

Conclusion

Ohio’s infant mortality crisis is a stark reflection of systemic challenges that disproportionately affect marginalized communities. This report highlights the urgent need for transformative change, rooted in equity, collaboration, and community-centered solutions. The voices of parents, caregivers, and community leaders echo a resounding plea for targeted policies and investments that address the social determinants of health, expand access to quality care, and dismantle the structural barriers that perpetuate disparities. Ensuring that every infant reaches their first birthday and thrives beyond requires us to prioritize the health, stability, and well-being of mothers, families, and communities.

We stand at a pivotal moment where incremental progress is no longer enough. Tackling infant mortality demands bold, unified action. The Ohio Department of Youth has set a bold goal of reducing Ohio’s infant mortality rate to 4.4 per every 1,000 babies born. Policymakers, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders must work together to amplify family voices, invest in culturally competent care, and reimagine systems to center the needs of Ohio’s most vulnerable populations to reach this goal. By addressing root causes like racism, economic instability, and fragmented care, we can create a future where all families have the opportunity to thrive.

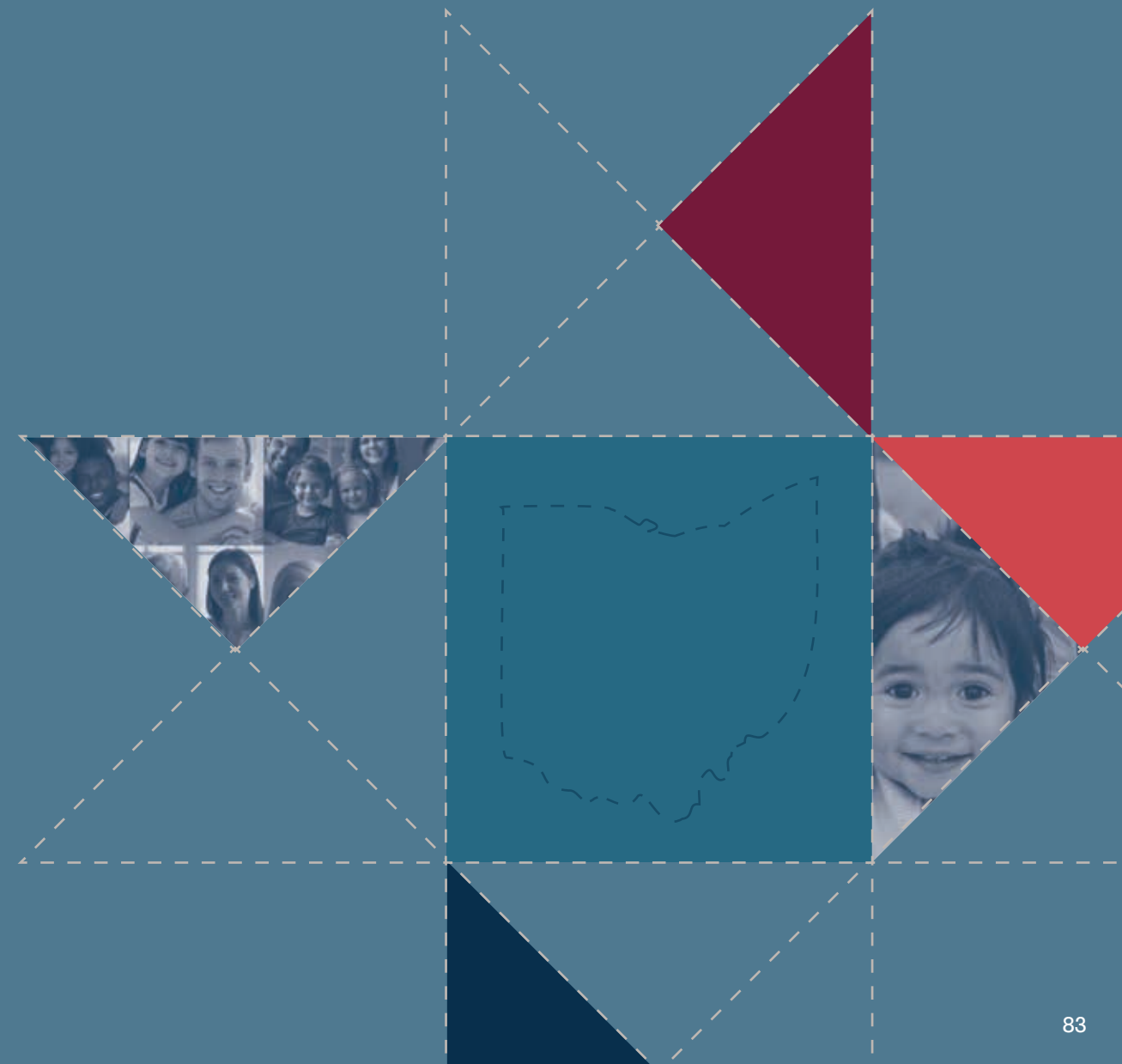
As Groundwork Ohio leads statewide efforts to prioritize moms and babies in public policy and investment aligned with the findings of

