco County reported 469 COVID cases through Wednesday, March 1, 2023. Fewer than ten COVID cases and deaths were reported between January 14, 2023, and March 2, 2023.
- ✓ There were fifty new hospital admissions in Pasco County through Wednesday, March 1, 2023.

## **Opportunities and Considerations (Update 2023)**

1. Continue to provide education and awareness for families on domestic violence, child maltreatment, and resources for victims, while promoting prevention strategies.
2. Continue to advocate for affordable housing opportunities with local government officials and housing authorities.
3. Continue to provide drug education and drug overdose awareness for families.
4. Continue to provide food resources (SNAP), food banks, and other food-related (WIC) assistance to families, due to food insecurity rates. Continue to encourage WIC participation.
5. Continue to offer and provide mental health support and opportunities to families because of the high number of poor mental health days within the service area.
6. Continue to provide or assist families with obtaining a GED and other supportive services for those who did not complete high school.
7. Continue to provide education and awareness on the benefits of expectant mothers receiving adequate prenatal care, the risks of preterm births, and infant deaths. Provide training and resources for nurturing and responsive child-parent relationships.
8. Continue to educate mothers on the importance of children aged 3 and below receiving developmental screening.
9. Continue to monitor the COVID-19 community-level status.
10. Explore possible expansion or conversion opportunities for infants and toddlers.
11. Consider exploring the possibility of writing a grant for The Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program in 2024 to provide funding for home-based programs for infants and toddlers in the service area.
12. Intensify recruitment of grandparents and provide relevant resources to assist them with raising their grandchildren.
13. Continue to provide health education and resources to families and community partners about current health issues. The Health Advisory committee may want to partner with a provider to educate families on these topics.
14. Explore opportunities to expand in zip codes 33565, 33815, and 33810.