

CHILD DEATHS

Definition

Child deaths is the number of deaths among children ages 1-14 and the rate per 100,000 children.

Data in context

The loss of a child is a tragedy for the family and also the community in which they live. The child death rate is the most powerful measure of child well-being, capturing how well the community protects children from risks they face and addresses their health needs.

In 2006, Kentucky ranked 26th among the 50 states on child deaths, and Kentucky's rate of child deaths at 21 per 100,000 was the lowest in more than a decade.¹

Unintentional injuries, specifically motor vehicle crashes, are the leading cause of death among children ages 1-14.² Motor vehicle crashes account for a greater portion of child deaths in Kentucky than nationally.³ The Kentucky General Assembly took action to reduce those deaths with passage of a booster seat law in 2008 and passage of laws in 2006 to strengthen the seat belt law and require children to wear helmets when riding on all-terrain vehicles. Communities can reduce injuries by providing education and encouraging enforcement of these laws.

Other leading causes of accidental injury include drowning and fire-related injuries.⁴ Targeted strategies to address these causes of death include requiring fencing around all residential pools, use of flotation devices when boating, adult supervision at lakes and rivers, educating children on water safety, and increasing the use of fire alarms, which greatly decreases fire-related deaths.⁵

Deaths due to child abuse and neglect are clearly preventable, yet a recent report found Kentucky had the highest rate among states of such deaths.⁶ Kentucky can reduce child abuse and neglect deaths by increasing interventions with families who have a history of abuse and through preventative interventions, such as parenting education, respite care for families at risk, and improved training for social workers and health care providers on identifying signs of risk.⁷

Leading health-related deaths in Kentucky among this population include malignant neoplasms and birth defects.⁸ Research increasingly suggests that preventing child deaths requires a broader look at the overall health of a child, including the health of a child's family and the community in which they live.⁹

Between 2005 and 2007, 493 children ages 1-14 lost their lives in Kentucky. Rates of child deaths more than doubled the

Deaths among Children Ages 1-14 by Cause



Source: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Vital Statistics Branch, processed by Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute.

state rate in Adair, Hopkins, Knox, and Nelson Counties. Of counties with rates calculated, rates of child deaths were lowest in Boone, Jefferson, and Warren Counties.

Conditions in communities, such as poor housing quality or a lack of safe play areas, contribute to racial disparities in child deaths.¹⁰ Limited access to information and education on child safety among some populations also increases risks for children.¹¹

Child death rates have decreased for all race/ethnicity groups in Kentucky. During 2005-2007, White children died at a rate of 20 per 100,000; rates were slightly higher among Black children (24 per 100,000) and Hispanic children (23 per 100,000).¹²

Kentucky can reduce deaths among children by ensuring parents and caregivers have the appropriate information on protecting their children from injuries and presenting the information in a culturally-appropriate way.¹³ This includes expanding programs for the prevention of child abuse and neglect in at-risk families, as well as addressing leading causes of unintentional injury.¹⁴

Data Source: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Vital Statistics Branch, processed by Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute. Number of children in 2000 from the U.S. Decennial Census. Number of children in 2006 from Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute.

Data Note: All data refer to totals over the 3-year periods of 1999-2001 and 2005-2007. Data for 2007 is preliminary. Data are reported by youth's county of residence.

Rate Calculation: (average number of deaths among children ages 1-14 between 1999-2001 * 100,000) / (number of children ages 1-14 in 2000) (average number of deaths among children ages 1-14 between 2005-2007 * 100,000) / (number of children ages 1-14 in 2006)

CHILD DEATHS

(number & rate per 100,000 children ages 1-14)

	1999-2001		2005-2007	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Kentucky	536	23	493	21
Adair	2	*	7	77
Allen	2	*	3	*
Anderson	6	49	2	*
Ballard	1	*	1	*
Barren	3	*	6	27
Bath	2	*	2	*
Bell	3	*	2	*
Boone	6	10	7	10
Bourbon	5	*	2	*
Boyd	6	24	2	*
Boyle	4	*	2	*
Bracken	0	*	2	*
Breathitt	8	86	5	*
Breckinridge	1	*	5	*
Bullitt	6	15	5	*
Butler	2	*	2	*
Caldwell	3	*	0	*
Calloway	2	*	5	*
Campbell	4	*	9	19
Carlisle	1	*	0	*
Carroll	3	*	2	*
Carter	4	*	5	*
Casey	3	*	3	*
Christian	20	41	18	30
Clark	4	*	8	42
Clay	3	*	2	*
Clinton	1	*	1	*
Crittenden	2	*	2	*
Cumberland	1	*	0	*
Daviess	16	29	11	21
Edmonson	1	*	1	*
Elliott	1	*	2	*
Estill	1	*	4	*
Fayette	24	18	25	18
Fleming	3	*	3	*
Floyd	8	35	1	*
Franklin	5	*	3	*
Fulton	2	*	0	*
Gallatin	0	*	1	*
Garrard	2	*	4	*
Grant	1	*	5	*
Graves	8	38	8	39
Grayson	5	*	2	*
Green	1	*	3	*
Greenup	4	*	4	*
Hancock	2	*	0	*
Hardin	19	32	12	21
Harlan	7	37	4	*
Harrison	1	*	5	*
Hart	2	*	3	*
Henderson	6	24	4	*
Henry	3	*	1	*
Hickman	1	*	0	*
Hopkins	3	*	12	49
Jackson	2	*	1	*
Jefferson	88	22	60	15
Jessamine	6	25	5	*
Johnson	3	*	1	*
Kenton	12	13	15	16
Knott	1	*	2	*

	1999-2001		2005-2007	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Knox	4	*	10	52
LaRue	1	*	2	*
Laurel	6	19	11	34
Lawrence	2	*	2	*
Lee	1	*	1	*
Leslie	1	*	1	*
Letcher	2	*	1	*
Lewis	1	*	1	*
Lincoln	1	*	5	*
Livingston	1	*	0	*
Logan	3	*	5	*
Lyon	0	*	0	*
McCracken	10	28	9	27
McCreary	3	*	1	*
McLean	1	*	1	*
Madison	4	*	8	19
Magoffin	0	*	0	*
Marion	2	*	1	*
Marshall	4	*	1	*
Martin	3	*	2	*
Mason	0	*	3	*
Meade	5	*	1	*
Menifee	0	*	3	*
Mercer	3	*	2	*
Metcalfe	1	*	2	*
Monroe	4	*	2	*
Montgomery	4	*	4	*
Morgan	3	*	2	*
Muhlenberg	2	*	5	*
Nelson	12	49	12	48
Nicholas	1	*	1	*
Ohio	3	*	2	*
Oldham	7	24	5	*
Owen	0	*	0	*
Owsley	1	*	2	*
Pendleton	5	*	0	*
Perry	3	*	4	*
Pike	13	35	12	37
Powell	2	*	1	*
Pulaski	9	30	10	32
Robertson	0	*	0	*
Rockcastle	2	*	5	*
Rowan	2	*	2	*
Russell	2	*	1	*
Scott	6	29	6	23
Shelby	2	*	5	*
Simpson	1	*	0	*
Spencer	1	*	1	*
Taylor	4	*	2	*
Todd	2	*	2	*
Trigg	1	*	2	*
Trimble	1	*	2	*
Union	2	*	0	*
Warren	11	22	7	13
Washington	2	*	0	*
Wayne	2	*	1	*
Webster	3	*	2	*
Whitley	11	51	7	34
Wolfe	1	*	0	*
Woodford	6	43	1	*

* Rates were not calculated for counties with fewer than 6 occurrences.