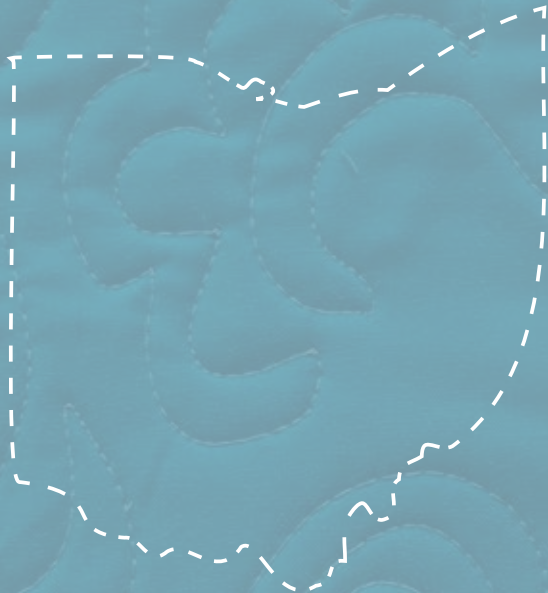
this report, Montgomery County efforts will continue and be reinvigorated. Montgomery County and the Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association (GDAHA) have relaunched the Maternal & Infant Health Task Force to improve maternal and infant health in the region. This initiative builds on past efforts, including the EveryOne Reach One Task Force, to address high infant mortality rates, disparities in birth outcomes, and social determinants of health. The relaunch includes a Steering Committee and a Leadership Council featuring diverse community representatives, including local leaders, nonprofits, healthcare providers, and residents with lived experiences. The initiative aims to foster collaboration, build trust, and develop innovative strategies to improve outcomes for mothers and infants, ensuring every baby has a healthy start in life.⁷

The path forward requires sustained commitment, innovative approaches, and accountability at every level. Let this report serve as a rallying cry for Ohio to embrace solutions that are inclusive, equitable, and informed by the lived experiences of those we serve. Together, we can ensure that healthier beginnings lead to brighter futures for every child, every family, and every community. The time to act is now.

Sources

1. March of Dimes, [Ohio Report Card](#) (2024)
2. March of Dimes, [Ohio Report Card](#) (2024)
3. March of Dimes, [Ohio Report Card](#) (2024)
4. [A Report on Pregnancy-Related Deaths in Ohio 2020](#). (2020).
5. [A Report on Pregnancy-Associated Deaths in Ohio 2008-2016](#). (2019).
6. Department of Children & Youth: [Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review](#)
7. Montgomery County, [Montgomery County & GDAHA Join Forces to Strengthen Maternal and Infant Health Initiatives](#) (October 8, 2024).





GroundworkOhio.org

175 S. 3rd St., Suite 420
Columbus, OH 43215



@GroundworkOhio

