



oklahoma's economic clusters & state benchmark indicators oklahoma's economic clusters & state benchmark indicators oklahoma's economic clusters & state benchmark indicators oklahoma's economic clusters & state benchmark indicators

In spite of the annual changes, these five clusters continue to illustrate the diverse economic environments in which Oklahoma children live. Oklahoma's wealthiest counties remain primarily concentrated in the northwestern part of Oklahoma, with a few adjacent to the state's two largest urban counties (Oklahoma and Tulsa). The poorest counties remain primarily concentrated in the southeastern corner, with substantial numbers found in the southwest and the northeast.

As in the past, this year's profiles of the five clusters repeat clear patterns in Oklahoma's economic landscape. Almost

twice the number of children live in poverty in Oklahoma's 32 poorest counties than do in the state's 18 wealthiest counties. Children in Oklahoma's poorest counties are twice as likely to be on welfare. Incomes are the lowest, unemployment rates are the highest and economic distress is entrenched in these poorest, mostly rural Oklahoma counties.

The cluster of Oklahoma's 18 wealthiest counties has the best indicators for eight of the twelve benchmark areas investigated by Oklahoma KIDS COUNT: infants born under 3 pounds and five ounces, infants born under five and one-half pounds, births to young teens, births to older teens, births

to all teens, high school dropouts, juvenile violent crime arrests and teen death rates. This group of wealthy counties also ties for the best rate of infant mortality. These 18 wealthiest Oklahoma counties also have the best CHILDHOOD STRESS Index, measuring the type of adverse childhood experiences in those counties which typically lead to childhood mental illness and substance abuse.

With a rate more than twice as high as most other clusters, the second most economically advantaged cluster (wealthier counties) has the worst rate of juvenile violent crime arrests.

	All Counties	Cluster 1 Wealthiest Counties
Total Population (2005)	3,547,884	719,420 (20.3%)
Child Population (2005)	853,336	160,645 (18.8%)
Number of Counties	77 (100.0%)	18 (23.4%)
Percent of Child Population Residing in Metropolitan Counties	64.8%	66.7%
Percent of Child Population Residing in Mid-Size Counties	14.0%	22.8%
Percent of Child Population Residing in Rural Counties	21.2%	10.5%
Number and Percent of Children Living in Poverty (2004)	171,495 (20.2%)	23,159 (14.4%)
Average of County Per Capita Incomes (2003-2005)	\$24,892	\$26,624
Average Monthly Number and Percent of Children Receiving TANF (FY2004-FY2006)	23,842 (2.8%)	2,472 (1.5%)
Average of County Unemployment Rates (2003-2005)	4.5	3.5
Average Annual Percent of Low Birthweight Babies, less than 5 1/2 lbs (2003-2005)	7.9%	7.0%
Average Annual Percent of Very Low Birthweight Babies, less than 3 lbs, 5 oz (2003-2005)	1.3%	1.0%
Average Annual Rate of Births to Young Teen Girls ages 15 through 17 (2003-2005)	28.8 per 1,000 young teen girls	17.4 per 1,000 young teen girls
Average Annual Rate of Births to Older Teens ages 18 through 19 (2003-2005)	92.8 per 1,000 older teen girls	53.0 per 1,000 older teen girls
Average Annual Rate of Births to Teens ages 15 through 19 (2003-2005)	55.2 per 1,000 teen girls	33.8 per 1,000 teen girls
Average Annual Rate of Child Abuse/Neglect Confirmations (FY2004-FY2006)	15.3 per 1,000 children	12.9 per 1,000 children
Average Annual High School Dropout Rate (School years 2003/2004 through 2005/2006)	3.4%	2.6%
Average Annual Violent Crime Arrest Rate of Youth ages 10 through 17 (2003-2005)	200.3 per 100,000 youth	97.4 per 100,000 youth
Average Annual Rate of Infant Mortality (2003-2005)	7.9 per 1,000 births	7.1 per 1,000 births
Average Annual Death Rate among Children ages 1 through 14 (2003-2005)	27.6 per 100,000 children	27.4 per 100,000 children
Average Annual Death Rate among Teens ages 15 through 19 (2003-2005)	85.4 per 100,000 teens	68.4 per 100,000 teens
Average Annual Death Rate among Children & Teens ages 1 through 19 (2003-2005)	43.6 per 100,000 youth	40.1 per 100,000 youth
Average of County CHILDHOOD STRESS Indexes	307	227

The cluster of Oklahoma's 32 poorest counties has the worst indicators for four of the twelve benchmark areas investigated by Oklahoma KIDS COUNT: older teen birth rates, child death rates, teen death rates and death rates for children & teens. This cluster of poorest counties also ties with one other cluster for having the worst child abuse and neglect confirmation rate in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma's 2 poorer counties have the worst rates on six indicators: low birthweight babies, very low birthweight babies, births to young teens, births to all teens, high school dropout rates and infant mortality; and score the very worst on Oklahoma's CHILDHOOD STRESS Index, measuring the type of adverse childhood experiences in those counties which typically lead to childhood mental illness and substance abuse.



