

* YOUR COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE *

Health statistics and more

SPRING 2009

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Special Points of Interest

- Florida ranks 41st in America's Health Rankings.
- Hispanic birth outcomes continue to deteriorate.
- Babies born with low birth weight have higher risk of complications.
- Early entry to prenatal care continues to decrease.

Our Mission

IS TO COORDINATE A SYSTEM OF CARE THAT GUARANTEES ALL WOMEN HAVE ACCESS TO PERINATAL CARE AND THAT ALL INFANTS HAVE ACCESS TO SERVICES THAT PROMOTE OPTIMAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Our Vision

HEALTHY FAMILIES LIVING
IN A FAMILY FRIENDLY
COMMUNITY

A Healthy Start Journey

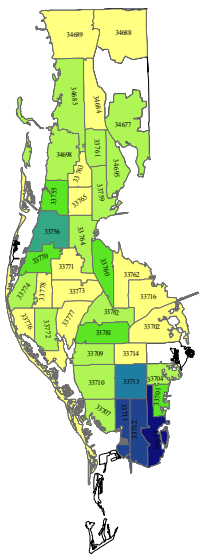
"It was mid December, 2006 when it hit me-I'm pregnant! This was my first child so I was happy, nervous, scared. I felt blessed and at a loss at the same time. I was single, working as a waitress, trying to get through school. Not knowing where to start, a friend told me to go to the Clearwater Health Department for help." And this is where Nikki Wanvijit's Healthy Start journey began. Nikki's needs were assessed and she was matched to a care coordinator who helped her with information and services to improve the quality of her pregnancy and help her with her baby. The Florida Department of Health provides funding to the Healthy Start Coalition of Pinellas to help mothers like Nikki in need of additional support during their pregnancy. The Coalition is a community based, private non-profit organization focused on improving the health and well being of pregnant women, their children and families. Healthy Start services are provided through contracts with local service providers including the Pinellas County Health Department, hospitals, mental health agency, childbirth educators and Doulas.

Like Nikki, many other mothers find themselves needing Healthy Start services regardless of socioeconomic, marital or residency status. In this publication of *Your Community At a Glance* we will summarize key indicators defining our community's health and the health of mothers and babies such as Nikki's. This information helps to guide future strategies to improve the well being of mothers, babies and families. We invite you to read this information and learn about your community.

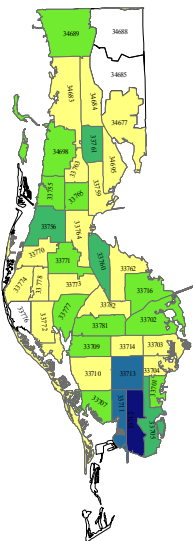
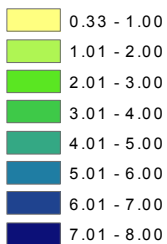


Coalition of Pinellas, Inc.

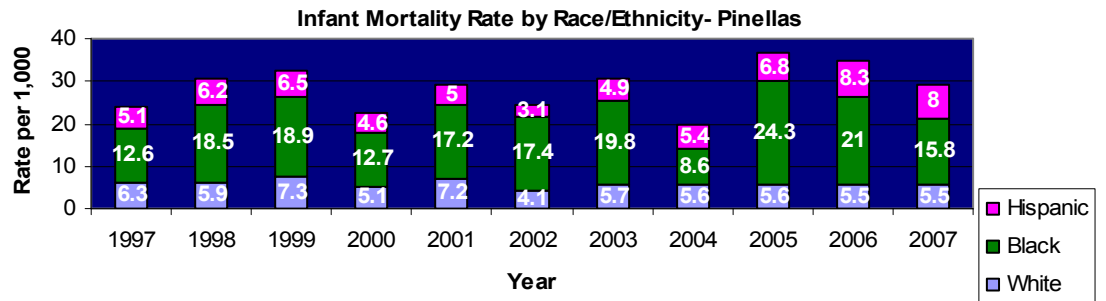
INFANT MORTALITY



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Ave Infant Deaths (by zip)

