

FactSheet

Children's Health



The health of New York's children is vital to our future. We all benefit when children are able to excel in school and prepare for a lifetime of contributing to the economic, social, and cultural assets in their communities.

Children's health promotion strategies are most effective when they focus on prevention. It is particularly important that these strategies emphasize developmental, social-emotional, and environmental health since these factors have life-long impacts on children's well-being. Prevention and early identification of traumatic experiences and interventions in early childhood can avert poor health and mental health in adulthood. Strong policies must be in place to eliminate the disparities that result in minority children suffering from greater burdens of disease and disability.

While New York has a higher percentage of children covered by health insurance than many other states, we can do even better. Parents and children need access to health coverage and care.



Key Facts

- ▶ New York is a leader in covering children. However, about 8%, or about 350,000 children remain uninsured.
- ▶ Access to mental health care is a problem. About 10% of New York's children have one or more emotional, behavioral or developmental conditions. Of those children, over a third have two or more conditions. Only two in five received treatment or counseling in the previous year.
- ▶ Just over one million children in New York live in food-insecure households, a rate of 22.4%. These children often have poorer overall health status, a higher likelihood of being hospitalized, lower physical function, and more chronic health conditions than children from families that have more food.
- ▶ One third of New York's children are obese or overweight, a three-fold increase in 30 years. Diseases such as Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure are being seen in overweight and obese children along with poor mental health associated with shame, self-blame, low self-esteem and depression.

We Can Do Better

- ▶ All eligible children and their parents should be enrolled in public health insurance. Families should be able to easily transition between programs as eligibility changes.
- ▶ Children's health priorities should be coordinated across programs to create a framework that recognizes the many determinants of disease prevention and health promotion.
- ▶ Quality measures in public and commercial health insurance should track health outcomes across physical, dental, social-emotional and developmental health indicators.
- ▶ All initiatives should aim to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities.
- ▶ Access to behavioral health and dental services should be expanded in part by increasing the number of these providers treating children.

Westchester County—Children’s Health

Key Facts

- ▶ There were 47,535 children insured through Medicaid and 21,645 children were insured through Child Health Plus in 2010 in Westchester County. This means that one out of three children in Westchester County are enrolled in public health insurance.
- ▶ The 2008 Fit Kids Body Mass Screening Project report found that 36.5% of children ages 4-17 are obese or overweight from a sampling of Westchester County schools; and according to NYS Department of Health, 16.8% of children in Westchester County ages 2-4 are considered obese.
- ▶ In 2009, respiratory illnesses were the second leading cause (19.3%) following injuries, for ER admissions for children ages 0-14. Mental health and substance abuse were the second leading cause (19.25%) following injuries, for ER admissions for ages 15-24.
- ▶ According to the 2009 Youth Development self-reported survey, 21% of 7-8th graders and 32% of 9-10th graders in Westchester County have tried an illicit drug and 19.5 % of 7-12th graders binge drank within the two weeks prior to the survey.

2010 Westchester County Population

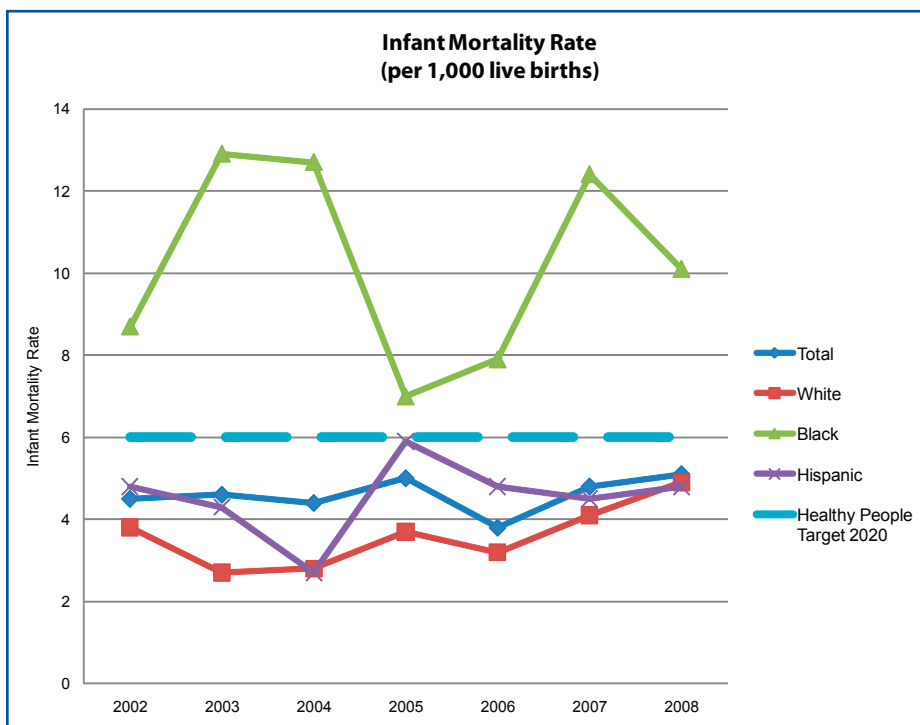
0 to 4-year-olds:	57,199
5 to 9-year-olds:	63,212
10 to 14-year-olds:	65,680
15 to 19-year-olds:	65,316
20 to 24-year-olds:	53,580

- ▶ The three year teenage pregnancy rate average (2007-09) was 16.3 per 1,000 females ages 15-19.
- ▶ 71.7% of teen mothers ages 10-17 either did not have or delayed prenatal care.
- ▶ 77.1% of teen mothers ages 10-19 use Medicaid as their primary health care.

We Can Do Better

- ▶ One of the largest challenges in children’s health is ensuring that parents can provide insurance for their children. Maintaining state and federal funding for programs is crucial for allowing children to grow up healthy.

- ▶ Socioeconomic and racial disparities are prominent in child health. We need a commitment to improve the health outcomes for *all* children based on the Community Health Assessment 2010-2013 and the Healthy People Target 2020.
- ▶ Westchester County needs to enhance the response to underage drinking and illicit drug use by increased awareness and public education campaigns.



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