

Wisconsin Data Resource: Birth Outcomes, 2021

This resource includes data on:

P. 2 **Stillbirth**

P. 8 **Preterm birth**

P. 5 **Infant mortality**

P. 11 **Low birthweight**

Background and overview

Birth outcomes—including stillbirth, infant mortality, preterm birth, and low birthweight—are key indicators of perinatal and infant health. This resource will include data on select birth outcomes over time and by characteristics of the birthing parent. It is important to monitor birth outcomes data to better understand the health of our communities. **The purpose of this resource is to provide a data overview of birth outcomes in Wisconsin.**

This data resource is a part of the work of the Maternal and Infant Mortality Prevention Unit located within the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Division of Public Health. The unit is organized within the Family Health Section and works collaboratively with the Maternal and Child Health Unit and section-wide data staff. The Maternal and Infant Mortality Prevention Unit works to improve birth outcomes for all Wisconsin families. Efforts of the unit include partnering with communities and organizations to address the social and economic conditions that can impact perinatal and infant health, investing in the work of community-based and community-led organizations, promoting health initiatives, disseminating data and reports, facilitating capacity-building activities, and implementing public health prevention strategies to improve birth outcomes in Wisconsin.

Additional resources and more information can be found on the [Maternal and Infant Mortality Prevention Unit webpage \(www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mch/mimp.htm\)](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mch/mimp.htm). If you have any questions or additional data needs, please reach out to the [Maternal and Infant Mortality Prevention team email \(DHSMIMP@dhs.wisconsin.gov\)](mailto:DHSMIMP@dhs.wisconsin.gov).

The information shared in this resource may be difficult to receive. By sharing this information, we hope to honor the lives and families impacted by adverse birth outcomes by using their stories to help prevent further loss. Please care for yourself as you need while processing.

Stillbirth

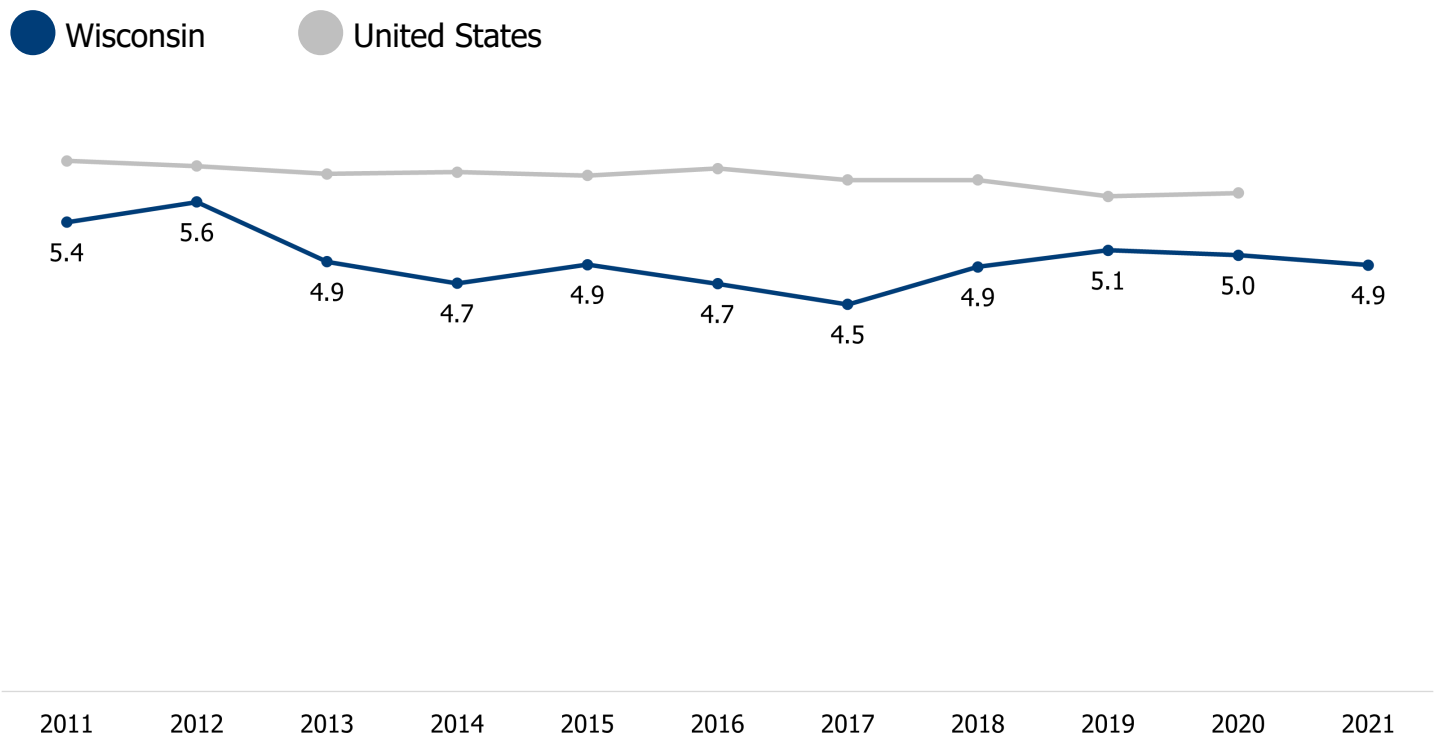
Stillbirth refers to a loss of a fetus before birth, after 20 weeks of pregnancy, or 350 grams. A stillbirth rate is the number of stillbirths per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths.

Data highlights

- In 2021, Wisconsin's stillbirth rate was 4.9 per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths. There were 305 fetal deaths in 2021.
- Over the last 10 years, Wisconsin's overall stillbirth rate has been decreasing. Wisconsin's stillbirth rate was lower than the national rate.
- In 2019–2021, stillbirth was the highest among birthing persons who:
 - Were 40 years of age or older.
 - Identified as non-Hispanic Black.
 - Completed less than a high school education.

