

Annual Wisconsin Birth and Infant Death Report, 2017

Executive Summary

Births



There were 2.4% fewer births in 2017 than 2016.

The general fertility rate has decreased by 4.1 live births per 1,000 women of reproductive age since 2008. Births among women under 30 are on the decline, but are increasing among women over 30. This is partly due to women waiting longer to have children (the average age of first-time mothers increased from 25.3 in 2008 to 26.8 in 2017), and a growing number of mothers having four or more children. The teen birth rate is less than half of what it was 10 years ago.

Health Care Characteristics



79% of mothers received an adequate amount of prenatal care in 2017.

Women with more education and women who live in low poverty areas were more likely to receive adequate prenatal care than women with less education or those who live in high poverty areas. Both urban and rural parts of the state had lower prenatal care utilization than suburban or medium metro areas. Medical factors for poor birth outcomes, such as previous preterm birth or previous Cesarean delivery, affected 41% of Wisconsin births.

Birth Outcomes



The proportion of low birthweight infants has increased among black, American Indian, and Hispanic mothers.

Large inequities in poor birth outcomes by race or ethnicity and education persist. Statewide, about 1 out of every 10 births is born premature, but prematurity occurs more frequently for black mothers (1 out of every 7 births) and less frequently for Laotian or Hmong mothers (1 out of every 15 births). The statewide increase in low birthweight since 2011 was only reflected by increases among black, American Indian, and Hispanic mothers, indicating a growing disparity in low birthweight.

Infant Mortality



Our black infant death rate is 3 times that of the white rate and is getting worse.

Preterm birth (birth before 37 weeks gestation) is a leading driver of neonatal death, and the rate of neonatal deaths due to preterm birth is 27% higher in Wisconsin than the nation as a whole.

The death rate for infants born to black mothers is the highest in the nation and is getting worse. Infant deaths are trending upwards for black, American Indian, and other Asian or Pacific Islander mothers indicating growing racial and ethnic disparities.

For the full report, please visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p01161-19.pdf>.

Questions or concerns?

Please email dhshealthstats@dhs.wisconsin.gov.

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