



BEPHI Data Brief

Kansas Department of Health and Environment
Bureau of Epidemiology and Public Health Informatics

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Prematurity

Each year in the United States, about 500,000 babies are born too soon. Premature or preterm births are those that occur when gestation is less than 37 weeks.

One of the items on Governor Sam Brownback’s “Roadmap for Healthy Kansas Families” is to excel in education [1]. Children born about three months prematurely are 3 - 4 times more likely to struggle in school than children born full term. Compared with children born full term, students born prematurely were more likely to repeat a grade of school (33% versus 18%); receive special education (20% versus 5%); and require extra help with reading, spelling, math, handwriting, speech/language and require occupational or physical therapy (16% versus 6%) [2].

Kansas Highlights

In 2011, there were 39,628 live births. Thirty-five births did not have gestation reported. Births with gestation less than 37 weeks totaled 3,598. This amounts to 9.1 percent of all babies born or about one out of every 11 births [3].

In Kansas in 2011, there were 247 infant deaths. This is almost five (4.75) deaths per week. Prematurity is one of the leading factors causing infant mortality.

The population group with the highest preterm birth rate was black non-Hispanic. The rate was 13.5 percent in 2011. Asian/Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders non-Hispanic population group was the lowest, 7.6 percent.

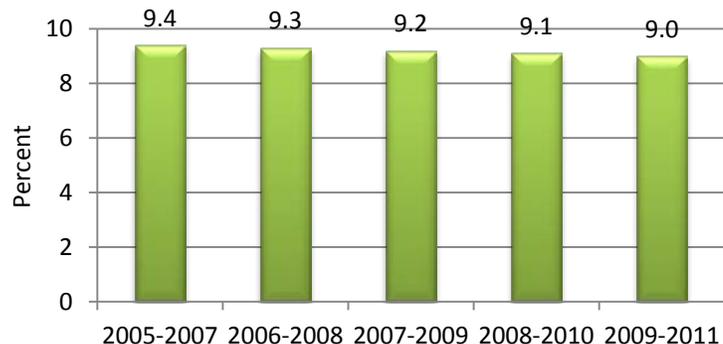
Table 1. Resident Preterm Birth Rates, Kansas, 2011

Population Group	Total Births	Preterm Births	Percent
White non-Hispanic	28,364	2,497	8.8
Black non-Hispanic	2,703	364	13.5
Native American non-Hispanic	229	26	11.4
Asian/Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander non-Hispanic	1,132	86	7.6
Other non-Hispanic	862	91	10.6
Hispanic any Race	6,286	532	8.5

Trends

- Kansas preterm birth rate was 8.8 percent in 2010. The 2011 preterm birth rate (9.1%) is 3.4 percent higher.
- Based on three-year rolling average percentages, the state is trending downward for prematurity (Figure 2) [4].

Figure 2. Percent of Resident Births Delivered Preterm, by Rolling Three-year Average, Kansas, 2005-2011



More Kansas Health Statistics and Publications

- For a list of all publications issued by KDHE go to http://www.kdheks.gov/data_reports_stats.htm.
- Visit Kansas Information for Communities (KIC) the department’s online data query tool at <http://kic.kdhe.state.ks.us/kic/index.html>.
- Community Health Needs Assessment information at <http://www.kansashealthmatters.org/>.

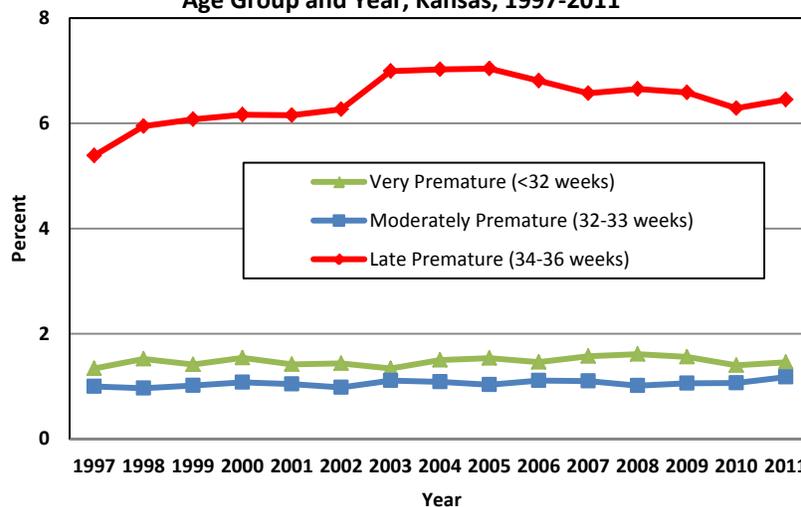
Breakouts

- Late premature births, after peaking at 7.0 percent of all births, have been decreasing since 2005 (Figure 3).

State and National Comparison

The 2011 Kansas rate (9.1%) compares favorably to the Healthy People 2020 target of 11.4% [5]. Direct comparison between state and federal rates is problematic due to different methods for calculation. Prematurity determination is based on obstetric estimate of gestation. While Kansas uses the unaltered estimate, federal rates are based on an imputation method that compares the obstetric estimate to the difference between the date of last menses and the date of birth.

Figure 3. Percent of Resident Preterm Births by Gestational Age Group and Year, Kansas, 1997-2011



Want to Know More?

For community ideas to reduce prematurity, visit Kansas Health Matters Promising Practices, and search on “preterm” or “premature” (<http://www.kansashealthmatters.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=PromisePractice&file=index>). Promising Practices contains hundreds of tested approaches to solving public health issues.

The March of Dimes is conducting a national effort to reduce prematurity. Visit <http://www.marchofdimes.com/kansas/> to become involved.

Resources can also be found at the Kansas Resource Guide at <http://www.ksresourceguide.org/>, maintained by the KDHE Bureau of Family Health.

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- HealthyPeople.gov [Internet]. Washington. Department of Health and Human Services. [updated 2012 Sep 13, cited 2012 Oct 18] Available from <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/objectiveslist.aspx?topicid=26>