Cluster 2 Wealthier Counties	Cluster 3 Middle Counties	Cluster 4 Poorer Counties	Cluster 5 Poorest Counties
702,481 (19.8%)	648,144 (18.3%)	723,689 (20.4%)	754,150 (21.3%)
177,865 (20.8%)	156,052 (18.3%)	180,294 (21.1%)	178,480 (20.9%)
7 (9.1%)	18 (23.4%)	2 (2.6%)	32 (41.6%)
90.6%	52.2%	95.2%	17.9%
4.2%	20.8%	0.0%	23.8%
5.2%	27.0%	4.8%	58.3%
31,519 (17.8%)	31,970 (20.6%)	39,476 (22.0%)	45,371 (25.7%)
\$25,741	\$23,751	\$28,803	\$21,007
3,913 (2.2%)	3,101 (2.0%)	9,080 (5.0%)	5,276 (3.0%)
4.1	4.9	4.8	6.2
8.0%	8.1%	8.5%	7.7%
1.3%	1.2%	1.5%	1.3%
28.9 per 1,000 young teen girls	26.4 per 1,000 young teen girls	38.0 per 1,000 young teen girls	33.0 per 1,000 young teen girls
99.3 per 1,000 older teen girls	101.7 per 1,000 older teen girls	108.3 per 1,000 older teen girls	112.3 per 1,000 older teen girls
56.3 per 1,000 teen girls	56.3 per 1,000 teen girls	66.7 per 1,000 teen girls	64.8 per 1,000 teen girls
10.0 per 1,000 children	17.3 per 1,000 children	18.1 per 1,000 children	18.1 per 1,000 children
4.1%	3.4%	4.4%	4.2%
355.7 per 100,000 youth	176.0 per 100,000 youth	204.2 per 100,000 youth	167.7 per 100,000 youth
7.4 per 1,000 births	7.1 per 1,000 births	9.6 per 1,000 births	7.8 per 1,000 births
24.1 per 100,000 children	25.8 per 100,000 children	25.1 per 100,000 children	35.3 per 100,000 children
91.7 per 100,000 teens	90.2 per 100,000 teens	76.0 per 100,000 teens	100.4 per 100,000 teens
41.3 per 100,000 youth	44.1 per 100,000 youth	38.0 per 100,000 youth	53.9 per 100,000 youth
286	308	371	352

Low Birthweight Infants



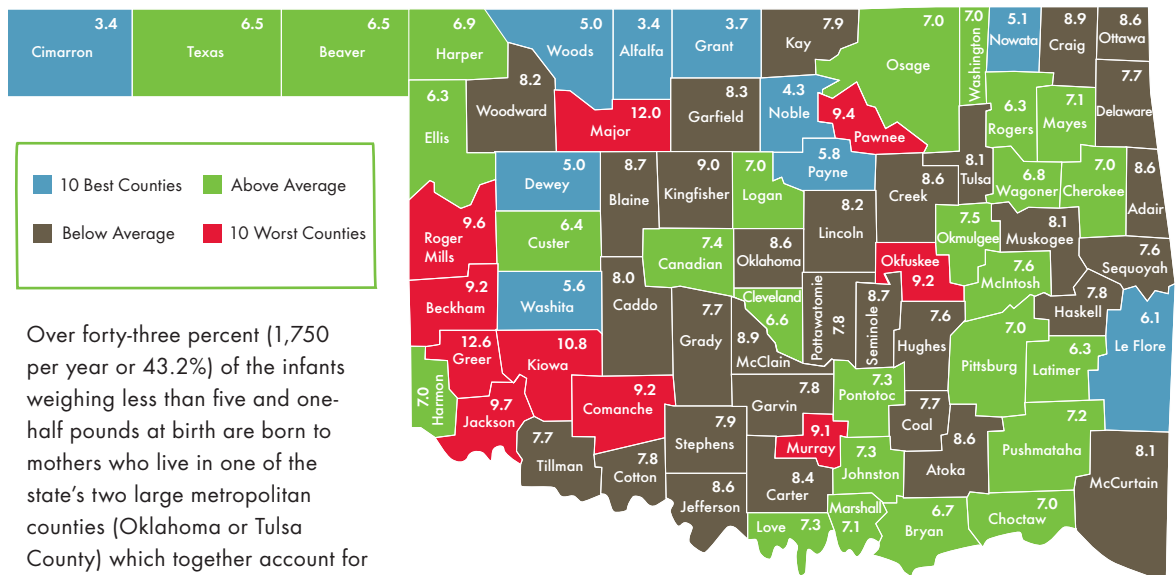
Low birthweight predicts later difficulties for Oklahoma babies. Most of the infants who die each year are born too small. Of those who live, one in four will experience serious health and/or developmental problems. As they grow, depression, anxiety, hyperactivity and aggression often create unmanageable social difficulties.

Each year more than four thousand Oklahoma babies (4,052 average annual, 2003-2005) are born too small (weighing less than 5 ½ pounds). The lower the birthweight, the greater the harm. One in six of Oklahoma's low birthweight infants (665 average annual, 2003-2005) is born very, very tiny (weighing less than 3 pounds, 5 ounces).

The proportion of Oklahoma babies born too small remains unimproved (7.9% of all births, 2003-2005) when compared to the three year period just one year earlier (7.9% of all births, 2002-2004). Comparable rates stay the same or worsen in most (43 of 77) Oklahoma counties.

The trend of babies born too small has continued for years. A higher proportion of Oklahoma babies (7.9% of all births) are born too small (weighing less than 5 ½ pounds) today as compared to those born in the mid-1990's (7.1% of all births), with such rates worsening in the majority of Oklahoma's counties (56 of 77). Currently, the highest and worst low birthweight rate (12.6% of all births to mothers living in the county) is found in Greer County; the lowest and best (3.4% of all births to mothers living in the county) is in Alfalfa County.

Three-Year Percent of Infants Born Weighing Less than 5½ pounds, Oklahoma and Counties, 2003–2005



Over forty-three percent (1,750 per year or 43.2%) of the infants weighing less than five and one-half pounds at birth are born to mothers who live in one of the state's two large metropolitan counties (Oklahoma or Tulsa County) which together account for almost forty-one percent (40.6%) of Oklahoma's births.

The current rate (1.3% of all births, 2003-2005) of births for Oklahoma's smallest infants (weighing less than 3 pounds, 5 ounces) worsens as compared to the mid-1990's (1.2% of all births). Comparable rates stay the same or worsen in most (46 of 77) Oklahoma counties. Currently, the highest and worst very low birthweight rate (3.5% of all births to mothers living in the county) is found in Harmon County; the lowest and best (0.0% of all births to mothers living in the county) is in five Oklahoma counties (Alfalfa, Cimarron, Grant, Ellis and Woods).

