



# Wisconsin Birth Defects Registry

## Information for Families

A birth defect is a problem that happens while the baby is growing in the parent's body. A birth defect may affect how a baby's body looks, works, or both. Nationally, about one out of every 33 babies is born with a birth defect.

Doctors and child specialty providers must report information to the Wisconsin Birth Defects Registry (WBDR) for children ages birth to two years who are born with certain birth defects. Common birth defects include spina bifida, heart defects, and Down syndrome. A full list of birth defects included in the WBDR can be found on the [Birth Defect Prevention and Surveillance webpage](#).

### Why is this important?

Tracking birth defects in the WBDR provides valuable information to help us understand more about birth defects. We watch for trends of high or increasing numbers that might be a concern. These patterns can help us identify causes and prevent these conditions in the future.

### Is the WBDR confidential?

Yes, the WBDR is confidential. Information in the WBDR is carefully protected in a secure system.

### How does the WBDR affect my family?

If your child has one or more of the birth defects that are included in the registry, their health care provider will securely report information to the WBDR. This information can help inform prevention and outreach activities to support children and families. Having complete information in the WBDR helps to improve what we can learn about birth defects and connects your family to services. You do have the option of having your child's name and address removed from the WBDR. You may talk about this option with your child's health care provider.

### Where can I learn more about the birth defects and the Wisconsin Birth Defects Registry?

Visit our program webpage: [dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/birthdefects](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/birthdefects).

### Where can I find resources for my family?

Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs:  
[dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn).

