



## African-American Babies in Minneapolis and St. Paul

Practitioners and researchers in many fields agree. The physical, social, and economic health and well-being of adults and society as a whole are strongly influenced by the early experiences of children, when the foundation for effective cognitive and social skills and abilities are developed. Children who have developmental delays or disabilities require and often receive early intervention. Children who have adverse experiences or prolonged toxic stress associated with poverty, child abuse and serious neglect, parental substance abuse, neighborhood violence, or maternal depression also need interventions to build the foundational skills necessary to reach their full potential. The most cost efficient time to intervene—to break the cycle of disadvantage for vulnerable children through providing access to comprehensive developmental, health, and educational resources—is in the very early ages.

This report provides a snapshot of the current status of African-American babies (whose parents were born in the U.S.) relative to other babies in St. Paul and Minneapolis. When data on African-American babies are not available, data on all black babies (including children of African immigrants) are presented.

### *Key findings*

In Minneapolis and St. Paul, there are about 11,000 African-American babies (about 4 percent of all children age 3 and younger).

Young African-American children are among the most vulnerable in the core cities. African-American babies have worse birth outcomes than most other babies born in the core cities, indicating they start life at an increased risk. Among the 1,200 babies born to African-American mothers in 2009:

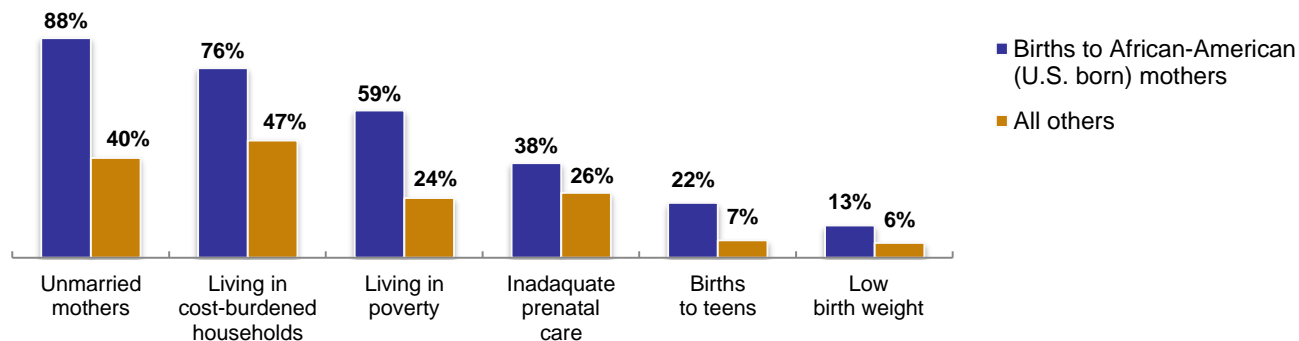
- 88% were born to unmarried mothers
- 38% did not receive adequate prenatal care
- 22% were born to teen mothers
- 13% were born at low birth weight
- 1 out of 100 died before the age of 1

African-American children through age 3 continue to experience challenges that put them at increased risk for school success:

- 76% live in cost-burdened households
- 59% live in poverty

Statewide data indicate that African-American children age 3 and younger also experience higher rates of out-of-home placements, and their mothers experience higher rates of maternal depression.

On the positive side, African-Americans are accessing appropriate services. They are participating in Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), getting well-child check-ups, accessing early childhood special education, and breastfeeding at rates similar to the overall population.



## ***African-American babies at birth***

### **Number**

In 2009, there were 1,158 births to African-American mothers in Minneapolis and St. Paul, 10 percent of the total 11,410 babies born. African-American births make up the second smallest proportion of births.

▪ White (non-Hispanic)	42%
▪ African	16%
▪ Hispanic or Latina ethnicity	15%
▪ Asian	14%
▪ <i>African-American</i>	10%
▪ American Indian	3%

### **Unmarried mothers**

Of the African-American babies born in Minneapolis and St. Paul in 2009, 88 percent were born to unmarried mothers. In comparison, 24 percent of white babies were born to unmarried mothers.

▪ American Indian	91%
▪ <i>African-American</i>	88%
▪ Hispanic or Latina ethnicity	67%
▪ All	47%
▪ Asian	46%
▪ African	42%
▪ White (non-Hispanic)	24%

### **Births to teens**

In 2009, 22 percent of African-American babies in Minneapolis and St. Paul were born to teen mothers, compared to just 2 percent of their African immigrant counterparts and 3 percent of white babies.

▪ American Indian	23%
▪ <i>African-American</i>	22%
▪ Hispanic or Latina ethnicity	14%
▪ Asian	13%
▪ All	9%
▪ White (non-Hispanic)	3%
▪ African	2%

### **Prenatal care**

In 2009, 62 percent of African-American women who gave birth in Minneapolis and St. Paul received adequate or better prenatal care. This rate is similar to African immigrant, Asian and Hispanic mothers, but far below white mothers, of whom 85 percent received adequate or better prenatal care.