Wisconsin stillbirth rate, 2011–2021

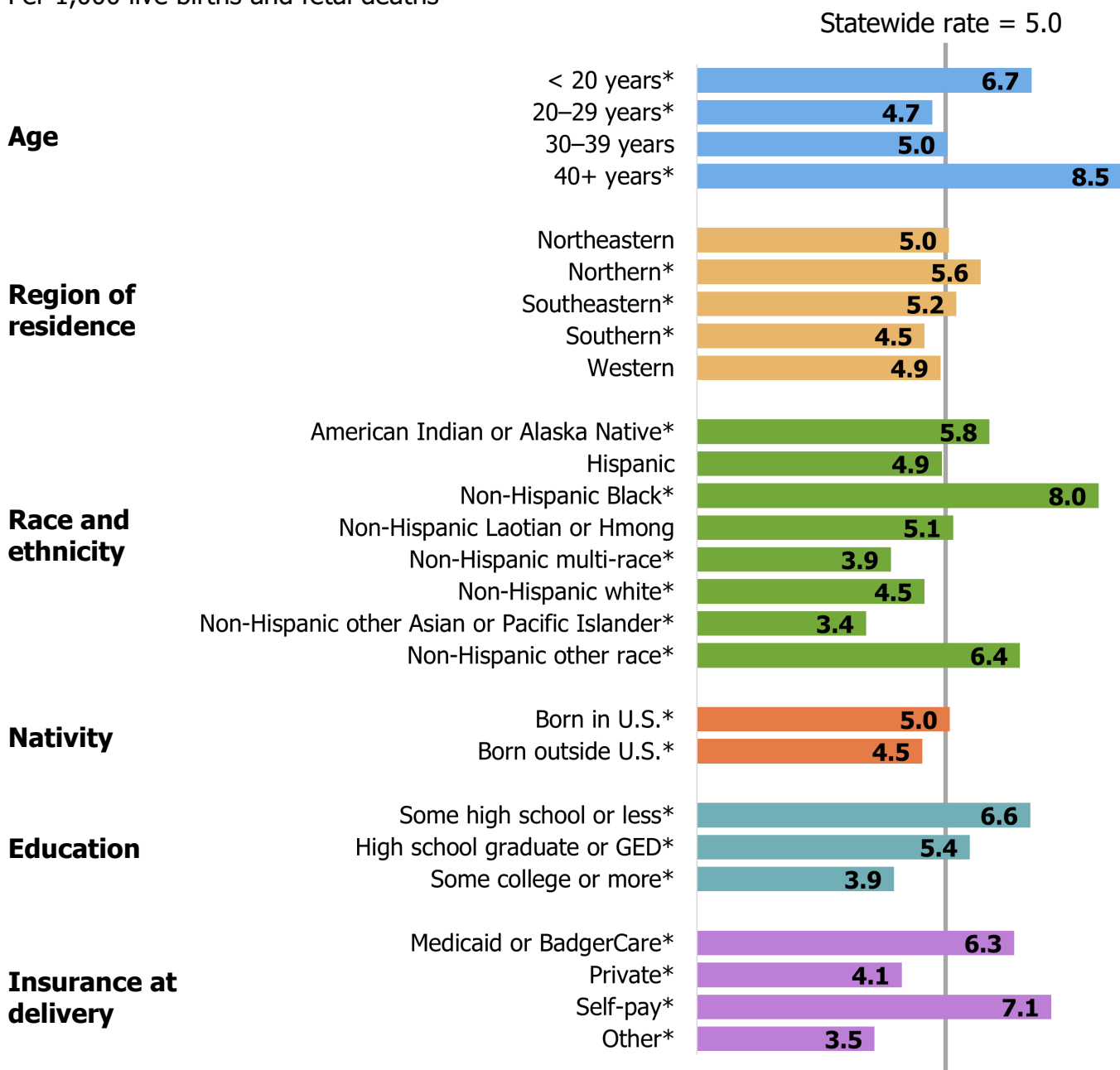
Per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths



Stillbirth

Stillbirth rate by birthing parent characteristics, 2019–2021

Per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths



GED = General education development

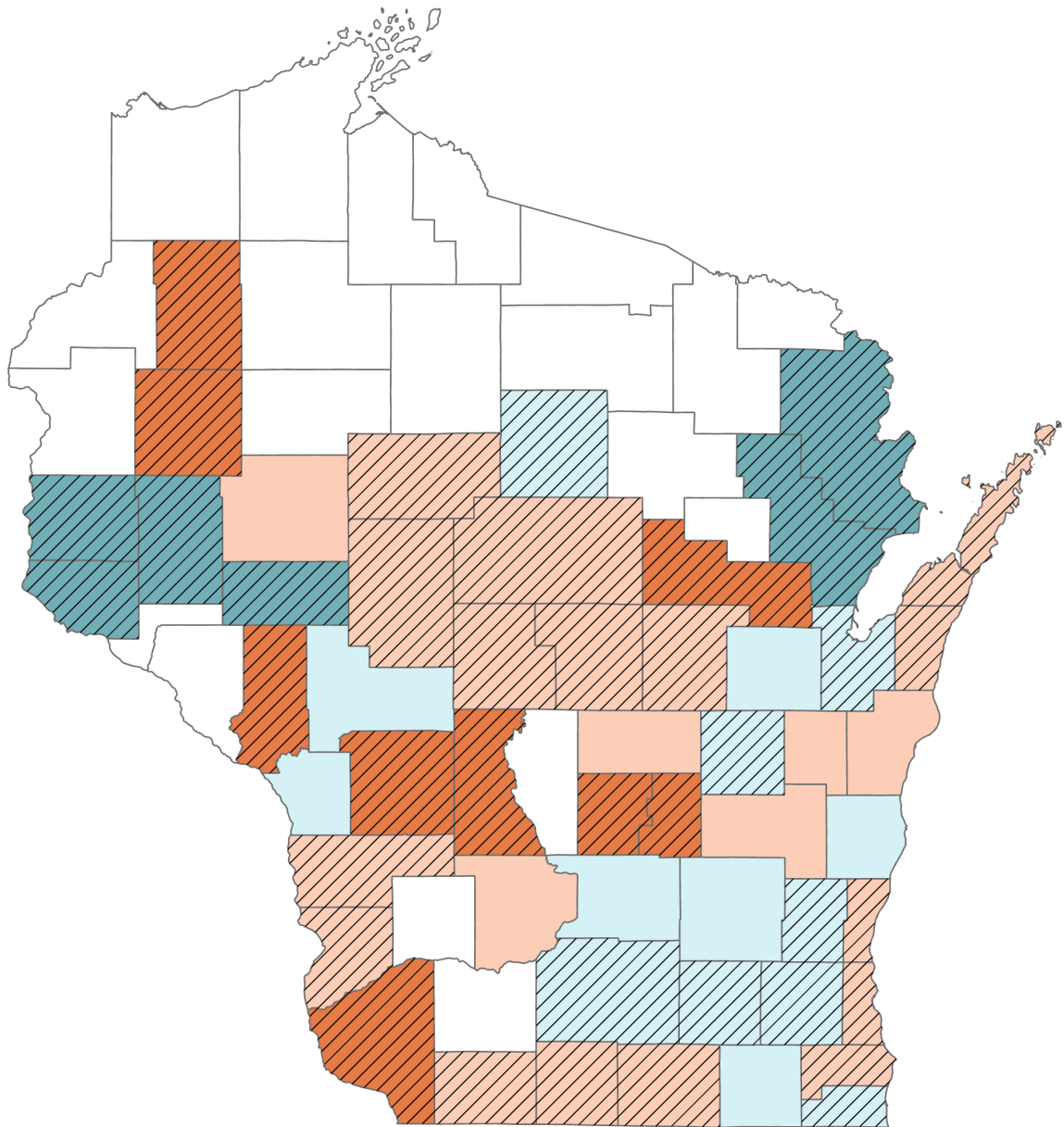
Note: Race and ethnicity categories are not mutually exclusive, with American Indian/Alaska Native including individuals identifying as Hispanic or multiple races. See [Data Notes](#) for more details.


