



Quality of Life Report Card

Rowan County

2002

As members of the Healthy Rowan! Task Force, a Healthy Carolinians initiative, we are pleased to present our first ever Quality of Life Report Card for Rowan County. In one brief document, we bring to your fingertips data on important indicators of our community's well-being. This first annual Report Card is designed to benefit our residents in several ways:

- Raise community awareness about our current quality of life along several dimensions
- Highlight areas where public policy, community-based initiatives, and resources are needed to secure a healthier, more prosperous future
- Measure local progress in making our county a continually better place to live and work
- Stimulate collaboration between the Healthy Rowan! Task Force and local organizations

During the development of the Report Card, we realized that a major challenge we faced was distilling a large amount of data into a useable product. We approached the problem by deciding to keep things simple, concise, and understandable while assuring that information presented was measurable from year to year, accurate, reliable, available at the county and state level for comparison purposes, and important to the residents of Rowan County.

We chose not to assign a "letter grade" to each measure, but rather allow you, the reader, to decide for yourself the extent to which our community is doing well and not so well. Beyond information sharing, Healthy Rowan! established partnerships with three local community-based organizations to impact several priority areas outlined in this report:

- Allies for Substance Abuse Prevention seeks to prevent alcohol and drug abuse among children and young adults
- Health Link of Rowan County endeavors to reduce infant death rates, eliminate the death disparity between Black and White babies, and improve the health and well-being of all children birth through age 5
- Rowan Partnership for Community Health promotes physical activity and good nutrition among elementary school students to help them adopt a healthy lifestyle that will reduce their risk for heart disease, stroke, and cancer

The Quality of Life Report Card demonstrates Healthy Rowan!'s commitment to bringing broader understanding among Rowan County residents about the local world in which they live. And the Healthy Rowan! Task Force is ready to translate understanding into action on behalf of our community by partnering with organizations dedicated to a better tomorrow for everyone who lives in Rowan County.

Healthy Rowan! Task Force

Allies for Substance Abuse Prevention
Board of County Commissioners
Cornerstone Church
Health Link of Rowan County
Piedmont Behavioral Healthcare-Rowan Center
Rowan County Department of Social Services

Rowan County Health Department
Rowan County Sheriffs Department
Rowan County United Way
Rowan Partnership for Community Health
Rowan Regional Medical Center
Rowan-Salisbury Schools

Quality of Life Measure	Rowan County	North Carolina	Time Period
Health			
Infant death rate (total per 1,000 live births) ¹	7.1	9.1	1996-2000
Infant death disparity between Whites and Blacks ²	40% greater death rate among Blacks	230% greater death rate among Blacks	1996-2000
Pregnancy rates for girls ages 15-17 ³	52.5	53	1996-2000
Deaths-all causes (race, gender, age adjusted rates per 100,000 population) ⁴	896	893.5	1999-2000
Death disparity between White and minority men ⁵	30% greater death rate among minority men	29% greater death rate among minority men	1999-2000
Death disparity between White and minority women ⁶	33% greater death rate among minority women	16% greater death rate among minority women	1999-2000
Heart Disease Deaths (adjusted rates per 100,000 population) ⁷	270.8	247.3	1999-2000
Stroke Deaths (adjusted rates per 100,000 population) ⁸	62.6	72.8	1999-2000
Cancer Deaths (adjusted rates per 100,000 population) ⁹	185.7	196	1999-2000
Suicide (adjusted rates per 100,000 population) ¹⁰	11.3	11.3	1999-2000
Homicide (adjusted rates per 100,000 population) ¹¹	5.9	8	1999-2000
Motor Vehicle Deaths (adjusted rates per 100,000 population) ¹²	30.7	19.7	1999-2000
Percent of kindergartners cavity-free ¹³	55.9	63.4	SY 2001
Percent of kindergartners with untreated dental decay ¹⁴	32.8	22.8	SY 2001
Percent of 5 th graders cavity-free ¹⁵	76	80	SY 2001
Percent of 5 th graders with untreated dental decay ¹⁶	11	4	SY 2001
Percent of 5 th graders with dental sealants ¹⁷	27	37	SY 2001
Persons per physician, nurse practitioner and physician assistant ¹⁸	1,590	1,198	1999
Persons per dentist ¹⁹	3,400	2,477	1999
Persons per health department staff ²⁰	1,661	852	1999
Crime			
Violent crime rate per 100,000 residents ²¹	373.4	498.3	2000
Property crime rate per 100,000 residents ²²	3,133	4,423	2000
Acts of violence per 1,000 students (elementary, middle, and high school) ²³	7.85	6.08	SY 2001
Juveniles before district courts for the 1 st time per 1,000 children ages 10-17 ²⁴	21.2	21.5	FY 1999

