

Data Notes and Definitions

Statistical Significance

Statistical significance is the probability that two numbers, such as percentages or mean scores, are truly different from each other. If a result is statistically significant then it is likely that the difference observed is real versus due to chance.

Although percent change calculations are included in the tables, these changes have not been tested for statistical significance. Therefore it cannot be said with certainty whether these changes are statistically meaningful. When the sample size is large, such as public health or education data, it is likely that differences are statistically significant. When sample sizes are smaller, such as for many of the adolescent health or county indicators, it is less likely that differences are real rather than due to chance.

Health

Data on **children with no health insurance** come from two different sources. In the tables with county level data, Census Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE) are used. SAHIE estimates are the most accurate available for county level health insurance data, because they are based on three-year averages. That means that small counties have three years of data to smooth out any sampling error that may have occurred one year. The entire state population is large enough so that significant sampling error in a given year is less likely. Indeed, adding three years of data together could mask real changes over time. Therefore, in the health section looking at state data, Census Current Population Survey (CPS) data are used because they are the best source for insurance information at the state level for any given year. In this publication, the CPS estimate (10.1 percent in 2000) is presented in the discussion of state health data and the SAHIE estimate (12.5 percent in 2000) in the county tables so that counties can better be compared to the state.

More information on CPS is available at: <http://www.bls.census.gov/cps/cpsmain.htm>.

More information on SAHIE is available at: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/sahie/>.

Infant Health

Very late or no prenatal care includes pregnant women who did not receive prenatal care until the third trimester or none at all. Percentages were calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Births Where There Was Very Late or No Prenatal Care}}{\text{Total Number of Live Births}} \times 100$$

Low birthweight infants are those live infants born weighing less than 2500 grams (5 pounds, 8 ounces or less) regardless of period of gestation. Percentages were calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Live Infants Weighing Less than 2500 Grams at Birth}}{\text{Total Number of Live Births}} \times 100$$

The data for **children who were breastfed as infants** come from the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH). The NSCH is sponsored by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration and reaches parents of children ages 0-17. Only parents of children who were 0-5 at the time of the survey were asked "Was [CHILD] ever breastfed or fed breast milk?"

Infant mortality includes all infants under the age of 1 who die. The infant mortality rate was calculated by the State Center for Health Statistics using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Infant (<1 year-old) Deaths}}{\text{Total Number of Live Births (<1 year-old)}} \times 1000$$

Adolescent Health

The **Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)**, also called the North Carolina High School Survey, is conducted every other year by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is a national survey of high school students about the behaviors that most affect adolescent health. Approximately 4,000 North Carolina youth took part in the survey in 2005.

More information is available at <http://www.nchealthyschools.org/data/>.

Economic (In)Security

The number of **school children enrolled in free/reduced-price school meals** includes public schools except charter schools. Percentages were calculated by the Department of Public Instruction using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{School Children Enrolled in Free/Reduced-Price School Meals}}{\text{Average Daily Membership at Lunch}} \times 100$$

Early Care and Education

Regulated care includes all child care that is monitored by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development. Types of care include: licensed child care providers, religious sponsored programs, and providers with temporary or provisional licenses.

The **four-year completion rate** used in this publication is from the *North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile, 2005* and is reported therein as the retention rate. This rate is calculated as the ratio of graduates (diplomas and certificates) at the end of the current school year to ninth grade final enrollment four years earlier. This is not a true *graduation* rate since the public schools do not track individual students.

$$\text{Four-Year Completion Rate} = \frac{\text{Graduates in Year X}}{\text{Ninth Grade Final Enrollment in (Year X - 4)}}$$

The four-year completion rate is the closest rate reported by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to the measure recommended by the National Governors Association and the federal government (U.S. General Accountability Office). The measure recommended by the federal government is the **cohort graduation rate** which tracks students from their enrollment in ninth grade to their graduation four years later. The cohort graduation rate is considered the most accurate measure of how many students are completing high school in four years and, alternately, how many students are dropping out. It is similar to the four-year completion rate, but makes adjustments, such as for population growth, to ninth grade enrollment to ensure accuracy. The dropout rate is equal to 1 - the cohort graduation rate. DPI will begin reporting a cohort graduation rate in late 2006.

$$\text{Cohort Graduation Rate} = \frac{\text{Graduates Receiving Regular Diplomas in Year X}}{\text{Adjusted 9th Grade Enrollment in (Year X - 4)}}$$

The **graduation rate** reported by the Department of Public Instruction varies from the recommended guidelines in that it does not include dropouts in the calculation. Instead, the rate measures the percentage of graduating students receiving diplomas in four years.

$$\text{Graduation Rate} = \frac{\text{Graduates Receiving a Regular Diploma in Year X}}{\text{Their Graduating Class (if they are graduating in four years)}}$$

The **dropout rate** reported by the Department of Public Instruction is an event dropout rate which measures the percentage of students who drop out in a given year. The event dropout rate only captures one year; students tend to drop out every year between ninth and 12th grade. Thus the rate is likely to significantly underestimate the true percentage of students who drop out because the percentage of students adds up over the four years between ninth and 12th grade.