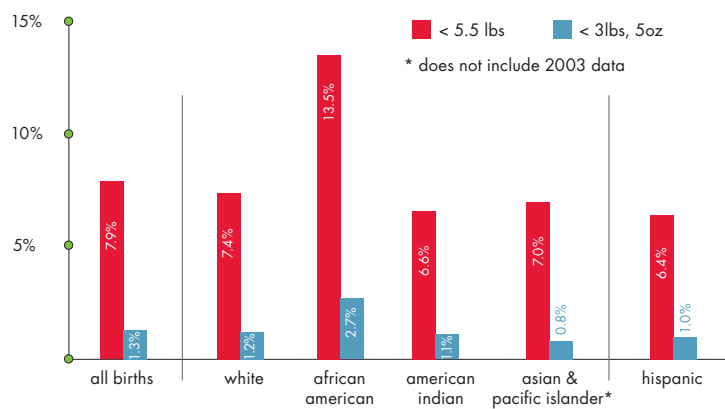
The rate of African American babies born too small (13.5% under 5 ½ pounds; 2.7% under 3 pounds, 5 ounces) is double the rate for White infants (7.4% under 5 ½ pounds; 1.2% under 3 pounds, 5 ounces). By race, the best low birthweight rate is recorded for American Indian infants (6.6% under 5 ½ pounds) and the best very low birthweight rate is for Asians and Pacific Islanders (0.8% under 3 pounds, 5 ounces). Low birthweight rates for Hispanic mothers, who may be of any race, are relatively good (6.4% under 5 ½ pounds; 1.0% under 3 pounds, 5 ounces).

While early prenatal care is known to improve these rates, well over one-third (37.5%, 2003-2005) of Oklahoma's babies are born to mothers who failed to receive the recommended level of prenatal care.

Births to Teens

Young mothers and their children face bleak futures. Each young mother is more likely to be poor, to be a victim of physical violence, to have been the victim of non-consensual sex before reaching her teen years, to have another child before reaching adulthood, to drop out of school, to have unsteady employment, to be on public assistance at some point in her life, to be less skilled, and to experience marital instability compared to peers who delay childbearing until age twenty or later. Each infant born to a teenager is more likely than other babies to be born too small, to die before his first birthday, and to face a future of living in poverty with an unstable family.

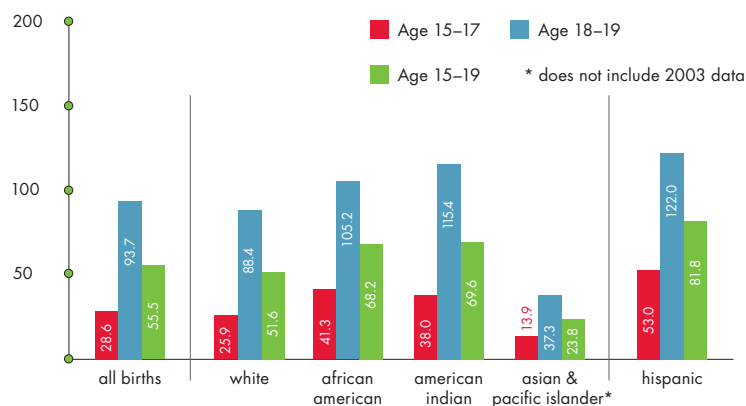
Low Birthweight Babies Three-year Percent by Weight by Race and Ethnicity Oklahoma, 2003-2005



Ranking near the middle of all the states, Oklahoma's rate of low birthweight infants remains average relative to other parts of the country. Oklahoma is ranked 22nd among the fifty states during the most recent year (2004) compared.

Births to Teens Age 15-17; 18-19; 15-19

Rate per 1000 Teens in Age Group, Oklahoma, by Race, 2003-2005



Almost seven thousand (6,971 average annual, 2003-2005) babies are born annually to Oklahoma teen mothers (under the age of 20). Each year just over forty-seven hundred (4,740 average annual, 2003-2005) of those babies are born to teen mothers ages 18 and 19. The rest of the babies, over twenty-two hundred (2,254 average annual, 2003-2005), are born to Oklahoma school-age girls (age 17 and under). One hundred sixty (160 average annual, 2003-2005) of those school-age girls are age fourteen or younger. For the latest year recorded (2004), three of Oklahoma's new mothers were age twelve or younger.

The rate of births to Oklahoma teens continues to decline (28.8 births per 1,000 girls ages 15 through 17; 92.8 births per 1,000 girls ages 18 and 19; 2003-2005) when compared to the three-year period one year earlier (29.4 births per 1,000 girls ages 15 through 17; 94.5 births per 1,000 girls ages 18 and 19; 2002-2004). During this recent year birth rates for both age groups show some improvement in a majority of Oklahoma's counties (45 of 77 for girls ages 15 through 17; 41 of 77 for older teens ages 18 and 19).

The progress made in decreasing the high Oklahoma birth rate to young teens of the mid-1990's (from 38.1 to 28.8 births per 1,000 girls ages 15 through 17; from 103.1 to 92.8 births per 1,000 teens