Quality of Life Measure	Rowan County	North Carolina	Time Period
Economy			
Unemployment rate (percent) ²⁵	6.6	5.5	2001
Per capita income ²⁶	\$23,327	\$26,882	2000
Median family income (model based estimate) ²⁷	\$35,112	\$35,320	1997
Home ownership rate ²⁸	73.6	69.4	2000
Retail sales per capita ²⁹	\$6,461	\$9,740	1997
Percent of residents enrolled in Work First ³⁰	1.2	1.5	FY 2000
Percent of residents receiving Food Stamps ³¹	5.2	6.3	FY 2000
Persons below poverty (percent, model-based estimate) ³²	11.8	12.6	1997
Children below poverty (percent, model-based estimate) ³³	17.6	18.6	1997
Percent of residents without health insurance (estimate) ³⁴	15.8	16.3	1999
Social Well-Being			
Investigated incidents of child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children (birth to 17 years) ³⁵	63	60	FY 2001
Substantiated incidents of child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children (birth to 17 years) ³⁶	14	17	FY 2001
Rate of children in Department of Social Services custody per 1,000 children (birth to 17 years) ³⁷	6.5	6.1	2000
Education			
Grade 9-12 drop out rate (percent) ³⁸	5.58	5.71	SY 2001
Grade 3 End of Grade Reading Mean Score ³⁹	146.1	147	SY 2001
Grade 3 End of Grade Math Mean Score ³⁹	249.4	250.6	SY 2001
Grade 5 End of Grade Reading Mean Score ³⁹	156.1	156	SY 2001
Grade 5 End of Grade Math Mean Score ³⁹	259.8	260	SY 2001
Grade 8 End of Grade Reading Mean Score ³⁹	161.3	163.1	SY 2001
Grade 8 End of Grade Math Mean Score ³⁹	268.2	270	SY 2001
Per pupil appropriations ⁴⁰	\$1,106	\$1,194	SY 2000
Civic Participation			
Percent of eligible residents registered to vote ⁴¹	84.7	84.2	2000
Percent of eligible residents participating in the general election ⁴²	46	50	2000

