

Technical Notes for 2005 Child Deaths in North Carolina

I. Child Deaths by Cause

The Child Deaths by Cause table presents child death data by eight causes of death categories and seven subcategories.

Rounding considerations

The numbers in the Average Annual Number column are rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to the total due to independent rounding.

Unintentional Injuries Subcategories

Note that the total number of unintentional injuries is divided into seven subcategories: *motor vehicle injuries, bicycle injuries, injuries caused by fire, drowning, falls, poisoning and other unintentional injuries*. These subcategory numbers are not included in the column total since they are already accounted for in the broad Unintentional Injuries category. This breakdown of unintentional injuries is used for all four columns: Average Annual Number 2001-2005, Number in 2004, Number in 2005, and Percent Change.

Other Unintentional Injuries Categories

This subcategory may have unknown causes as well as others such as exposure to inanimate mechanical forces, unspecified/accidental threats to breathing, exposure to electric current, etc.

All Other Causes of Death Categories

All other causes of death may include but are not limited to causes such as other ill-defined and unspecified causes of mortality, systemic connective tissue disorder, unspecified mental retardation, or abnormal finding without diagnosis, etc.

Interpreting Percent Change

The Percent Change column is a comparison of the 2005 deaths to the 2004 deaths. Note that when the category has very few deaths, such as bicycle injuries, a change of just one death produces a relatively large percent change. In 2005 the unintentional injuries caused by falls is another example of this type of change.

Notes on Cause of Death Categories:

Since 1999 the mortality data have been coded under ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases-Tenth Revision). The coding for 1998 and prior were done under ICD-9 CM (International Classification of Diseases-Ninth Revision). In order to maintain consistent reporting, the standard cause of death vocabulary is kept same as in the past. However, the ICD-10 codes differ from those under ICD-9 CM, because of changes in coding rules, changes in category names and ICD numbers, and - importantly - because of changes in the tabulation lists used to produce data. *Consequently, caution should be exercised in comparing cause of death across years.*

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- Other birth-related conditions are certain conditions that originate in the perinatal period, during birth or the first month of life.
- *Motor vehicle injuries* includes both traffic and non-traffic collisions.
- *"Bicycle" injuries* includes pedal cyclist deaths involving collisions with or without a motor vehicle.
- *Injuries caused by fire* includes, but is not limited to, fires in private dwellings and injuries caused by ignition of clothing.
- *Other unintentional injuries* includes unintentional injuries not included in any of the six injury categories listed: motor vehicle, bicycle, injuries by fire, drowning, falls or poisoning.

II. Child Deaths by Age

Note that the age categories are of unequal increments. Consequently, caution should be used when making comparisons across groups.

The Infant category includes all children who have not yet reached their first birthday.

III. North Carolina Population Data

When the 2000 census results were released, the State Demographer made necessary changes in the estimated population to reflect proximate population for the previous nine years. These changes revealed that the North Carolina population had been underestimated by 3 to 4 percent over the ten year period. The child death rates, 1999 and earlier, shown in the graph have been recalculated using the smoothed population estimates. With these changes, the rates have decreased slightly.

The 2005 population figures used in this report are county/state population estimates for North Carolina as of July 1, 2005.