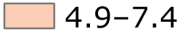
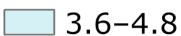

*Significantly different from statewide rate at $\alpha = 0.05$


Stillbirth

Stillbirth rate by county of residence, 2017–2021

Per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths



Lower [ <3.6  4.9–7.4] Higher
 3.6–4.8  7.5+]

 Insufficient numbers for analysis

 Significantly differs from state rate (4.9)

Infant Mortality

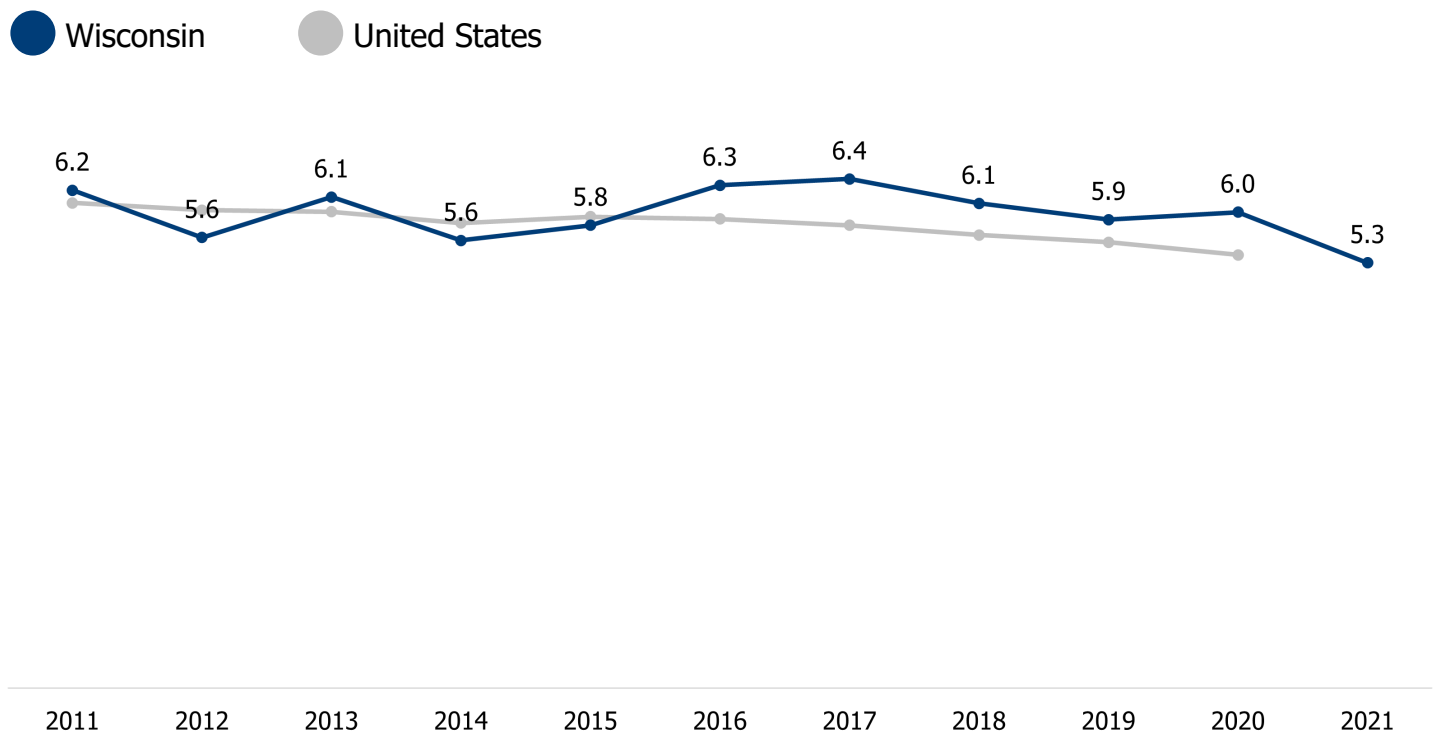
Infant mortality refers to infant deaths that occur within the first year of life, and an infant mortality rate is the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

Data highlights

- In 2021, Wisconsin's infant mortality rate was 5.3 per 1,000 live births. There were 329 infant deaths in 2021.
- Over the last 10 years, Wisconsin's overall infant mortality rate has been decreasing. Wisconsin's infant mortality rate was similar to the national rate.
- In 2019–2021, infant mortality was highest among birthing persons who:
 - Were younger than 20 years old.
 - Identified as non-Hispanic Black or American Indian or Alaska Native.
 - Completed less than a high school education or some high school.
- In 2019–2021, the leading causes of infant mortality in Wisconsin was birth defects (20.5%) and prematurity (20.5%).