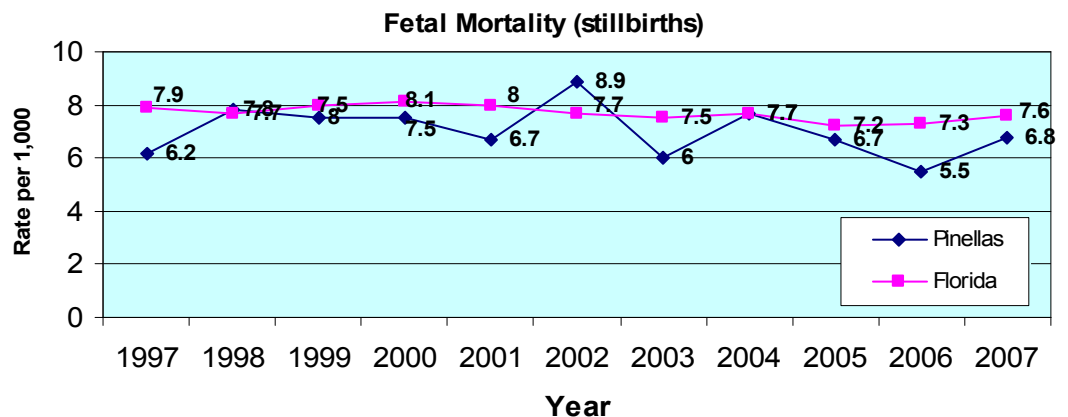


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Ave Fetal Deaths (by zip)

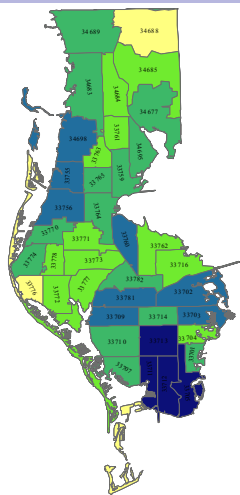


The United States has one of the highest numbers of infant deaths in the industrialized world. Infant mortality is the number of babies dying before their first birthday. In 2007, Florida ranked 41st (50th being the worst) in America's Health Rankings and it is expected to be 45th in 2008 (United Health Foundation Report 2008). Florida's infant mortality in 2007 was 7.1 per 1,000 births (a decrease from 7.2 in 2006). Pinellas county had a slightly higher rate at 7.3 per 1,000 births in 2007 (a considerably lower rate than the reported 8.6 infant mortality rate for 2006). Ethnic and racial minorities have a higher chance of experiencing illness, are less likely to receive routine medical care and are more likely to receive poor quality healthcare. Minorities have a higher mortality rate (see graph above). It is important to note that despite a large decrease in the number of Black babies dying, the number of White and Hispanic babies that died stayed about the same as the previous year. African American babies are almost 3 times more likely to die before their first birthday, when compared to white babies. In 2007, almost 16 out of 1,000 black babies died before their first birthday. In the same year, almost 6 out of every 1,000 White babies and eight out of 1,000 Hispanic babies died. The last two years reflect the highest number of Hispanic infant deaths in the past 11 years. The map shows the areas where most babies died in Pinellas County (dark blue) between the years 2005 and 2007. The main cause of death for Pinellas County babies is prematurity (*babies born before 37 weeks*). Prematurity has been linked to conditions related to the mother's health such as infections, chronic illnesses (like diabetes, hypertension, etc.), obesity, other nutritional factors, lifestyle and environmental factors (like smoking).

Fetal mortality refers to a fetus that dies at 20 weeks or more of gestation (also known as stillbirth) prior to full delivery. In 2007, sixty-four fetal deaths (6.8 out of 1,000 deliveries) were recorded in Pinellas County. Florida's rate was higher than Pinellas at 7.6 per 1,000 deliveries (see graph below). Racial and ethnic minorities continue to be over represented in the number of fetal deaths. In 2007, eleven out of 1,000 fetal deaths were African American; 5 out of 1,000 fetal deaths were Hispanic and 6 out of 1,000 fetal deaths were white. In Pinellas County the factors associated with fetal deaths are very similar to those associated to infant deaths and include low birth weight (*less than 5.5 lbs. or less than 2,500 grams*), very low birth weight (*less than 3.5 lbs or less than 1,500 grams*) and



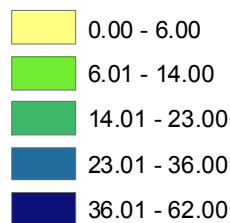
PREMATURITY



Average Prematurity by Zip Code 2007

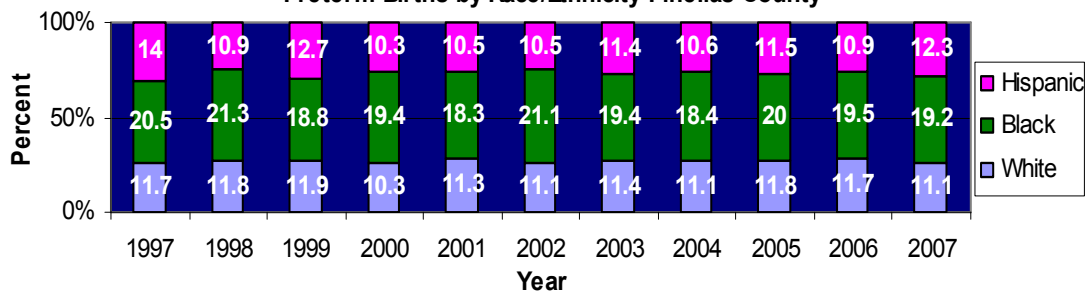
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Premature Births Total (by Zip)