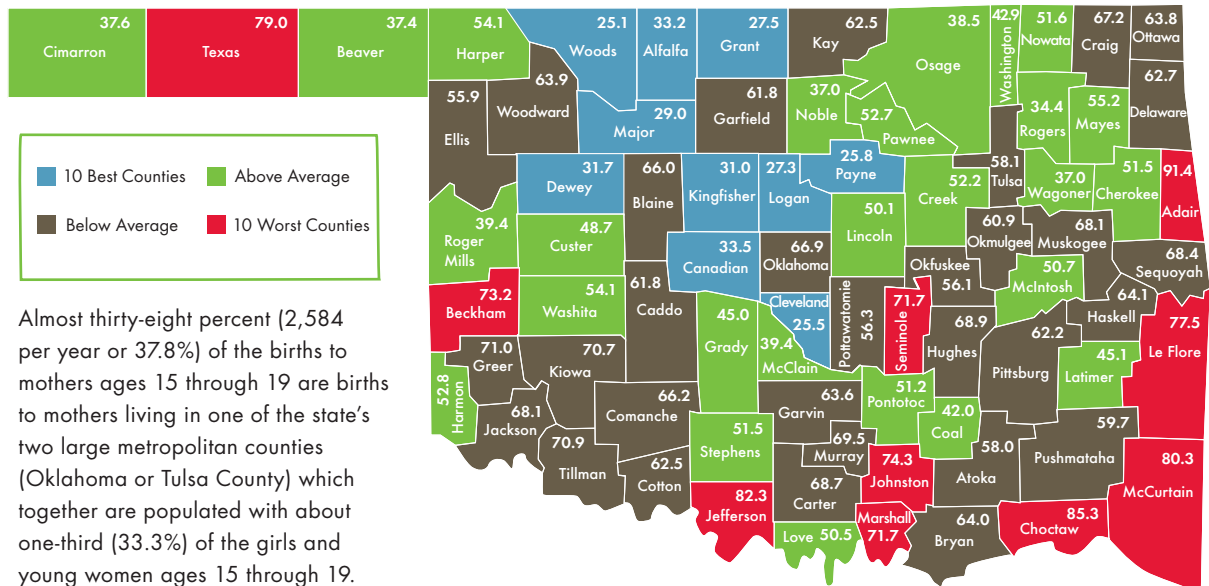
ages 18 and 19) is also evident at the county level where rates for both ages improve in most Oklahoma counties (64 of 77 for girls ages 15 through 17; 60 of 77 for older teens ages 18 and 19). Currently, the highest and worst rate for girls ages 15 through 17 (58.1 births per 1,000) is found in Greer County; the lowest and best (8.2 births per 1,000) is in Woods County.

The highest and worst rate for older teens ages 18 and 19 (170.8 births per 1,000) is found in Adair County; the lowest and best (26.3 births per 1,000) is in Payne County.

The rate of teen births among African Americans (41.3 per 1000 young teens age 15 through 17; 105.2 per 1000 older teens age 18 and 19) and American Indians (38.0 per 1000 young teens age 15 through 17; 115.4 per 1000 older teens age 18 and 19) is substantially higher than for White teens (25.9 per 1000 young teens age 15 through 17; 88.4 per 1000 older teens age 18 and 19). The young teen birth rate (53.0 per 1000) for Hispanic youth, who may be of any race, is double that for White youth (25.9 per 1000).

Oklahoma's teen childbearing rate was substantially above other states in 1980, but by the late 1990's, the gap had narrowed. Even so, with births to teens ages 15 through 19 ranked at forty-four, Oklahoma remains among the worst ten states in the nation during the most recent year (2004) compared.

Three-Year Rate of Births per 1,000 Female Teens, Ages 15-19 Oklahoma and Counties, 2003-2005



Almost thirty-eight percent (2,584 per year or 37.8%) of the births to mothers ages 15 through 19 are births to mothers living in one of the state's two large metropolitan counties (Oklahoma or Tulsa County) which together are populated with about one-third (33.3%) of the girls and young women ages 15 through 19.





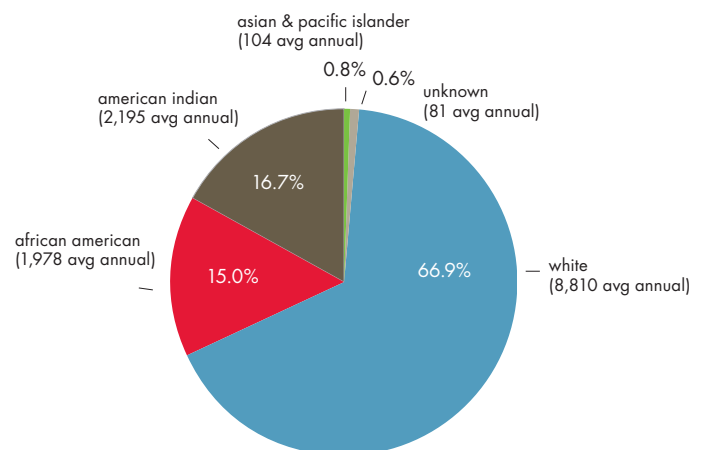
Child Abuse and Neglect

The cycle of child abuse and neglect threatens Oklahoma’s future generations. Most are victims of neglect. Physical abuse is common, with the smallest proportion of victims being sexually abused. Half of all young victims suffer delay in their development or serious physical or emotional impairments. Attachment disorders are common. School performance suffers. Poor children, low birthweight infants, infants born premature, and children with disabilities, chronic illness or developmental delay are at high risk for abuse from their caregivers. When victims of child abuse and neglect reach adulthood, they are more likely to become ill and die prematurely. The cycle continues. Today’s victims often become tomorrow’s abusers.