Wisconsin infant mortality rate, 2011–2021

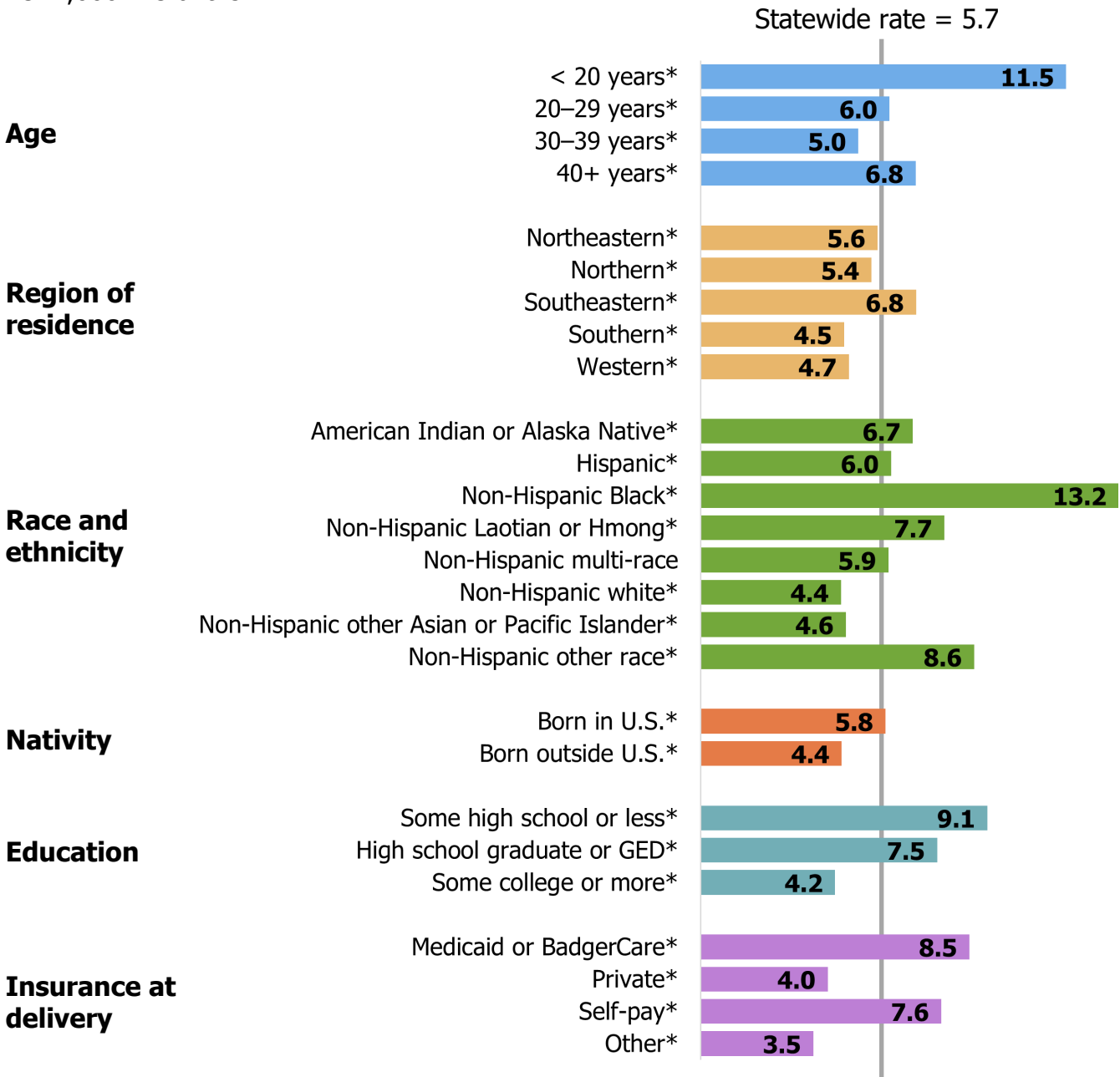
Per 1,000 live births



Infant Mortality

Infant mortality rate by birthing parent characteristics, 2019–2021

Per 1,000 live births



GED = General education development

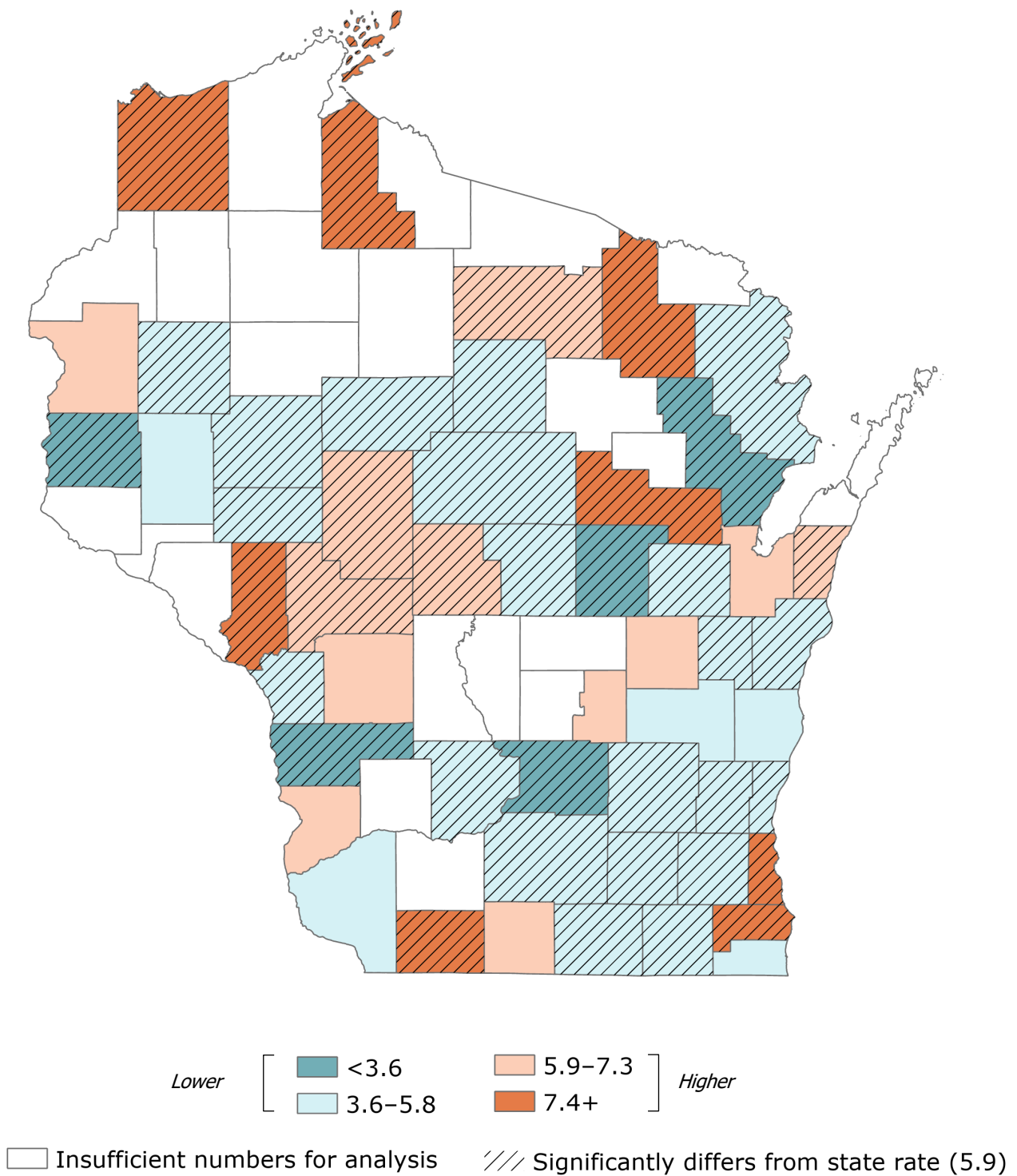
Note: Race and ethnicity categories are not mutually exclusive, with American Indian/Alaska Native including individuals identifying as Hispanic or multiple races. See [Data Notes](#) for more details.

