

INFANT MORTALITY

DEFINITION: Number and rate of deaths of children under one year of age.

SIGNIFICANCE

Infant mortality rates are often used as a measure of a community's overall health and quality of life. The United States has one of the highest infant mortality rates of any economically advanced nation. In 2006, the U.S. was ranked 28th in the world for infant mortality, just behind Poland and Slovakia.¹ In 2006, Louisiana's infant mortality rate (9.9 per 1,000 births) was the second-highest in the nation, behind only Mississippi (10.6 per 1,000 births).²

The leading causes of infant death in Louisiana are conditions originating in the perinatal period (47.5%), congenital malformations, deformations, and chromosomal abnormalities (18.6%) and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) (10.7%). Among conditions originating in the perinatal period are those that result from short gestational age (preterm births) and fetal malnutrition, which account for 39.7% of all such deaths.³

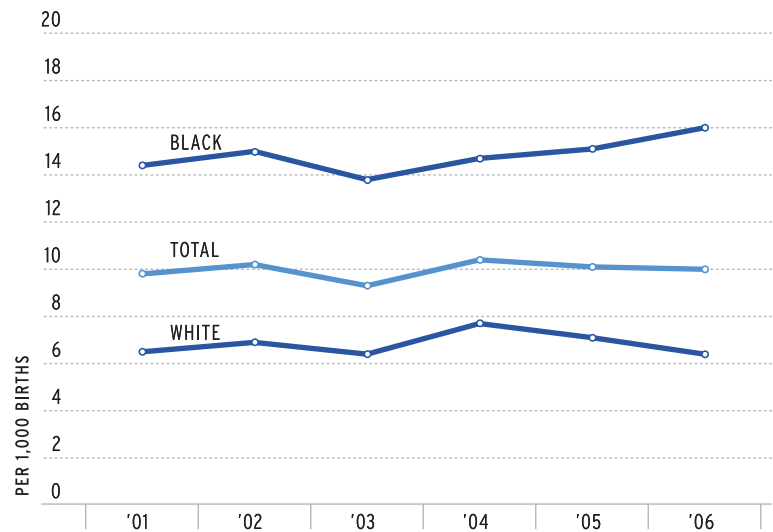
While the United States has made significant progress recently in reducing the number of babies who die due to SIDS or congenital abnormalities, we have not seen similar improvements in reducing the number of infant deaths that result from prematurity and low birthweight.⁴ The plateau in the nation's infant mortality rate between 2000 and 2005 is largely attributable to the increase in the preterm birth rate, combined with a lack of improvement in the mortality rates for preterm infants.⁵

RACIAL DISPARITIES

There are wide variations in infant mortality by race and ethnicity both in Louisiana and nationally. In 2006, the black infant mortality rate was 2.5 times as large as the white infant mortality rate in Louisiana. Since 2004, the level of racial disparity on this indicator has been increasing, as the white infant mortality rate has been decreasing and the black infant mortality rate has been increasing.

Racial disparities in infant mortality are partially attributable to racial disparities on other birth outcomes, including preterm births and

INFANT MORTALITY BY RACE IN LOUISIANA 2001-2006



low birthweight babies. Infants born to black mothers face a higher risk of being born at a low weight and being born preterm, compared to babies born to white mothers. Racial disparities tend to be even larger for very low birthweight and very preterm births, two categories that are associated with especially high mortality rates.

RATE CALCULATION

$1,000 * (\text{number of deaths of children under one year of age} \div \text{total number of children under 1 year of age})$

CHART DATA SOURCE

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health, Center for Preventive Health, Maternal and Child Health, "Louisiana Maternal and Child Health Data Indicators," 2001-2006.

DATA SOURCE

Live births and deaths 2004-2006: Louisiana State Center for Health Statistics

DATA NOTE

Three years of data were aggregated, then averaged. Thus the numbers here reflect the average number of infants who died in 2004, 2005, and 2006.

¹ National Center for Health Statistics, *2008 with Chartbook on Trends in the Health of Americans*, (Hyattsville, MD: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 2008).

² The Annie E. Casey Foundation, "Infant mortality (Rate per 1,000) 2006," KIDS COUNT Data Center, retrieved from www.kidscount.org/datacenter on 6/1/2009.

³ Tri Tran, Lillian Funke, Lyn Kieltyka, Joan Wightkin, "Louisiana 2001-2005 Maternal and Child Health Data Book" (New Orleans, LA: Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health, Maternal and Child Health, 2009), retrieved from www.dhh.louisiana.gov on 6/1/2009.