▪ White (non-Hispanic)	85%
▪ All	72%
▪ Hispanic or Latina ethnicity	69%
▪ African	63%
▪ <i>African-American</i>	62%
▪ Asian	58%
▪ American Indian	39%

### **Birth weights**

Rates of low-birth-weight babies are highest among African-American babies. In 2009, 13 percent of babies born to African-American mothers in Minneapolis and St. Paul were born with low birth weights (less than 5.5 pounds), nearly double the rate for other babies.

▪ <i>African-American</i>	13%
▪ American Indian	9%
▪ African	8%
▪ Asian	7%
▪ All	7%
▪ White (non-Hispanic)	6%
▪ Hispanic or Latina ethnicity	6%

### **Breastfeeding**

Though breastfeeding rates among African-American women in Minneapolis and St. Paul are not available, some statewide data are available.

According to national surveys, in 2008, black (non-Hispanic) women in Minnesota with a recent birth reported:

- 82% initiated breastfeeding
- 68% were breastfeeding after 4 weeks
- 59% were breastfeeding after 8 weeks

Rates at which African-American women in Minnesota breastfeed have not changed significantly since 2002, nor do they differ significantly from the rates of white women in Minnesota, though Hispanic women are more likely to breastfeed.

### **Mortality (infant death rates)**

In 2009, African-American babies in Minneapolis and St. Paul had the highest infant mortality rate of any other race, with 10.9 babies dying before age 1 for every 1,000 births. The overall infant mortality rate was half that, 5.6 out of every 1,000 births.

▪ African-American	10.9
▪ American Indian	6.7
▪ All	5.6
▪ White (non-Hispanic)	4.9
▪ Hispanic or Latina ethnicity	4.6
▪ African	4.3
▪ Asian	3.7

### **Children age 3 and younger**

#### **Early intervention**

In 2010, about 450 black (African-American and African immigrant) children age 2 and younger throughout the state were being served by the federal Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) Part C, which requires states to provide special education services to infants and toddlers with disabilities. In 2010, black children made up 9 percent of the children being served, but only 4 percent of the overall population of children under 3.

#### **Well-child visits**

Regular medical check-ups support the health and well-being of young children. Low-income babies receive well-child visits through The Child and Teen Checkups Program (C&TC), which is part of Minnesota's Medicaid program. In 2009, low-income black (both African-American and African) babies and toddlers were receiving check-ups at slightly higher rates than those of other races, about 90 percent for babies and 79 percent for toddlers.

	< 1 Year	Age 2-3
▪ Black	90%	79%
▪ American Indian	91%	66%
▪ Asian	85%	72%
▪ White	85%	73%
▪ Hispanic	92%	81%
▪ Other	88%	77%
▪ All	87%	76%

### **Family strengths and stressors**

#### **Poverty**

The federal poverty threshold (100% of poverty) for a family of four in 2009 was \$22,000 a year. The American Community Survey estimates that over half (59%) of African-American children age 3 and younger were living at or below this threshold in 2007-09. In comparison, only 8 percent of white babies and 27 percent of all babies are living in poverty.

▪ African-American	59%
▪ Hispanic or Latina ethnicity	46%
▪ African	43%
▪ Asian	27%
▪ All	27%
▪ White (non-Hispanic)	8%
▪ American Indian	Not available

#### **Housing**

Three out of 4 African-American children age 3 and under in Minneapolis and St. Paul lived in households that were cost-burdened (households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs) in 2007-2009. In comparison, only one of three white babies and one of two Asian babies lived in cost-burdened households.

▪ African-American	76%
▪ African	72%
▪ Hispanic or Latina ethnicity	61%
▪ Asian	49%
▪ All	49%
▪ White (non-Hispanic)	33%
▪ American Indian	Not available



## Parent education and parenting

ECFE provides education and support to expectant parents and parents with young children. Given that most children participate in mixed age group classrooms, it is difficult to know the degree ECFE is serving parents of children birth through age 3. During the 2010-11 school year, 500 black (native and foreign-born) parents participated in ECFE in the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts. This was 16 percent of the total number of parents who participated that year, double their proportion in the population.

## Out-of-home placements

The extent to which African-American children in Minneapolis and St. Paul are in out-of-home placements is not known, but some statewide data are available. In 2008, 2,527 children birth through age 3 (1%) were in out-of-home care. Black children (both African-American and African immigrant) make up a disproportionate share; 21 percent of these children are black even though only 6 percent of the statewide population are black.

## Maternal depression

The extent to which African-American women in Minneapolis and St. Paul experience postpartum depression is not known, but some statewide data are available.

According to a national survey, in 2008, 19 percent of black mothers in Minnesota with a recent birth experienced frequent postpartum depressive symptoms. Comparatively, 8 percent of white mothers reported experiencing frequent postpartum depressive symptoms.



## Sources:

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U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey.\*

\* indicates Wilder Research obtained and analyzed the data.

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