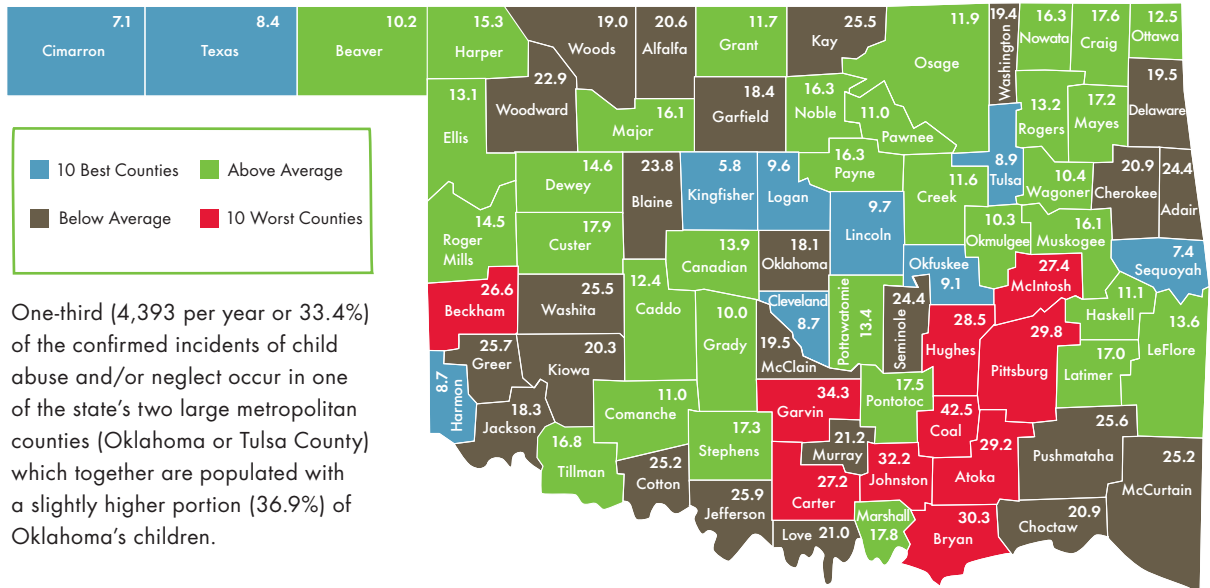
The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) investigates or assesses almost sixty-two thousand (61,935 average annual, Fiscal Year 2004 - Fiscal Year 2006) incidents each year which contain allegations of serious or immediate threats to a child’s safety. On average, OKDHS substantiates that over thirteen thousand (13,167) of those incidents are abuse and/or neglect.

Child Abuse & Neglect Confirmations

by Race of Child
Oklahoma, FY2004–FY2006



Three-Year Rate of Child Abuse & Neglect Confirmations per 1,000 Children, Oklahoma and Counties, FY2004–FY2006



One-third (4,393 per year or 33.4%) of the confirmed incidents of child abuse and/or neglect occur in one of the state's two large metropolitan counties (Oklahoma or Tulsa County) which together are populated with a slightly higher portion (36.9%) of Oklahoma's children.

The perpetrators of this substantiated abuse and neglect are the child's own caregivers — parents, grandparents, other relatives, child care providers, live-in friends of their parent, and others. Neglect constitutes most (82.4%) of the Fiscal Year 2004 - Fiscal Year 2006 confirmations. One in eight (12.6%) is physically abused and one in twenty (5.0%) is sexually abused by their caregiver.

Recent (Fiscal Year 2004 - Fiscal Year 2006) rates of confirmed child abuse and/or neglect in Oklahoma increase when compared to the three-year period just one year earlier (Fiscal Year 2003 - Fiscal Year 2005). Oklahoma abuse and neglect rates move from 14.7 to 15.3 confirmations per 1,000 children in the state. Comparable rates

also worsen in most Oklahoma counties (46 of 77).

Current child abuse and neglect rates (15.3 confirmations per 1,000 children) are substantially above those recorded in the mid-1990's (14.3 confirmations per 1,000 children, Fiscal Year 1995 - Fiscal Year 1997). Oklahoma rates are inching back toward the record high rate of child abuse and/or neglect posted in Oklahoma during the late 1990's (17.8 confirmations per 1,000 children, Fiscal Year 1998 - Fiscal Year 2000). Rates worsen in most (49 of 77) Oklahoma counties from those of the mid-1990's. Currently, the highest and worst proportion of children confirmed to be victims of child abuse and/or neglect (42.5 per 1,000) is found in Coal County;

the lowest and best (5.8 per 1,000) is in Kingfisher County.

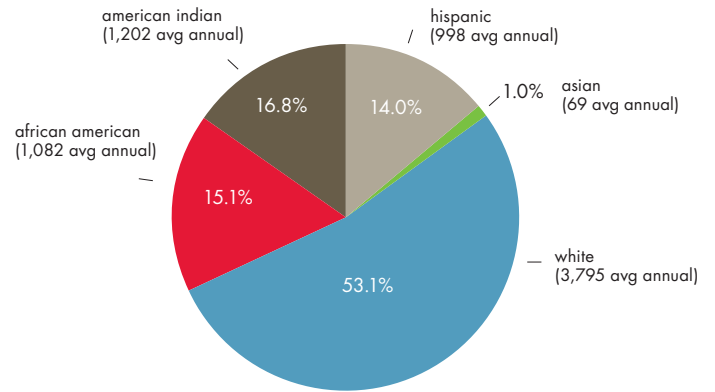
Child abuse deaths recorded by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) reached an all time high of 51 two years ago (FY2004) and fell to 40 last year (FY2005). Newer OKDHS information detailing deaths resulting from child abuse is not yet available.

Two-thirds (66.9%) of the Fiscal Year 2004 - Fiscal Year 2006 confirmations of abuse and/or neglect in Oklahoma involve children who are White. However, while non-White children comprise only one-fourth (24.5%, 2004) of the child population, they account for one-third (32.5%, excluding those whose race is not known) of the confirmed child abuse and/or neglect incidents.



Students Quitting School Without Graduating

All Ages, by Race
Oklahoma, 2003/2004 & 2005/2006



High School Dropouts

Lack of education threatens current and future generations of Oklahoma children and youth. Completing high school alone is inadequate preparation in today's economy. Youth not completing high school face a lifetime of problems, often including poverty, little employment opportunity, poor earning ability, and criminal involvement. Unemployment rates for adult workers are twice as high for dropouts than for graduates. The majority of Oklahoma inmates are high school dropouts. Children of high school dropouts are at a higher risk of quitting school themselves.