⁴ Rima Shore, "KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief: Reducing Infant Mortality," The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2009, retrieved from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/databook> on 8/1/2009.

⁵ Marian F. MacDorman, Ph.D., and T.J. Mathews, M.S., "Recent Trends in Infant Mortality in the United States," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 2008, retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/> on 7/1/2009.

INFANT MORTALITY (NUMBER AND RATE PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)

2001-2003 AVERAGE

2004-2006 AVERAGE

CHANGE FROM 2001-2003 TO 2004 TO 2006

	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	% change in rate
LOUISIANA	636	9.8	641	10.2	6	4.1
Acadia	10	11.3	9	10	-1	-11.6
Allen	2	LNE	4	LNE	1	n.a.
Ascension	10	7.3	13	8.2	3	12.9
Assumption	4	LNE	3	LNE	-2	n.a.
Avoyelles	4	LNE	6	LNE	3	n.a.
Beauregard	4	LNE	5	LNE	1	n.a.
Bienville	<2	LNE	2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
Bossier	11	7.2	12	7.2	1	0.6
Caddo	47	12.9	48	13	1	0.5
Calcasieu	28	10.2	23	8.4	-5	-18.0
Caldwell	3	LNE	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
Cameron	0	0.0	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
Catahoula	<2	LNE	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
Claiborne	3	LNE	4	LNE	1	n.a.
Concordia	3	LNE	3	LNE	0	n.a.
De Soto	4	LNE	4	LNE	0	n.a.
East Baton Rouge	58	10.0	65	11	6	10.3
East Carroll	<2	LNE	2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
East Feliciana	2	LNE	4	LNE	1	n.a.
Evangeline	5	LNE	5	LNE	0	n.a.
Franklin	4	LNE	3	LNE	-1	n.a.
Grant	2	LNE	4	LNE	2	n.a.
Iberia	12	10.2	11	9.3	-1	-9.3
Iberville	4	LNE	3	LNE	-1	n.a.
Jackson	2	LNE	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
Jefferson	54	8.6	54	9.4	1	9.1
Jefferson Davis	2	LNE	6	LNE	4	n.a.
Lafayette	27	9.4	35	11.6	8	23.9
Lafourche	10	8.6	10	8.1	-1	-5.9
La Salle	2	LNE	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
Lincoln	4	LNE	7	13	3	n.a.
Livingston	14	9.4	13	7.6	-1	-18.8
Madison	2	LNE	3	LNE	1	n.a.
Morehouse	6	LNE	5	LNE	-2	n.a.
Natchitoches	7	11.4	6	LNE	-1	n.a.
Orleans	83	11.7	47	10.1	-36	-13.6
Ouachita	25	11.0	29	12.6	5	14.8
Plaquemines	3	LNE	2	LNE	-2	n.a.
Pointe Coupee	2	LNE	3	LNE	1	n.a.
Rapides	25	13.3	20	10.3	-5	-22.6
Red River	2	LNE	2	LNE	0	n.a.
Richland	5	LNE	4	LNE	-1	n.a.
Sabine	3	LNE	3	LNE	0	n.a.
St. Bernard	8	9.2	5	LNE	-3	n.a.
St. Charles	4	LNE	8	11.5	4	n.a.
St. Helena	<2	LNE	2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
St. James	3	LNE	3	LNE	0	n.a.
St. John the Baptist	7	10.3	6	LNE	-1	n.a.
St. Landry	14	10.3	18	13.1	4	26.7
St. Martin	7	10.2	11	14.2	3	39.4
St. Mary	7	9.4	4	LNE	-3	n.a.
St. Tammany	16	5.7	24	8.3	8	44.9
Tangipahoa	12	7.7	17	10	5	30.2
Tensas	<2	LNE	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
Terrebonne	16	9.7	17	10.1	1	4.5
Union	2	LNE	2	LNE	1	n.a.
Vermilion	9	11.2	6	LNE	-3	n.a.
Vernon	4	LNE	8	8.3	4	n.a.
Washington	7	10.4	4	LNE	-2	n.a.
Webster	6	LNE	7	13.7	1	n.a.
West Baton Rouge	3	LNE	7	20	4	n.a.
West Carroll	2	LNE	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
West Feliciana	<2	LNE	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.
Winn	2	LNE	<2	LNE	n.a.	n.a.

LNE [low number of events] is used because the rate or percent may be unreliable.