

# **Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Birth Outcomes**

## **Overview and Purpose**

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Statewide Advisory Committee  
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# Wisconsin

## Infant Mortality and Birth Outcomes

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- **Key marker for community well-being**
- **Marked racial and ethnic disparities**
- **Worst of 40 states for African Americans**

# Social and Economic Determinants of Health

- **Families**
- **Neighborhoods**
- **Schools**

*Children Left Behind: How Metropolitan Areas Are Failing America's Children.* Harvard School of Public Health and the Center for the Advancement of Health. [diversitydata.org](http://diversitydata.org)

# Social and Economic Determinants of Health

- **Neighborhoods**
- **Income Levels**
  - **Family Structure\***
  - **Home Ownership\***
  - **Residential Segregation**
  - **Education Level\***
  - **Unemployment\***

# Neighborhood Environment\*

- **“Milwaukee/Waukesha is one of the best ranking areas for white children, but one of the worst ranking areas for black, Asian and Hispanic children.”**

# Racial and Ethnic Disparities

- **“In Milwaukee/Waukesha, the poverty rate in the neighborhood of the average black child was six times larger than the poverty rate in the neighborhood of the average white child.”**

# Racial and Ethnic Disparities

- **“The metros with the largest Hispanic/white child disparity in neighborhood poverty were...Milwaukee-Waukesha.”**
- **“Those with the largest Asian/white disparity were Milwaukee-Waukesha...”**

## **The Journal Times, 02/16/2007**

**“Racine’s infant mortality  
double the state average”**

**“Between 2001 and 2005...101 babies from the city died for an overall infant mortality rate of almost 12 per 1,000 live births...”**

**“Community leaders, people working in public health and health care and members of the community at large are coming together to see what they can do.”**

## **The Journal Times, 02/16/2007**

- **“We’ve always felt there was a need to do something because Racine has one of the highest rates in the state,” said Thelma Jones, director of community health programs for the city of Racine....I get the paper in the morning and I see another dead baby, and it hurts. If there’s something we can do to keep mothers from losing their babies, we should.”**

## Reader Opinions

- Local Joe wrote: “Am I living in a third world country or a city in SE Wisconsin? High infant mortality, poverty, high unemployment....Something needs to be done and NOW!”
- Kenosha news wrote: “Drugs and illegals—what else is there to say. It’s not rocket science.”

# Reader Opinions

- 2007 wrote: “What this city needs is more birth control. It’s disgusting how many women pop out babies and don’t take care of them, or harm them while inutero....”
- Proud Aunt wrote: “Better doctors and hospital equipment couldn’t hurt the babies chances. Not every death will be due to a bad mom and how she treated herself while being pregnet...”

# Reader Opinions

- **Iconoclast wrote:** “Hey, BA-It’s damned nice of us to provide ANY healthcare for your teenaged (unmarried) pregnant daughter. Maybe if she kept her knees together ...”We ‘wealthy’ (read: taxpayers) pay for our own healthcare. Why don’t you try it.”
- **kay wrote:** It happens to be the state’s responsibility to protect babies and children...”

# **Governor Doyle's Budget Items Related to Birth Outcomes**

- **Family Foundations**
  - universal home visiting program for first-time parents, and expands the current targeted home visiting program for first-time parents eligible for Medical Assistance, effective January 2009 (\$642,400)
- **Parent with Newborn**
  - increases length of time parent may stay home with newborn and receive W-2 assistance, from 12 weeks to 26 weeks

# **Governor Doyle's Budget Items Related to Birth Outcomes**

- **W-2 Cash Assistance**
  - for women with custodial children, are participating in W-2, are in the third trimester of a medically verified at-risk pregnancy and are unable to work
- **Expansion of the Milwaukee-based Meta House**
  - alcohol and other drug abuse treatment services designed specifically for women (\$250K annually above current budget)

## **Governor Doyle's Budget Items Related to Birth Outcomes**

- **Invests in Dane County Early Childhood Initiative**
  - comprehensive home visiting and employment supports) at \$1 million over two years
- **\$9.8 million for emergency assistance**
  - to families, including impending homelessness

# **Governor Doyle's Budget Items Related to Birth Outcomes**

- **Child Care**
  - subsidies- proposing several measures to make up declining federal funds in this arena, including a child care co-payment of \$10 per month for a family of four, with income at 100% of the federal poverty limit (approx \$20,000 in 2006)
- **\$2.8 million for child care rating system**
- **\$2.4 million for education for child care workers**

# Governor Doyle's Budget Items Related to Birth Outcomes

- **SAGE**
  - \$20.8 million GPR biennial increase for SAGE program of lower class sizes for K-3; \$2,250 per pupil, beginning 2007-08
- **4K**
  - \$3 million for 4-year old kindergarten starting 2008-09
- **School Breakfasts**
  - 50% increase in state's reimbursement rate

## **Governor Doyle's Budget Items Related to Birth Outcomes**

- **Wisconsin Covenant Scholars**
  - **guarantees college education for students who maintain B average in high school and stay out of trouble**
  - **8th graders in Spring of 2007 first class to sign, for college entry in 2011**