On average, one of every four (25.0%) students in Oklahoma starting high school as a freshman disappears from the roster prior to graduation. Some transfer out of state, switch to private schools, become incarcerated or even die, and others change districts. Dropouts comprise the large majority of Oklahoma students lost over a four-year period. The four-year high school dropout rate for Oklahoma is estimated to be 14.1% for the class of 2006. Even while the single-year student dropout rate reported here has declined over the past several years, the four-year high-school dropout rate has remained relatively constant.

Over seven thousand (7,146 average annual, School Year 2003/2004 through School Year 2005/2006) young Oklahomans quit school without graduating each year. Just under six thousand (5,899) of those are under age 19 and quit during high school in a single year.

Oklahoma's single year high school dropout rate averages 3.4% during the most recent three-year period (School Year 2003/2004 through School Year 2005/2006). Currently, the

highest and worst rate of children leaving high school each year without graduating (6.3%) is found in Kay County; the lowest and best (0.4%) is in Cimarron County.

Recent (School Year 2003/2004 through School Year 2005/2006) high school dropout rates in Oklahoma fall slightly when compared to the three-year period just one year earlier (School Year 2002/2003 through School Year 2004/2005). High school dropout rates move from 3.5% to 3.4% in the state, with comparable rates during the same period also improving in just over half of Oklahoma's counties (39 of 77).

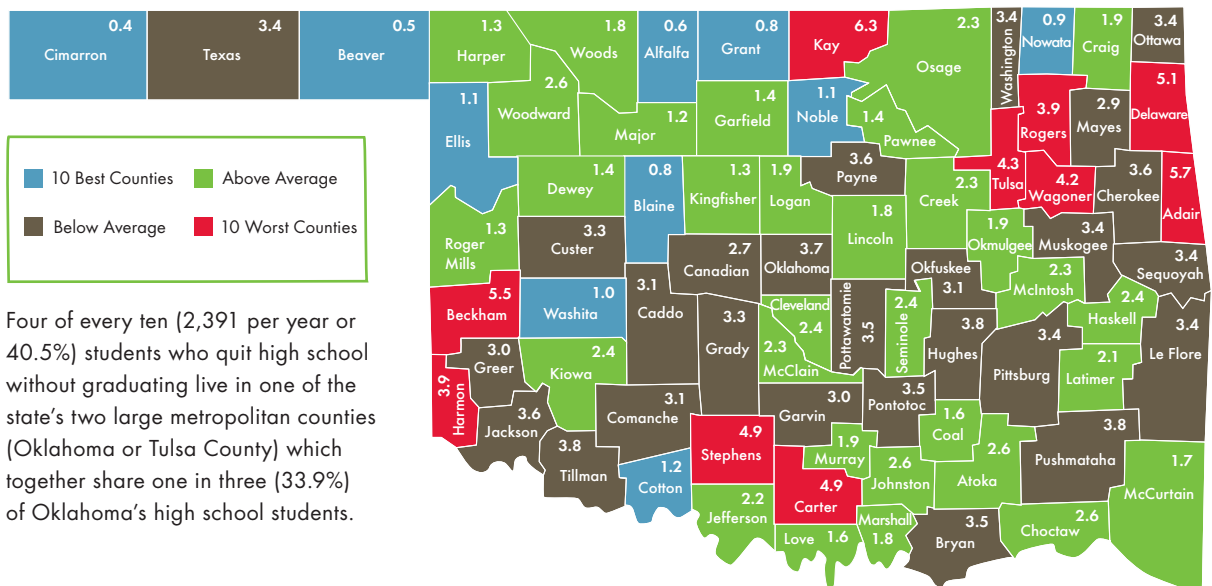
The proportion of high school dropouts who are girls (45.6%) and the proportion who are boys (54.4%) changes little from year to year (School Year 2003/2004 through School Year 2005/2006). Seventeen remains the most common age an Oklahoma dropout leaves high school. While the largest proportion (23.9%, School Year 2003/2004 through School Year 2005/2006) of

students leave school during the tenth grade, almost the same rate (23.8%, School Year 2003/2004 through School Year 2005/2006) drop out during the eleventh grade.

During the most recent three-year period (School Year 2003/2004 through School Year 2005/2006) more than half (3,795 per year or 53.1%) of all children failing to finish high school are White. However, while African American children comprise just under eleven percent (10.9%, 2004) of the child population, they account for a much higher proportion (15.1%) of the high school dropouts. Similarly, American Indian children make up just under twelve percent (11.9%, 2004) of Oklahoma's child population and almost seventeen percent (16.8%) of Oklahoma's dropouts.

During the most recent year for which comparison data is available (2005), Oklahoma ranks near the bottom (47th) in the percent of teens who are high school dropouts (10.0% of those ages 16 through 19).

Three-Year Rate of Youth Under Age 19 Dropping Out of High School, School Year 2003/2004 through School Year 2005/2006



Four of every ten (2,391 per year or 40.5%) students who quit high school without graduating live in one of the state's two large metropolitan counties (Oklahoma or Tulsa County) which together share one in three (33.9%) of Oklahoma's high school students.





Juvenile Violent Crime Arrests

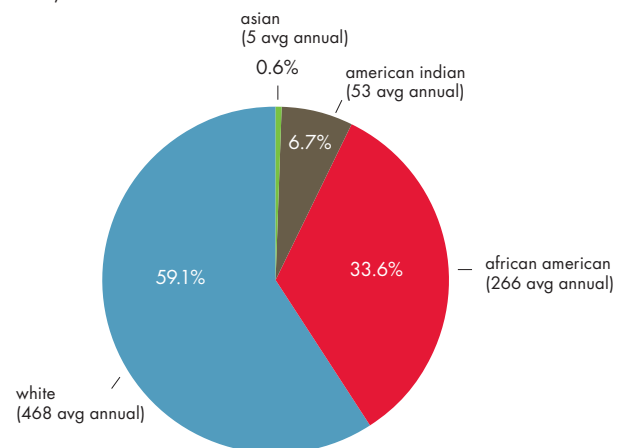
Youth engaging in murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault place themselves and their communities at risk. Children at higher risk for involvement in violence and crime include boys born to teen mothers, children from families whose parents never completed high school and young people doing poorly in school. Victims of child abuse and neglect are more likely than others to later be arrested for delinquent behavior, crimes of violence or prostitution. A young poor child is more likely than a non-poor one to be a current victim and a later perpetrator of violent crime.