*Significantly different from statewide rate at $\alpha = 0.05$

Infant Mortality

Infant mortality rate by county of residence, 2017–2021

Per 1,000 live births



Preterm Birth

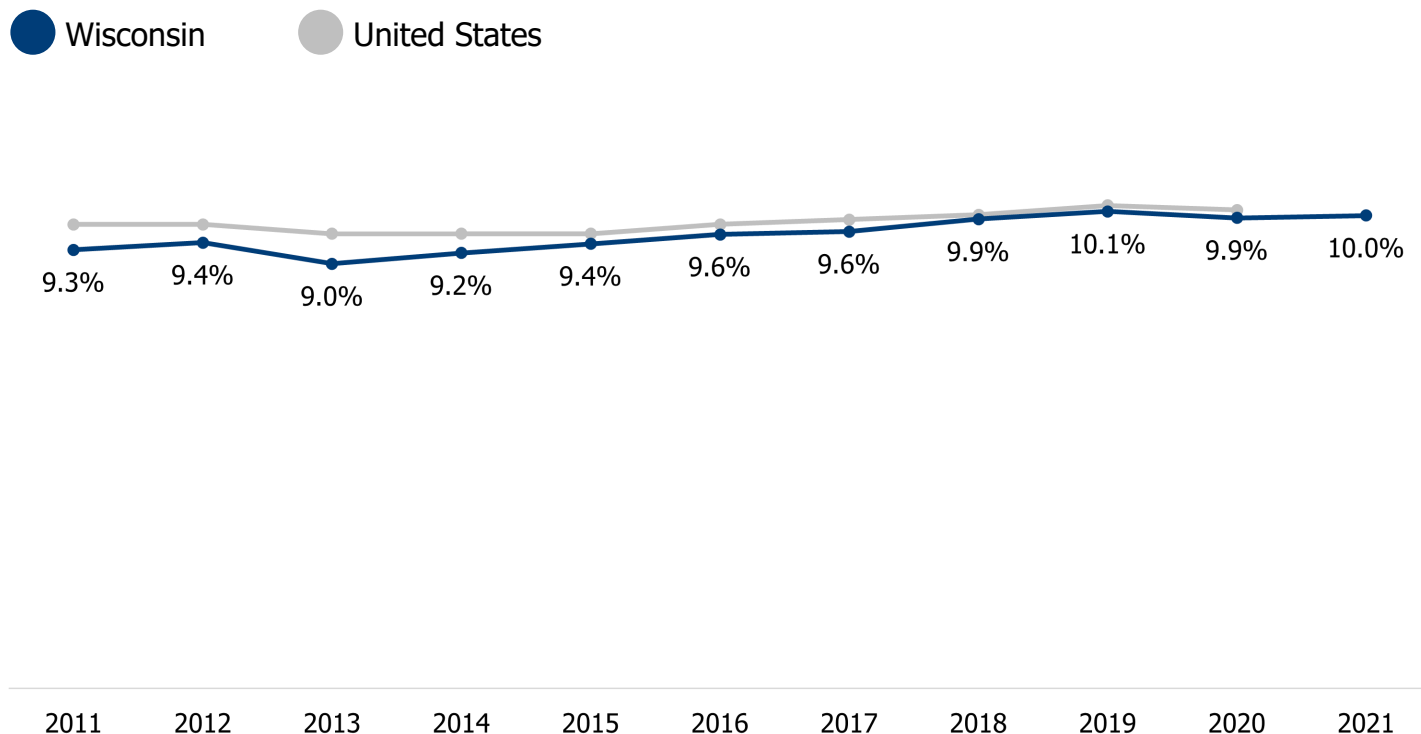
Preterm, or premature, births occur before the 37th week of pregnancy.

Data highlights

- In 2021, the percent of preterm births in Wisconsin was 10.0%. There were 6,162 infants born preterm in 2021.
- Over the last 10 years, the percent of preterm births in Wisconsin has been increasing. Wisconsin's percent of preterm births was similar to the national percent.
- In Wisconsin, preterm birth was higher among birthing persons who:
 - Were 40 years of age or older.
 - Identified as non-Hispanic Black or American Indian or Alaska Native.
 - Completed some or all of high school.