DPI defines a dropout as:⁴⁸

A "dropout" is an individual who:

- was enrolled in school at some time during the reporting year;
- was not enrolled on day 20 of the current year;
- has not graduated from high school or completed a state or district-approved educational program; and does not meet any of the following reporting *exclusions*:
 1. transferred to another public school district, private school, home school or state/district-approved educational program,
 2. temporarily absent due to suspension or school-approved illness, or
 3. death.

DPI defines the dropout rate as:⁴⁸

$$\frac{\text{Total Number of Dropouts}}{[(20\text{th Day Membership past school year} - \text{Initial enrollees in membership on 20th day of past school year} + 20\text{th Day Membership current school year})/2] + \text{Total Number of Dropouts}}$$

DPI Example⁴⁸

School System A documented 300 dropouts for the reporting year 2004-05. The first month membership for the reporting year was 5,000 students in grades 7-12. Of this number, 10 students were initial enrollees in membership on day 20 (FM20s). The 2005-2006 (current year) 20th day membership for the same grades is 6,000.

To compute the rate, state the fraction:

Numerator = 300

Denominator = [(5,000 - 10 + 6,000) / 2 + 300], or 5,495 + 300, or 5,795

Solve: Divide the Numerator by the Denominator:

300 / 5,795 = 5.176%, or rounded to nearest one hundredth, 5.18%.

This calculation is not included in this report.

Data Notes and Definitions *(continued)*

Child Maltreatment

Note: All definitions in this section come directly from the N.C. Department of Social Services

Substantiated children include those cases substantiated for abuse, neglect, abuse and neglect or dependency as the outcome of an Investigative Assessment.

Substantiated abuse is defined as a situation in which a child's parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker inflicts or allows to be inflicted, creates or allows to be created a substantial risk of serious physical injury by other than accidental means; or uses or allows to be used upon the child cruel or grossly inappropriate procedures or cruel or grossly inappropriate devices to modify behavior; or commits, permits, or encourages the commission of any sexual offense by, with or upon the child in violation of the law; promotes the prostitution of the child; or creates or allows to be created serious emotional damage to the child; or encourages, directs or approves of delinquent acts involving moral turpitude committed by the child.

Substantiated neglect is defined as a situation in which a child does not receive proper care, supervision or discipline from the child's parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker; or who has been abandoned; or who is not provided necessary medical care; or who is not provided necessary remedial care; or who lives in an environment injurious to the child's welfare; or who has been placed for care or adoption in violation of the law. In determining whether a child is neglected, it is relevant if that the child lives in a home where another child has died as a result of abuse or neglect or lives in a home where another child has been subjected to sexual abuse or severe physical abuse by an adult who regularly lives in the home.

Substantiated Dependency is defined as a situation in which a child is in need of assistance or placement because he or she has no parent, guardian or custodian responsible for the child's care or supervision or whose parent, guardian or custodian, due to physical or mental incapacity and the absence of an appropriate alternative child care arrangement, is unable to provide for the child's care or supervision.

"**Services needed**" children are those cases of neglect (with the exception of abandonment and the special types of reports) and dependency assigned to the Family Assessment Response, where the safety issues and future risk of harm is so great that the agency must provide involuntary services to ensure the safety of the child. There is no substantiation of maltreatment or perpetrator identified.

Recurrence of maltreatment is the percentage of all children who were victims of substantiated child abuse and/or neglect during the first six months of the period under review who had an additional substantiated report of maltreatment in the following six months.

Stability of foster care is the percentage of all children who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal who experienced no more than two placement settings.

Maltreatment in foster care is the percentage of children in foster care who were the subjects of substantiated maltreatment by a foster parent or a facility staff member during the year under review.

Reunification in less than 12 months is the percentage of children in foster care who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care within 12 months of the time of the latest removal from home.

Adopted in less than 24 months is the percentage of children exiting foster care to adoption during the year under review who were adopted in less than 24 months from the time of their latest removal from home.

Re-entry into foster care in less than 12 months is the percentage of children entering foster care during the year under review who had a prior foster care episode in the previous 12 months.