Each year more than twenty-one thousand (21,435 in 2005) criminal arrests involve juveniles. Oklahoma children and youth account for one of every seven arrests (13.7% of arrests for any crime).

Almost eight hundred (782 average annual, 2003-2005) Oklahoma youths from the ages of 10 through 17 are arrested each year for committing a violent crime. On average, twelve are arrested for murder, two for manslaughter, 46 for forcible rape, 112 for robbery and 610 for aggravated assault. Four of every five (79.5%, 2003-2005) youth arrested for violent crimes in Oklahoma are male.

Juvenile Violent Crime Arrests Under Age 18

by Race & Ethnicity
Oklahoma, 2003-2005



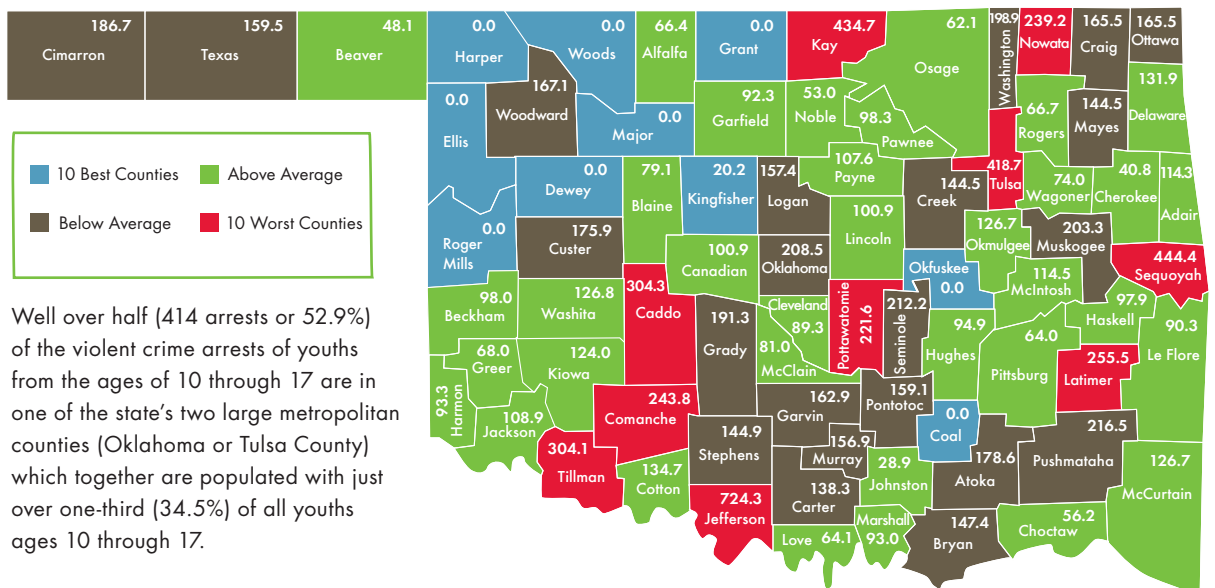
Hispanic juveniles may be of any race and with an average of 52 arrests annually comprise 6.6% of all 2003-2005 Oklahoma juvenile arrests for violent crimes.

The recent (2003-2005) proportion of Oklahoma youths from the ages of 10 through 17 arrested for violent crimes decreases when compared to the three-year period just one year earlier (2002-2004). Oklahoma violent crime arrest rates for this age group move from 218.3 to 200.3 per 100,000 youth, with comparable rates staying the same or improving in a large majority of Oklahoma's counties (49 of 77).

The proportion of Oklahoma youths arrested for violent crimes continues to improve from the record highs recorded during the 1990s. The most recent juvenile violent crime arrest rate (200.3 arrests per 100,000 youth age 10-17, 2003-2005) is substantially improved over that of the comparison three-year period (363.3 arrests per 100,000 youth age 10-17, 1994-1996). Comparable rates improve or remain the same in a substantial majority of Oklahoma counties (58 of 77). Currently, the highest and worst rate of youths from the ages of 10 through 17 (724.3 arrests per 100,000 youth) arrested for violent crimes is found in Jefferson County. The lowest and best rate (0.0 arrests per 100,000 youth) is in nine Oklahoma counties (Coal, Dewey, Ellis, Grant, Harper, Major, Okfuskee, Roger Mills and Woods).

While non-White children comprise only one-fourth (24.5%, 2005) of the child population, they account for a substantially higher proportion (40.9%) of the violent crime arrests of children under age 18 (2003-2005).

Three-Year Rate of Violent Crime Arrests per 100,000 Youth Ages 10-17 (2003-2005)





Infant Mortality

Disease, poverty, abuse, neglect, injuries or infections can cause infant death. Higher rates occur in distressed communities. Reflecting the effectiveness of educational, economic, social and health care measures, the infant mortality rate is an indicator of a community's overall quality of life.