1. Infant Death Rate: Number of babies dying before their first birthday per 1,000 live births. State Center for Health Statistics
2. Infant Death Disparity Between Whites and Blacks: While the infant mortality rate is at a record low, Black babies continue experience significantly higher death rates than White babies. State Center for Health Statistics
3. Pregnancy Rates for Girls Ages 15-17: Number of girls between 15 and 17 years who become pregnant per 1,000 girls age 15 to 17. State Center for Health Statistics.
4. Deaths-All Causes: Number of deaths per 100, 000 population due to the following causes: heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes mellitus, pneumo-nia and influenza, chronic lower respiratory dis-eases, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, septic-mia, kidney disease, unintentional motor vehicle injuries, other unintentional injuries, suicide, homicide, and HIV. Rates are adjusted for race, gender, and age. State Center for Health Statistics.
5. Death Disparity Between White and Minority Men: Historically, minority (largely Black) men have experienced a greater burden of death than White men. State Center for Health Statistics.
6. Death Disparity Between White and Minority Women: Historically, minority (largely Black) women have experienced a greater burden of death than White men. State Center for Health Statistics.
7. Heart Disease: Number of deaths resulting from heart disease per 100,000. Race, gender and age adjusted. State Center for Health Statistics.
8. Stroke: Number of deaths due to stroke per 100,000. Race, gender and age adjusted. State Center for Health Statistics.
9. Cancer: Number of deaths due to cancer per 100,000. This includes cancer of lip, oral cavity and pharynx; stomach; colon, rectum, and anus; liver; pancreas, larynx; trachea, bronchus and lung; sinuses, pleura, and all other respiratory sites; malignant melanoma of the skin; breast; cervix and uterus; ovary; prostate; bladder; brain; non-Hodgkins Lymphoma; and leukemia. Race, gender and age adjusted. State Center for Health Statistics.
10. Suicide: Race, gender and age adjusted. State Center for Health Statistics.
11. Homicide: Race, gender and age adjusted. State Center for Health Statistics
12. Motor Vehicle Deaths: Race, gender and age adjusted. State Center for Health Statistics
13. Percent of Kindergartners Cavity Free: Percent of screened children who have never had a cavity of filling in a baby tooth. NC Calibrated Dental Screening Data, NC Oral Health Section.
14. Percent of Kindergartners with Untreated Dental Decay: NC Calibrated Dental Screening Data, NC Oral Health Section.
15. Percent of 5th Graders Cavity Free: Percent of children screened who have never had a cavity or filling in a permanent tooth. NC Calibrated Dental Screening Data, NC Oral Health Section.
16. Percent of 5th Graders with Untreated Dental Decay: NC Calibrated Dental Screening Data, NC Oral Health Section.
17. Percent of 5th Graders with Dental Sealants: Dental sealants are a plastic material applied to the chewing surfaces of the back teeth-premolars and molars. This plastic resin bonds into the depressions and grooves (pits and fissures) of teeth and prevents tooth decay by protecting tooth enamel from plaque and food. NC Calibrated Dental Screening Data, NC Oral Health Section.
18. Persons Per Physician, nurse practitioner and physician assistant: Number of residents per healthcare provider. Data provided by respective licensing boards and Office of State Planning. Numbers include those who are active in the profession and those with unknown activity status; inactive are excluded. Total physicians include active, non resident-in-training, non-Federal physicians. Includes MDs and DOs. Data compiled by the NC Health Professions Data System, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
19. Persons Per Dentist: Number of residents per dentist. Data provided by NC State Board of Dental Examiners and compiled through the NC Health Professions Data System, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
20. Persons Per Health Department Staff: Number of residents per County health department staff. Data compiled by the NC Health Professions Data System, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. State-level data excludes Avery, Cabarrus, Gates, Hyde and Lincoln Counties which did not participate in survey. State Center for Health Statistics.
21. Violent Crime Rate Per 100,000 Residents: Total number of violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault) per 100,000. State Bureau of Investigation.
22. Property Crime Rate Per 100,000 Residents: Total number of property crimes (burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft) per 100, 000. State Bureau of Investigation.
23. Acts of Violence Per 1,000 Students (elementary, middle and high school): Acts of violence include possession of weapon, possession of controlled substance, assault on school personnel, assault resulting in serious injury, sexual assault, assault involving use of weapon, possession of firearm, robbery with a dangerous weapon, taking indecent liberties with a minor, rape, kidnapping and death by other than natural causes. Public Schools of NC, State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction.
24. Juveniles Before District Courts for the 1st Time per 1,000 children ages 10-17: The number of juveniles who appear before the court for the first time during the fiscal year. A juvenile is defined as one who has not reached his or her 18th birthday and "is not married, emancipated, or a member of the armed services of the United States."
25. Unemployment Rate: Calculated by dividing the unemployed by the civilian labor force. Employment Security Commission of NC.
26. Per Capita Income: Total personal income for the region divided by the midyear population estimate for the region. Total personal income includes earnings (wage and salary disbursements, other labor income, and proprietors' income), dividends, interest, rent, and transfer payments. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

27. Median Family Income: 50 percent of households have incomes exceeding and 50 percent have incomes less than stated amount. Household income is the sum of money income received in the previous calendar year by all household members 15 years old and over, including household members not related to the householder., people living alone, and others in non-family households. The median household income reported here were produced through statistical modeling. U.S. Census Bureau.

28. Home Ownership Rate: Computed by dividing the number of owner-occupied housing units by the number of occupied housing units or households. A housing unit is owner-occupied if the owner or co-owner lives in the unit, even if it is mortgaged or not fully paid for. U.S. Census Bureau.