Children in foster care includes children living in the following living arrangements: home of relative (unlicensed), family foster care home (Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse Services), residential school, foster family care home, small group home (residential), small group home (treatment), children's camp, specialized foster family care home, large group facility (residential), large group facility (treatment), independent living arrangement, adoptive home, adoptive home (relative), adoptive foster home, maternity home, emergency shelter, family foster home (licensed relative), family foster home (non-relative), specialized family foster home (licensed relative), specialized family foster home (non-relative), other known and other unknown.

Children in Department of Social Services custody includes all children in foster care as well as those living in the following living arrangements: home of parent, home of legal guardian, Division of Youth Services residential facility, hospital, jail/lock-up, trial home visit and runaway.

Juvenile Justice

The North Carolina juvenile justice system deals with youth ages 6-17 charged with status/undisciplined offenses and youth ages 6-15 charged with misdemeanors and felonies. Youth 16 and older charged with misdemeanors or felonies are handled by the adult court system.

The numbers in this publication reflect data edits made after the publication of DJJDP's 2004 Annual Report. Data are edited as more information becomes available. Therefore, while both publications present 2004 data, there may be slight data discrepancies between the two.

Total complaints includes all complaints against juveniles. Juveniles may be duplicated when complaints are received for multiple counties and/or offenses.

The statewide total for **juveniles with complaints** is lower than the sum of juveniles with complaints for each county. A distinct juvenile may commit offenses in multiple counties and be counted distinct for each county.

Status/undisciplined offenses are those which are offenses only because of the individual's age, such as truancy (skipping school) and running away.

Infractions include traffic and local ordinance complaints.

Minor misdemeanors include a variety of offenses such as simple assault, drug possession, disorderly conduct and carrying a weapon.

Serious misdemeanors and minor felonies cover violations such as breaking and entering, robbery and forgery.

Violent crimes include felony charges for crimes such as sexual offenses, murder and drug trafficking.

Child Race and Ethnicity

Most data in this report are based on July estimates from the N.C. State Demographics Office. Race and ethnicity data use July Census data. Census data are used in this particular instance because they provide a greater level of detail on race, ethnicity and age breakdowns.

Service, Safety and Civics

Civic Index 2003: Nearly 800 youth, ages 13-17, were asked about their civic skills, behavior, knowledge, attitudes and opportunities. The North Carolina Youth Civic Index Survey was conducted between January and March of 2003, by the Survey Research Center at the University of Georgia. A total of 771 North Carolina youth ages 13-17 were interviewed by telephone.

More information available at: <http://www.civics.unc.edu/civicindex/>.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is a nationally representative and continuing assessment of "what America's students know and can do" in various subject areas. Each state's sample consists of, on average, 2,500 students from 100 schools per grade, per subject assessed. NAEP includes subject tests in a number of areas including mathematics, reading and writing as well as questions regarding behaviors that affect learning.

More information available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

National Survey of Children's Health: This national survey, sponsored by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration, examines the physical and emotional health of children ages 0-17. The survey reached the parents of 102,353 children nationally, including 2,084 in North Carolina. Special emphasis is placed on factors that may relate to well-being of children including family interactions, parental health, school and after-school experiences and safe neighborhoods.

More information available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/slaits/nsch.htm>.

Data Sources

Note: Data source for state and county tables is the same unless otherwise noted.

Health

Prenatal Care: N.C. State Center for Health Statistics, special data request October 2005.

Low Birthweight: N.C. State Center for Health Statistics. Years 2001 and 2004, "Birth Data for North Carolina [year], County Data by Birthweight." Generated using the North Carolina Health Data Query System available online at: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/data/query.html>.

Children Who Were Breastfed: Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (2005). National Survey of Children's Health, Data Resource Center on Child and Adolescent Health. Available online at: www.nschdata.org.

Lead Testing: N.C. Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, special data request in November 2005.

Immunization: Immunization Branch, DHHS, special data request in November 2005.

Infant Deaths: N.C. Center for Health Statistics. "Infant Mortality Statistics." Available online at: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/data/vitalstats.cfm>.

No Health Insurance:

State-Level Data Tables: U.S. Census Bureau. Historical Health Insurance Tables, Table HI-5. "Health Insurance Coverage Status and Type of Coverage by State—Children Under 18: 1987 to 2004." Available online at: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hlthins/historic/hihistt5.html>.

County-Level Data Tables: SAHIE, "Experimental Small Area Health Insurance Estimates by County, 2000." Available online at: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/sahie/index.html>.

N.C. Health Choice: N.C. Division of Medical Assistance. "North Carolina Eligibility Information - Authorized Eligibles by County, Health Choice," December, 2000 and 2004. Available online at: <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dma/elig/elig.html>.