Percent of preterm births in Wisconsin, 2011–2021

Born before 37 weeks

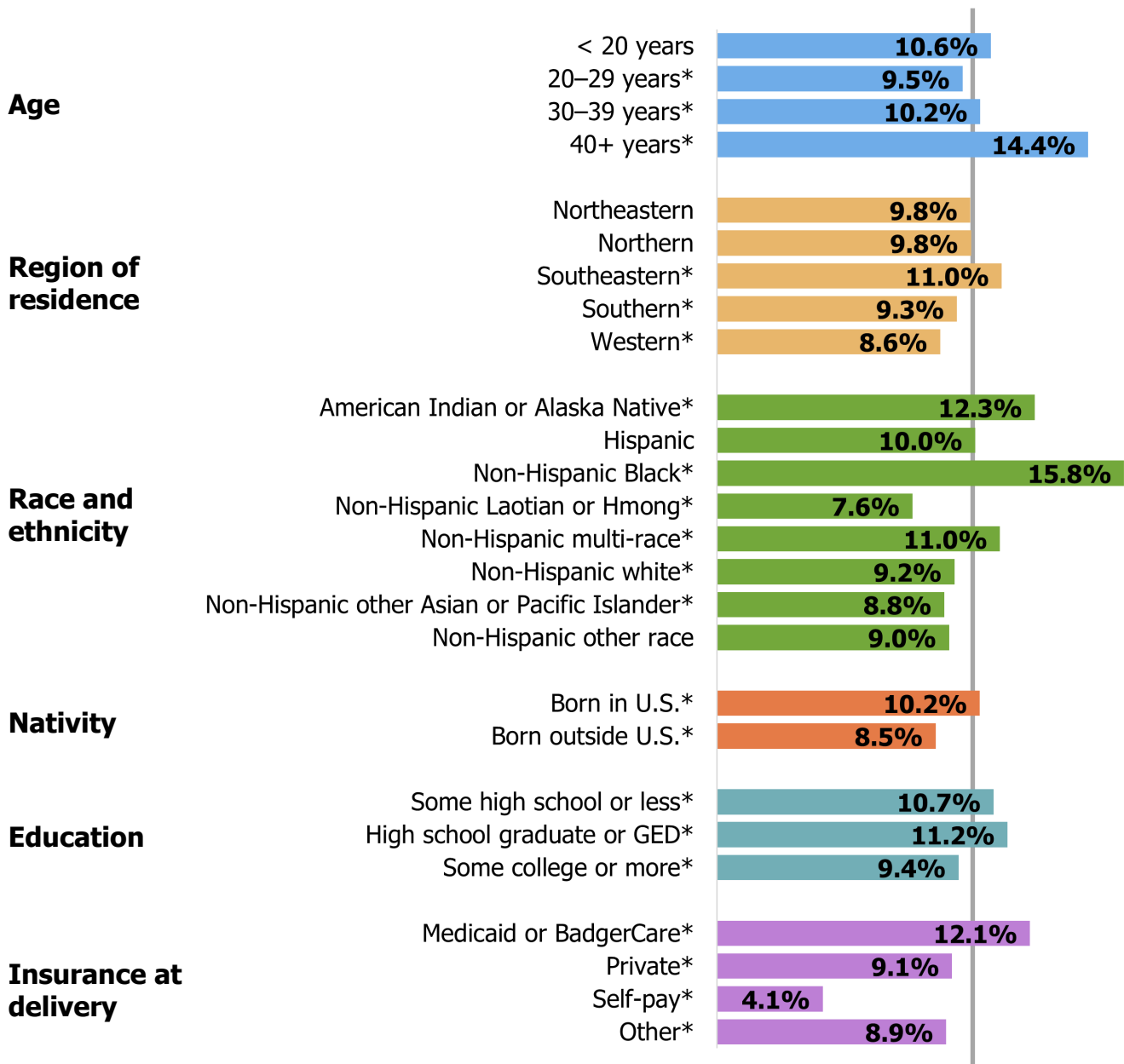


Preterm Birth

Percent preterm birth by birthing parent characteristics, 2019–2021

Born before 37 weeks

Statewide rate = 10.0%



GED = General education development

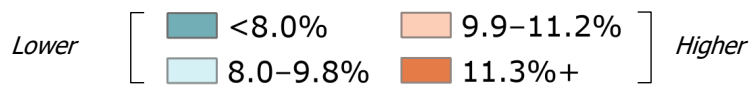
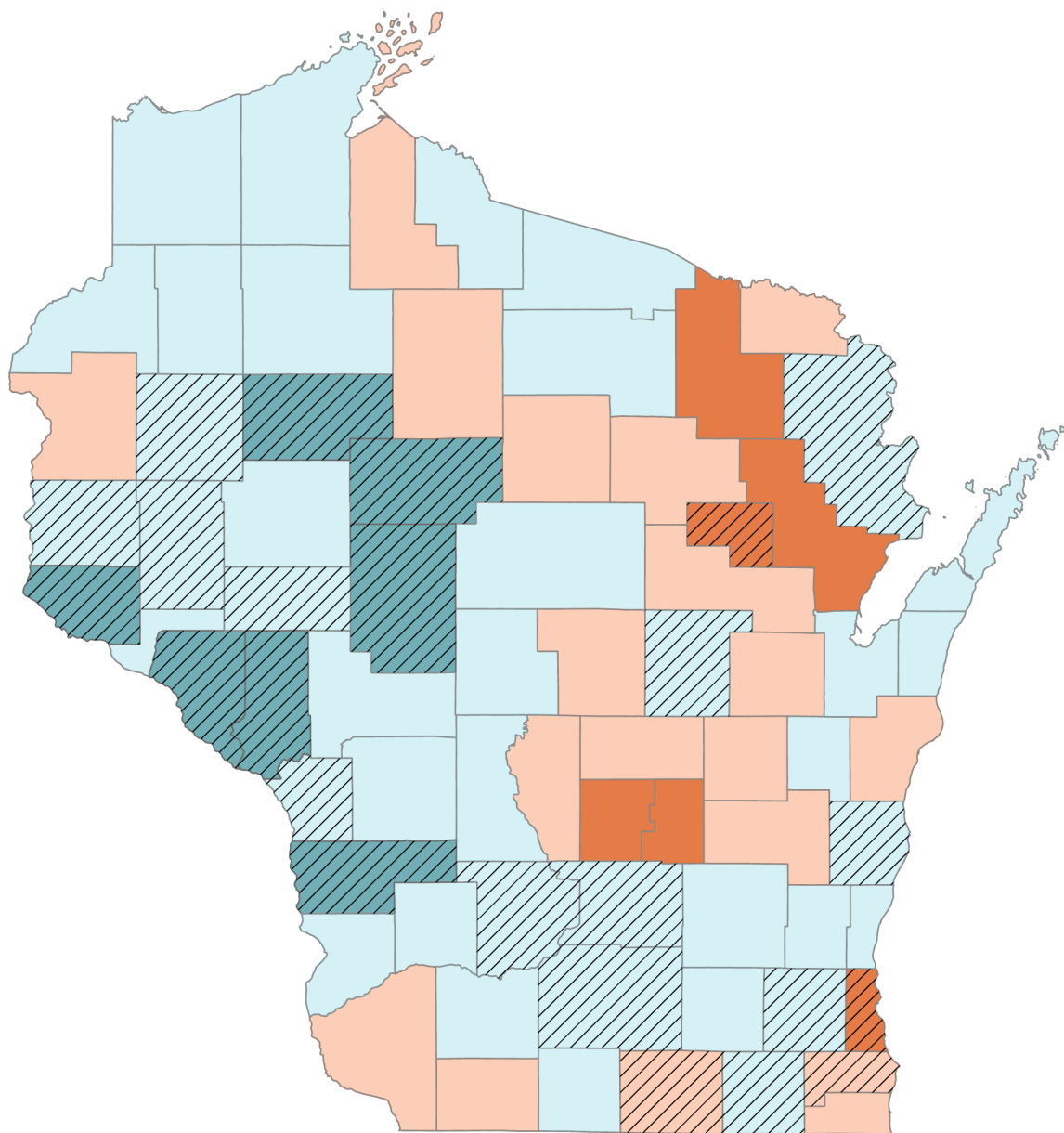
Note: Race and ethnicity categories are not mutually exclusive, with American Indian/Alaska Native including individuals identifying as Hispanic or multiple races. See [Data Notes](#) for more details.

*Significantly different from statewide rate at $\alpha = 0.05$

Preterm Birth

Percent preterm birth by county of residence, 2017–2021

Born before 37 weeks



/// Significantly different from state average (9.9%)