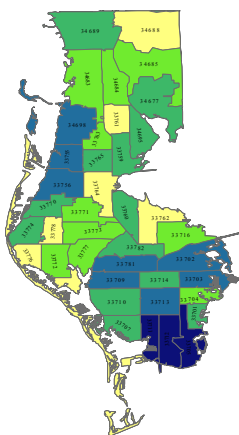


In the United States *preterm birth* is the leading cause of death in the first month of life. Prematurity is defined as the birth of an infant before the thirty-seventh week of pregnancy (or before the ninth month). In Pinellas County, 13% of the babies born in 2007 were premature (the state of Florida was 14%). As with other indicators, racial and ethnic minorities are over represented. The graph below shows a breakdown by race as a cumulative percent. Approximately 19% of African American babies are born premature, compared to almost 12% of Hispanic babies and almost 11% of white babies (see graph). No one knows exactly what causes prematurity, but there are factors that can increase the risk of delivering a premature baby including but not limited to: history of premature birth, maternal illness, poor nutrition, poor dental health, late or no prenatal care, age or family history, smoking, drug and alcohol abuse etc. The last few weeks of pregnancy are critical to a child's health and development. Babies who survive a premature birth, face the risk of serious lifelong health problems including learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, blindness, hearing loss and other chronic conditions such as asthma. Infants born just a few weeks early have a greater risk of breathing problems, feeding difficulties and delayed brain development. Some of these problems may be apparent at birth while others could take years to identify.

Preterm Births by Race/Ethnicity-Pinellas County



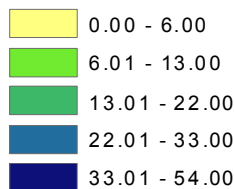
LOW BIRTH WEIGHT



Average Low Birth Weight by Zip Code 2007

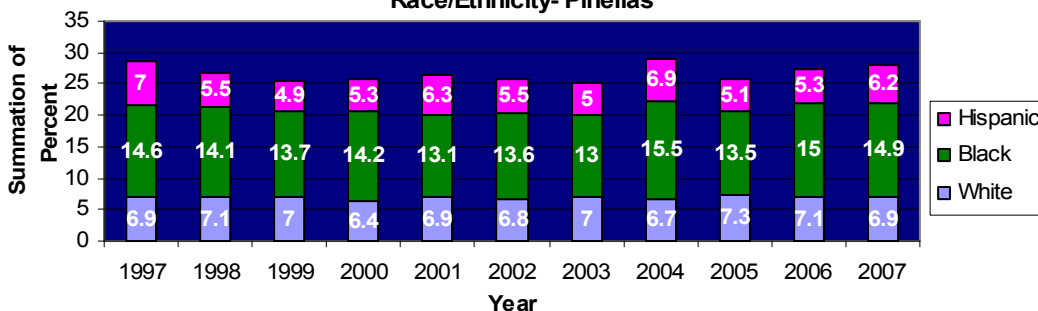
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Low Birth Weight Deliveries - Total (by zip)

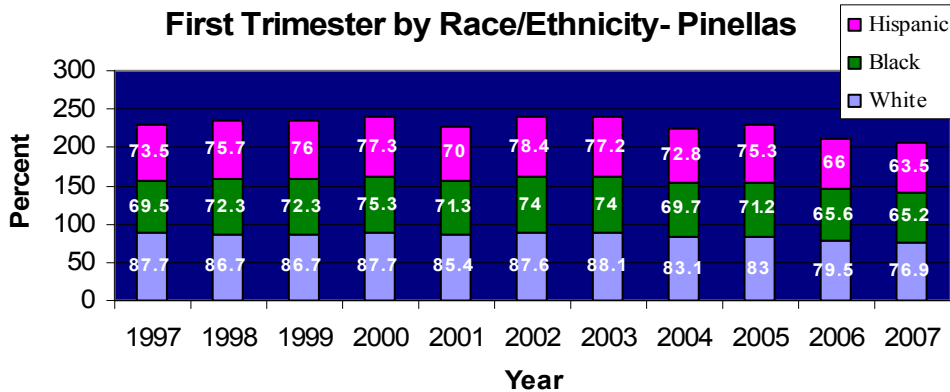


Low birth weight is defined as a weight at birth of less than 5 lbs 8 ounces or 2,500 grams. An average newborn weighs 7 lbs. The primary cause of low birth weight is prematurity, but even full term babies can be low birth weight. Being born early means a baby has less time to grow and gain weight in the mother's uterus. In 2007, approximately (8%) of Pinellas County babies were born low birth weight and a similar percent applies for the state of Florida. The graph below shows cumulative percents for Pinellas County by race. In 2007, African American babies in Pinellas County were two times more likely to be low birth weight (14.9%), followed by white babies (6.9%) and Hispanic babies (6.2%) (see graph below). Problems with the placenta, birth defects, multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.), maternal illnesses, maternal drug use, smoking, inadequate prenatal care and poor nutrition during pregnancy contribute to low birth weight. Babies that are born low birth weight can have problems with growth and development and have a greater risk of complications such as difficulty eating and gaining weight, difficulty staying warm, infections, breathing problems, etc. Low birth weight prevention begins prior to pregnancy with a healthy diet and avoiding alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use. During pregnancy, appropriate weight gain and prenatal care are key factors in low birth weight prevention.