29. Retail Sales Per Capita: Total dollar value of sales divided by the number of residents living in the area. Sales include merchandise sold for cash or credit at retail and wholesale by establishments primarily engaged in retail trade; amounts received from customers for layaway purchases; receipts from rental of vehicles, equipment, instruments, tools, etc.; receipts for delivery, installation, maintenance, repair, alteration, storage and other services; the total value of service contracts; and gasoline, liquor, tobacco, and other excise taxes which are paid by the manufacturer or wholesaler and passed on to the retailer. U.S. Census Bureau.

30. Percent of Residents Enrolled in Work First: Work First, which began in July 1995, is North Carolina's plan to help families stay off welfare or move off welfare and into jobs. Work is required for families on welfare. Work First is based on the premise that parents have a responsibility to support themselves and their children. Through Work First, parents can get short-term training and families can get childcare assistance and other services to help them become self-sufficient, but ultimately the responsibility is theirs. Most families have 2 years to move off welfare. State Center for Health Statistics.

31. Percent of Residents Receiving Food Stamps: The Food Stamp Program is a Federal program that provides a monthly allotment of Food Stamp benefits that may be used to purchase most foods at participating stores. They may not be used to purchase tobacco, pet food, paper and soap products, or alcoholic beverages. The Food Stamp Program is an entitlement program; so all eligible individuals and households can receive assistance. State Center for Health Statistics.

32. Persons Below Poverty: Families and persons are classified as below poverty level if their total family income or unrelated individual income was less than the poverty threshold specified for the applicable family size, age of householder and number of related children under 18 present. The State and County estimates were produced through statistical modeling. U.S. Census Bureau.

33. Children Below Poverty: Children, people under age 18 years, are classified as below poverty if their family's income or unrelated individual income was less than the poverty threshold specified for the applicable family size, age of householder and number of related children under 18 present. The State and County estimates were produced through statistical modeling. U.S. Census Bureau.

34. Percent of Residents Without Health Insurance: Estimates based on the March 1996-2000 Current Population Surveys. Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

35. Investigated Incidents of Child Abuse and Neglect per 1,000 Children (birth to 17 years): The number of unique children subject to an investigative assessment divided by the total child population. Unique children is defined so when the same child is subject of more than one investigative assessment, he/she is counted only once. State Center for Health Statistics.

36. Substantiated Incidents of Child Abuse and Neglect per 1,000 Children (birth to 17 years): Number of children substantiated for maltreatment following investigative assessment divided by the total child population. A County Department of Social Services has the responsibility to make a determination when information gathered from an investigative assessment warrants a determination of child maltreatment. There are 3 categories of child maltreatment: abuse (both physical and sexual), neglect and dependency. State Center for Health Statistics.

37. Rate of Children in Department of Social Services Custody per 1,000 children (birth to 17 years): Number of children placed in Department of Social Services custody divided by the total child population. Custody is defined as the court awarding the Department of Social Services temporary responsibility for the care and placement of a child. NC Child Advocacy Institute.

38. Grade 9-12 Drop Out Rate: The annual percentage of students in grades 9-12 who have left their public school prior to completion and officially are no longer enrolled. NC uses the Federal guidelines for counting public school drop outs. Students are excluded from the drop out counts if they transferred to another public school district, private school, home school or state/district approved educational program; were temporarily absent due to suspension or illness; or died. Public Schools of NC, State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction.

39. End of Grade Mean Score: NC End-of-grade (EOG) tests were initiated in response to the General Assembly's enactment of the School Improvement and Accountability Act in 1989. The EOG reading and math tests for grades 3, 5 and 8 are designed to measure student growth and performance in these academic areas. Raw test results are converted to developmental scale scores with a higher number reflecting a higher score. The data reported are average scores compiled from all children (grades 3, 5 and 8) taking EOG tests during the 2001 school year.

40. Per Pupil Appropriations: The annual amount spent per pupil by the school system. It is calculated by dividing the overall operating expenditures by the number of children listed as the school system's average daily membership. Public Schools of NC, State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction.

41. Percent of Eligible Residents Registered to Vote: Percent of eligible residents (U.S. citizens 18 years age and older) who are registered to vote. Rowan County Board of Elections.

42. Percent of Eligible Residents Participating in the General Election: Calculated by dividing the number of citizens voting in the 2000 general election by number of residents eligible to vote. (U.S. citizens 18 years of age and older). Rowan County Board of Elections.