Low Birthweight

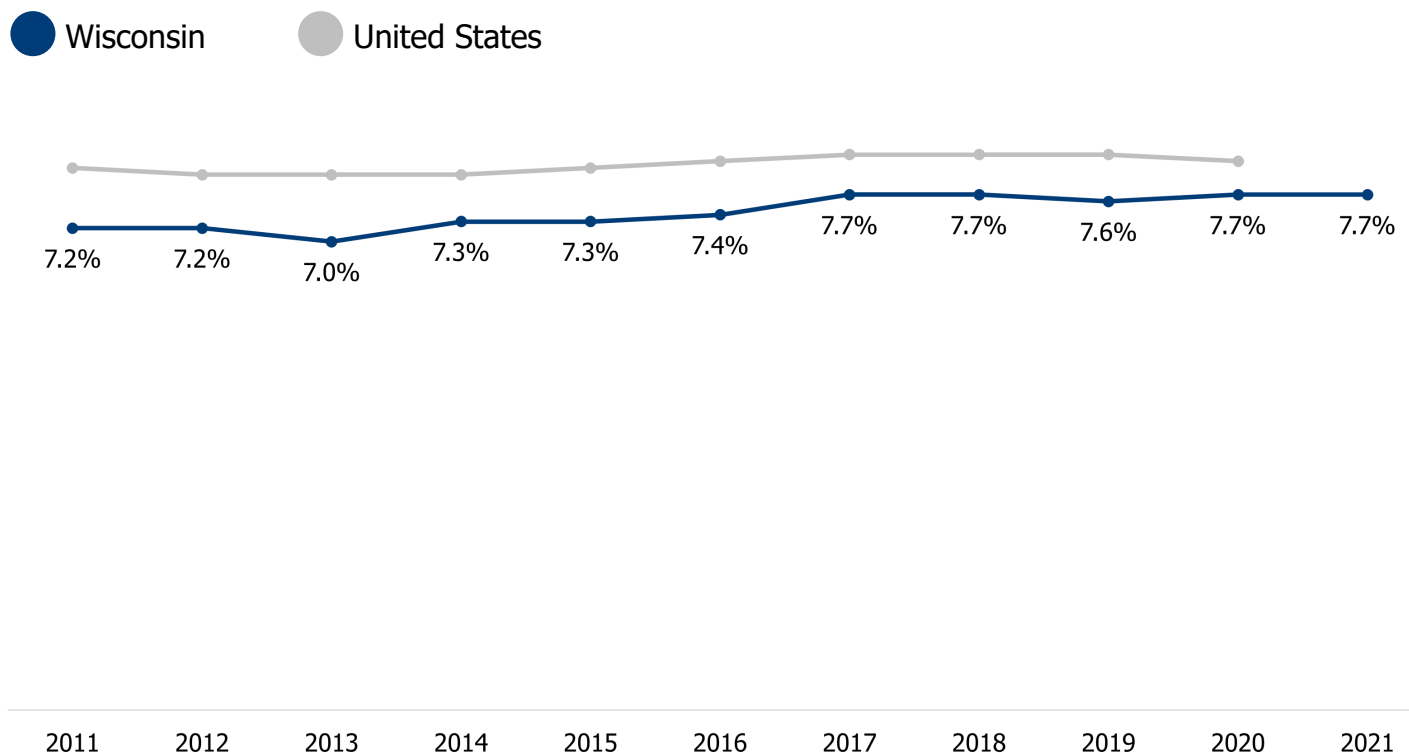
Low birthweight is defined as infants weighing less than 2,500 grams, or 5.5 pounds, at birth.

Data highlights

- In 2021, the percent of low birthweight births in Wisconsin was 7.7%. There were 4,768 infants born under 2,500 grams in 2021.
- Over the last 10 years, the percent of low birthweight births in Wisconsin has been increasing. The Wisconsin percentage has been lower than the national percent.
- In Wisconsin, low birthweight is higher among birthing persons who:
 - Were younger than 20 years old.
 - Identified as non-Hispanic Black.
 - Completed some or all of high school.