Children Whose Overall Health is Good, Who Had Preventive Visits and Who Have a Regular Doctor/Nurse: Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (2005). National Survey of Children's Health, Data Resource Center on Child and Adolescent Health.

Overweight Children, 2004 NC-NPASS Data. "Prevalence of Overweight, At-Risk for Overweight, and Underweight in Children, By County, 2004." Available online at: <http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/>.

Child, Teen, Motor Vehicle and Firearm Deaths: N.C. Division Public Health - Women's and Children's Health Section and the State Center for Health Statistics. 2001 and 2004 "Child Deaths in North Carolina." Available online at: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/data/vitalstats.cfm>.

Adolescent Exercise, Depression and Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use: 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, North Carolina High School Survey, detailed tables. Available online at: <http://www.nchealthyschools.org/data/>.

Teen Births: State Center for Health Statistics, special data request October 2005.

Overweight: North Carolina-Nutrition and Physical Activity Surveillance System (NC-NPASS), Data available online at: <http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com>.

Economic (In)Security

Unemployment: N.C. Employment Security Commission. Years 2001 and 2004 "Civilian Labor Force Estimates for North Carolina." Available online at: <http://eslmi40.esc.state.nc.us/ThematicLAUS/clfasp/CLFAASY.asp>.

Median Family Income: American Communities Survey. Multi-year Profile, "North Carolina, Selected Economic Characteristics." Available online at: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>.

Children in Working Poor Families: N.C. Budget and Tax Center, special data request December 2005.

Children in Poverty:

State-Level Data Table: KIDS COUNT state level data online. Available online at: <http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/index.jsp>.

County-Level Data Table: Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE). "Estimates for North Carolina Counties 2003, age 0-17 in poverty." Available online at: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/>.

School Lunch, School Lunch Enrollment and Average Daily Membership: N.C. Department of Public Instruction, Claims Department, special data request October 2005.

Food Stamps and Work First: N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, Performance Reporting and Automation. Special data request September 2005.

Children in Households Where Someone Receives SSI: Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2005 KIDS COUNT Data Book. Available online at: <http://www.aecf.org/>.

Early Care and Education

Regulated and Subsidized Child Care: N.C. DHHS, N.C. Division of Child Development, Child Care Study, special data request January 2006.

End-of-Grade Testing: N.C. Department of Public Instruction, Division of Accountability Services, special data request October 2005.

Four-Year Completion Rate: North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile, 2005. Available online at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/stats/>.

Suspensions: N.C. Department of Public Instruction. 2005. "Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions: 2003-04." Available online at: www.ncpublicschools.org.

SATs: N.C. Department of Public Instruction. For years 2001 and 2005, "The North Carolina SAT Report." August 2005. Available online at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/sat/>.

Per Pupil Expenditure and School Size: N.C. Department of Public Instruction's online tool: ESAS- Education Statistics Access System. Table: "Per Pupil and Current Expenditures, FY1980 to Most Recent FY." Available online at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/reportstats.html>.

Child Maltreatment

All data except Child Abuse Homicides: N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, special data requests October 2005 and January 2006. Selected data available online at: <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/stats/cw.htm>.

Child Abuse Homicides: Information was obtained from the North Carolina Child Fatality Prevention Team (Office of the Chief Medical Examiner) for this report. However, the analysis, conclusions, opinions and statements expressed by the author and the agency that funded this report are not necessarily those of the CFPT or OCME.

Juvenile Justice

N.C. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Special data request January 2006.

Demographics

Population: N.C. State Demographics. Certified County/State Population Estimates, "County Total Age Groups-Children." Available online at: <http://demog.state.nc.us/>.

Race and Ethnicity: Original data analysis using data from the Population Estimates Program, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau. North Carolina state file, "County Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2004." Available online at: <http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/asrh/>.

Positive Indicators

All data come from the following sources as noted in the tables.

Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (2005). National Survey of Children's Health, Data Resource Center on Child and Adolescent Health. Available online at: <http://www.nschdata.org>.

North Carolina Civic Education Consortium (2003). North Carolina Youth Civic Index Survey. Available online at: <http://www.civics.unc.edu/index.html>.

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Available online at: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.



Endnotes

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- ³ National Education Goals Panel *Special Early Childhood Report, 1997*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997. Available online at: <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/negp/Reports/spcl.pdf>.
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Action for Children North Carolina KIDS COUNT/2006 North Carolina Children's Index Staff

Elizabeth Hudgins
Senior Director of Policy and Research

Berkeley Yorkery
Research and Data Analyst

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Council chair: Sorien K. Schmidt, J.D. (N.C. Justice Center)

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