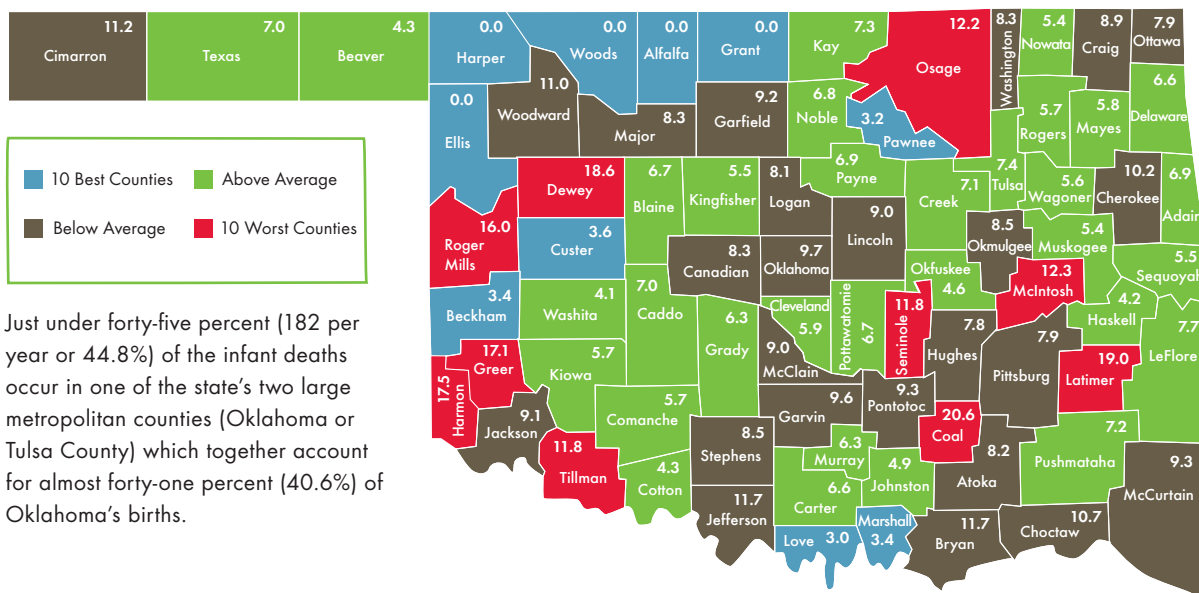
Each year just over four hundred babies born in Oklahoma (406 average annual, 2003-2005) do not live to see their first birthday. Causes vary widely. Babies die from birth complications, birth defects, health problems, living conditions, injuries, inadequate care, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, and more.

The current (2003-2005) rate of Oklahoma infants who die this young does not improve when compared to the three-year period just one year earlier (2002-2004). Oklahoma infant death rates remain flat at 7.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, with comparable rates worsening or staying the same in about half (38 or 77) of Oklahoma's counties.

Over time, however, infant death rates decline. Today, proportionately fewer Oklahoma babies (7.9 per 1,000 live births, 2003-2005) die in their first year of life than did in the mid-1990s (8.4 per 1,000 live births, 1994-1996), with rates improving or staying the same in the majority of Oklahoma's counties (42 of 77). Currently, the highest and worst infant death rate (20.6 per 1,000 live births) is found in Coal County; the lowest and best (0.0 per 1,000 live births) is found in five Oklahoma counties (Alfalfa, Ellis, Grant, Harper and Woods).

Infant death rates improve over time for all races. However, the most recent death rate for African American infants (15.7 per 1,000 African American births, 2003-2005) remains twice

Three-Year Rate of Deaths per 1,000 Live Births (2003–2005)



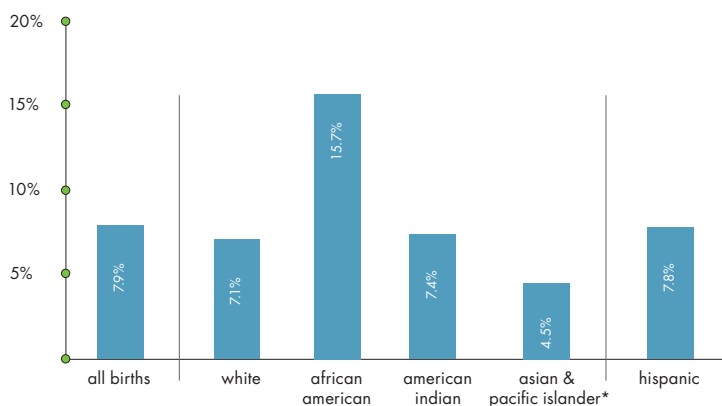
Just under forty-five percent (182 per year or 44.8%) of the infant deaths occur in one of the state's two large metropolitan counties (Oklahoma or Tulsa County) which together account for almost forty-one percent (40.6%) of Oklahoma's births.

as high as the comparable rates for both White and American Indian infants (7.9 per 1,000 White births and 7.8 per 1,000 American Indian births). The lowest infant death rate is found among Asian and Pacific Islander infants (4.5 per 1,000 Asian and Pacific Islander births).

Ranking in the bottom half of all the states, Oklahoma's rate of infant death is only fair relative to other parts of the country. Oklahoma's rank among the fifty states is 37th during the most recent year (2004) in which states were compared.

Infant Deaths

Rate per 1000 Births, by Race & Ethnicity Oklahoma, 2003–2005



Child and Teen Death

Disturbing trends continue. The leading causes of death for children and teens are changing from natural causes, such as illness and birth defects, to preventable causes, including injury and violence. Children increasingly imitate the violence they observe on television. Poor children are three times more likely to die during their childhood than non-poor children.

Four hundred children and youth die each year (401 average annual ages 1 through 19, 2003-2005). Half are children (45.6% or 183 ages 1 through 14); half are teenagers (54.1% or 217 teens ages 15 through 19).

Reversing the usual annual improvement, current (2003-2005) child and teen death rates worsen when compared to the three-year period (2002-2004) one year earlier (worsening from 26.2 to 27.6 per 100,000 children ages 1 through 14; from 81.0 to 85.4 per 100,000 teens ages 15 through 19; from 41.4 to 43.6 per 100,000 youth ages 1 through 19). Comparable death rates also worsen in most Oklahoma



Deaths Among Children & Teens

Percent, Ages 1-19 by Cause, by Race & Ethnicity Oklahoma 2003-2005