Percent of low birthweight infants in Wisconsin, 2011–2021

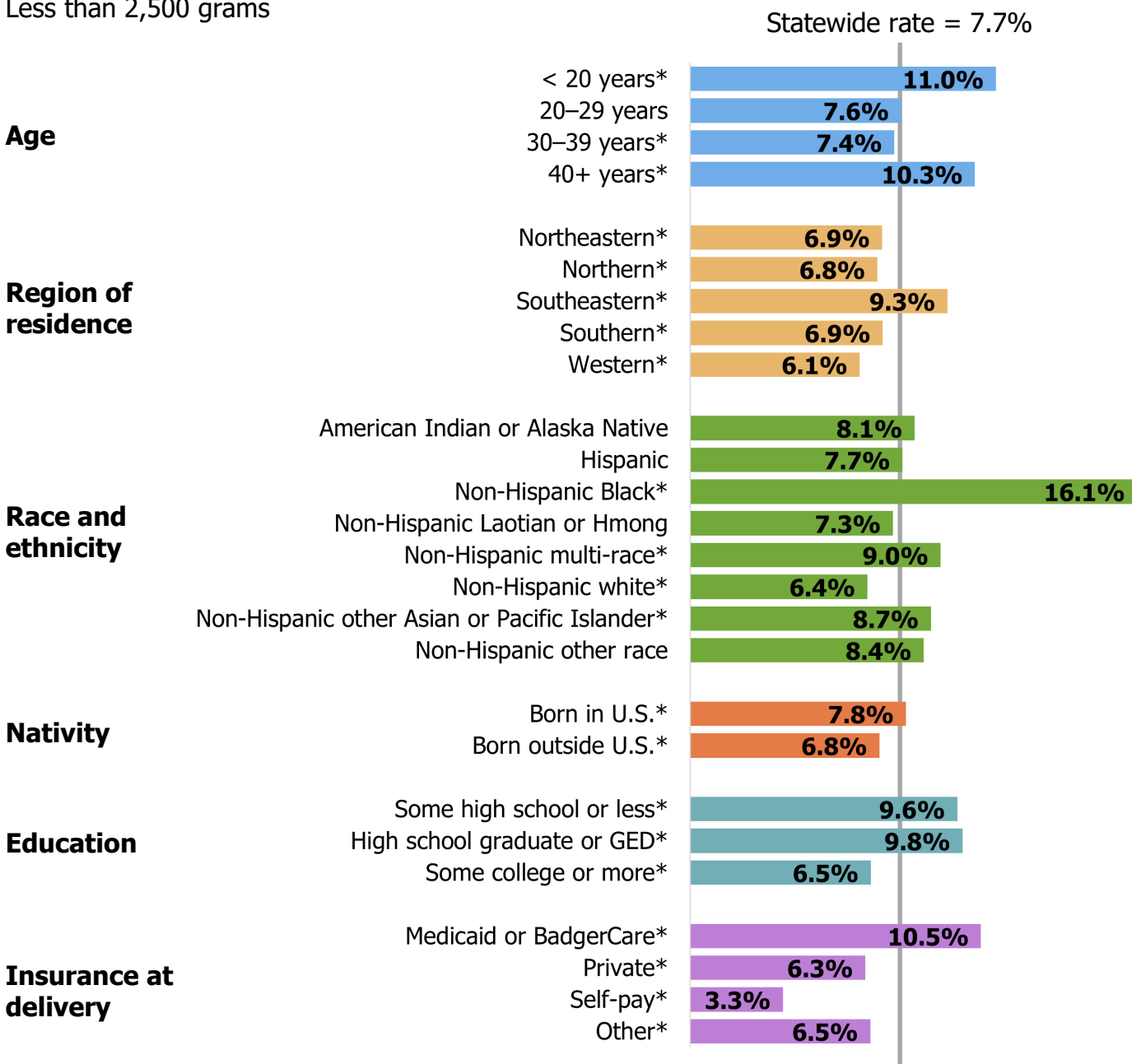
Less than 2,500 grams



Low Birthweight

Percent low birthweight by birthing parent characteristics, 2019–2021

Less than 2,500 grams



GED = General education development

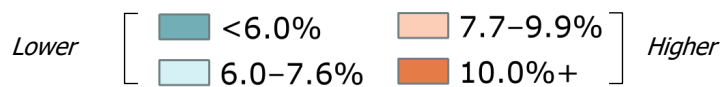
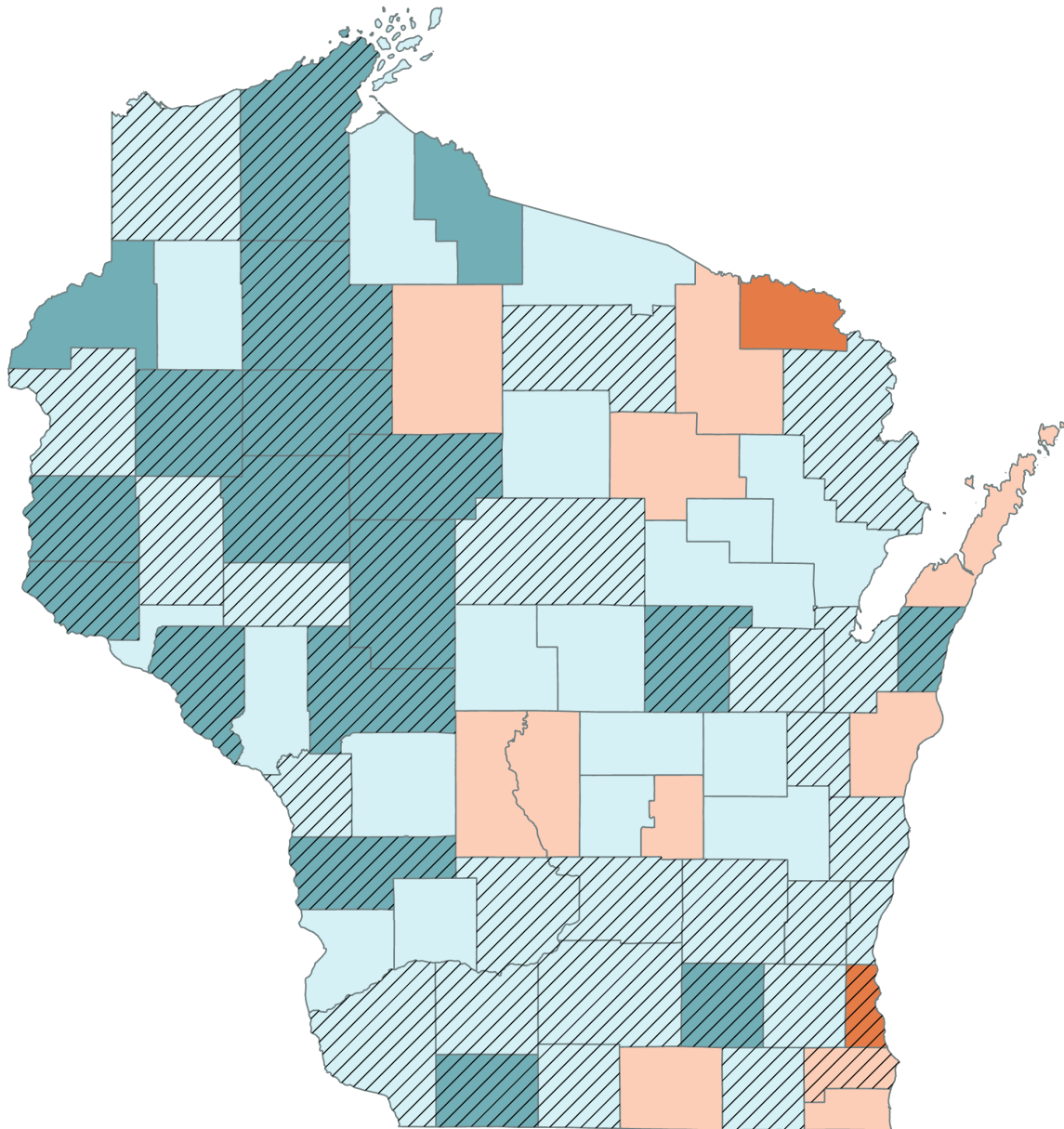
Note: Race and ethnicity categories are not mutually exclusive, with American Indian/Alaska Native including individuals identifying as Hispanic or multiple races. See [Data Notes](#) for more details.

*Significantly different from statewide rate at $\alpha = 0.05$

Low Birthweight

Percent low birthweight by county of residence, 2017–2021

Less than 2,500 grams



/// Significantly different from state average (7.7%)

Data notes

The Wisconsin data in this data resource come from 2011 through 2021 Wisconsin birth certificates and the Wisconsin Vital Records Office. National data come from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and CDC WONDER online databases.

Infants with an unknown gestational age or birthweight did not factor into the calculation of the percentage of infants born preterm or at a low birthweight.

The race and ethnicity groupings used in this resource are not mutually exclusive. American Indian/Alaska Native includes everyone who identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, including those who also identified as Hispanic or another race. Hispanic includes everyone who identified as Hispanic. Non-Hispanic multi-race includes everyone who identified as non-Hispanic and as more than one race. All other race groupings include those who identified as non-Hispanic and as a single race.

Statistical significance is a term used to describe two or more data points that have been compared using a statistical test and found to be different from one another with a high degree of confidence. In this resource, a difference is said to be statistically significant when the p-value resulting from the test is less than a cutoff value (α) of 0.05. In this resource, statistically significant differences from the statewide values were tested using the two-sided nested Z test.

Additional resources

The information shared in this data resource does not provide a complete picture of perinatal and infant health in Wisconsin. Additional resources—including grief support, funding opportunities, and other data sources—can be found on the [Maternal and Infant Mortality Prevention Unit data and resources webpage \(www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mch/mimp-resources.htm\)](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mch/mimp-resources.htm).

Information on maternal and perinatal outcomes can be found on the [Wisconsin Maternal Mortality and Morbidity webpage \(www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mch/maternal-mortality-and-morbidity.htm\)](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mch/maternal-mortality-and-morbidity.htm).

Additional data on birth outcomes and other topics can be accessed through the [Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health \(WISH\) Query System \(www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/index.htm\)](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/index.htm).

More information on experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy can be found on the [Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System \(PRAMS\) webpage \(www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/stats/prams/index.htm\)](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/stats/prams/index.htm).

Contact information

For questions and data requests, please reach out to the [Maternal and Infant Mortality Prevention Unit team email \(DHSMIMP@dhs.wisconsin.gov\)](mailto:DHSMIMP@dhs.wisconsin.gov).

Suggested citation

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