Percent of Babies Born Low Birthweight (under 2500 grams) by Race/Ethnicity- Pinellas

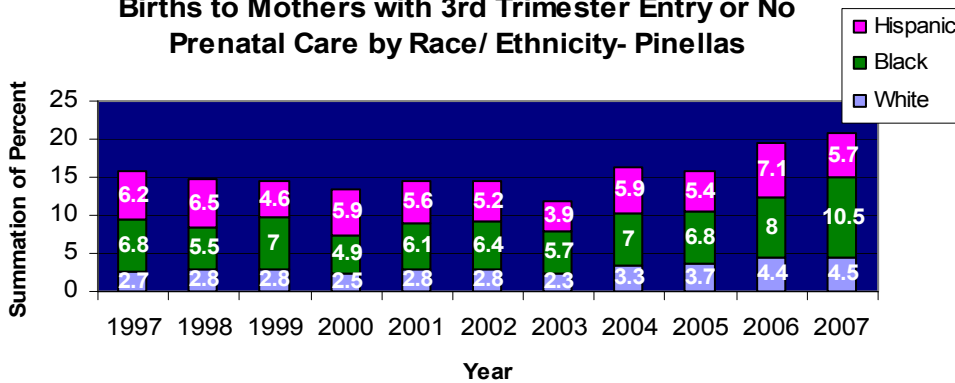


Births to Mothers Entering Prenatal Care in the First Trimester by Race/Ethnicity- Pinellas



(*Entry to PNC calculations changed in 2004 and are not comparable to previous years)

Births to Mothers with 3rd Trimester Entry or No Prenatal Care by Race/ Ethnicity- Pinellas



Entry to Prenatal Care

It is important to receive prenatal care early during pregnancy to have a healthy baby. Poor nutrition, urinary tract infections, dental infections, smoking and sexually transmitted diseases all can influence the health of the unborn baby. These issues are common to many women and are addressed and discussed during prenatal visits. In recent years, the number of women entering prenatal care early in Pinellas County has diminished from over 80% from 1997 thru 2005 to 74.5% in 2007. Early signs of this decrease began in 2004 and continued throughout the year of implementation of the Medicaid reform. The same pattern can be seen at the state level. During the same time period the number of women with late (3rd trimester) or no prenatal care increased and in 2007 the percent of women with 3rd trimester or no prenatal care in Pinellas was 5.7%.

As with other health statistics, ethnic minorities have higher numbers of late or no prenatal care. Several factors affect late entry or no prenatal care including lack of or under insurance, cultural barriers such as language and expectations of medical care based on experiences in their country of origin, fear due to immigration status and poor knowledge of community resources such as sliding scale fee clinics and temporary Medicaid. Many pregnant women do not know that they are eligible for temporary Medicaid funding and others experience problems with the application process. The tables on the right show the cumulative percent by ethnicity for early entry and late or no prenatal care. In 2007, Hispanic mothers had the lowest percent of early prenatal care (63.5%) and African Americans had the highest percent of 3rd trimester or late prenatal care (10.5%). The Healthy Start Coalition funds two health navigator positions to help women navigate the Medicaid system in an attempt to increase the number of women accessing prenatal care early.

For more information about Healthy Start, or to become a Healthy Start Coalition member please contact us at:

HEALTHY START COALITION OF PINELLAS, INC.

2735 Whitney Road
Clearwater, FL 33760
Phone (727)507-6330
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What are Healthy Start Services?

The Healthy Start Coalition funds Healthy Start services for pregnant women, infants and young children to promote healthy pregnancies and healthy babies. Services are coordinated by the Pinellas County Health Department and additional services are provided through contracts with other local providers. Some of the services obtained by Healthy Start include: home or office visits with a care coordinator, breastfeeding education and support, childbirth classes, mental health counseling, parenting support and education, nutritional guidance, help to stop smoking, doula services, assistance with issues related to medical insurance and information about care between pregnancies. All women should be screened for Healthy Start services at their OB provider's office. If a woman qualifies, the program can help improve the quality of her pregnancy and help her enjoy and celebrate this special time in her life.

We're on the web:



www.healthystartpinellas.org

Sponsored by:
Healthy Start Coalition of Pinellas, Inc. and the State of Florida Department of Health