

# OHIO POPULATION NEWS

## Ohio's Newborns, 2013-2017

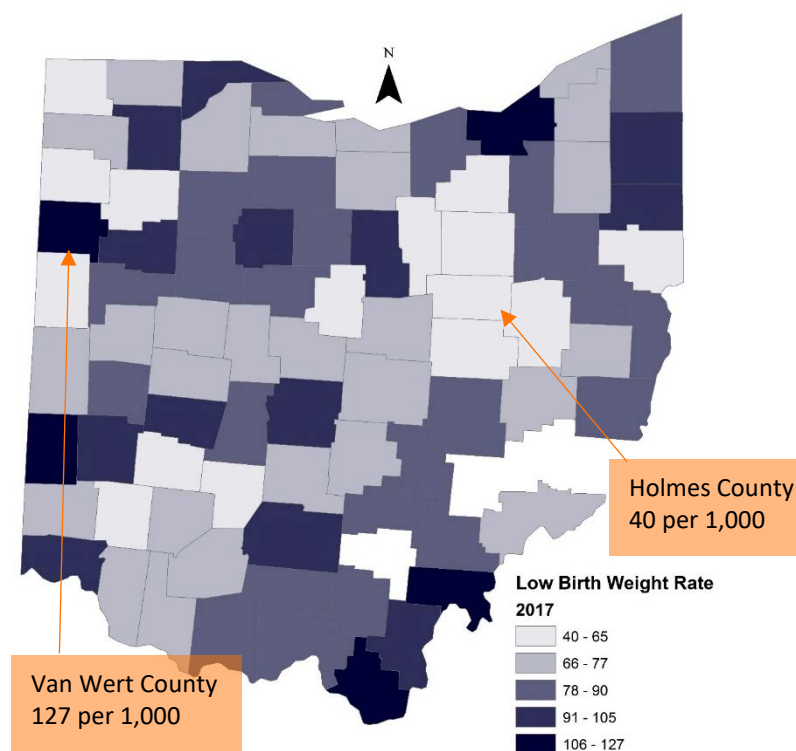
Approximately 135,000 children are born each year in Ohio (Ohio Department of Health), but there are striking differentials in the health and contexts into which they are born across the state and by race-ethnicity. These differentials could impact long-term well-being. For instance, low birth weight (birth weight of less than 2,500 grams, or 5 pounds, 8 ounces) has significant implications for health and development and increases the risk of infant mortality (Lemons et al., 2001; Watkins, Kotecha, and Kotecha, 2016). Using the most recently available American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates (2013-2017), and data from the Ohio Department of Health, National Center for Health Statistics, America's Health Rankings, and The Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center, we examine racial and ethnic variation in patterns of infant health (low birth weight and infant mortality), poverty status, and mother's union status among newborns in Ohio.

### Newborn Health

- In 2017, 83 per 1,000 infants in Ohio were born at a low birth weight (LBW), similar to the national average (Martin et al., 2018).
- The highest rate of babies with low birth weight is in Van Wert County, 127 per 1,000 newborns, and the lowest, 40 per 1,000, is in Holmes County.
  - Some of the highest levels of LBW births occur in counties with large cities (i.e. Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Montgomery, and Lucas).

- The rate of LBW births differs according to race/ethnicity (Figure 2). Black babies experienced the highest rates of low birth weight, 139 per 1,000. White newborns had the lowest low birth weight rate, 73 per 1,000 White babies.
- In Ohio, the infant mortality rate is 7.2 per 1,000 newborns. Ohio ranked 35th among all states for low birth weight in 2016 (America's Health Rankings).
- Racial and ethnic disparity in infant mortality continues to be apparent, with Black infants dying at three times the rate of White newborns (15.6 versus 5.3, respectively) (Ohio Department of Health, 2018).

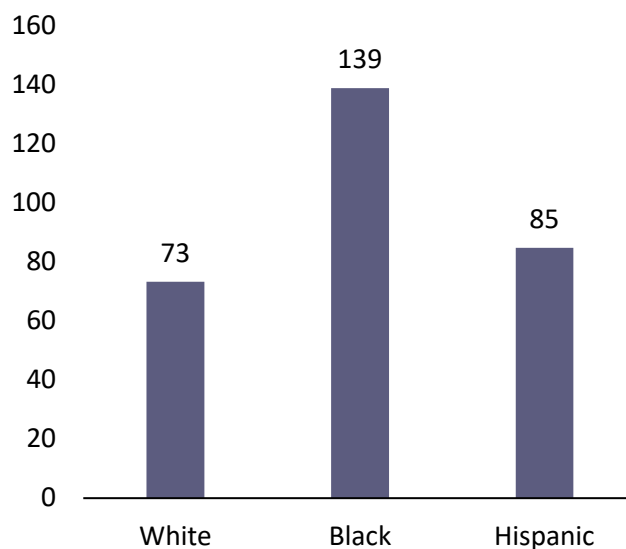
Figure 1. Low Birth Weight Rate in Ohio by County, 2017



Source: Kids Count Data Center, 2017. ArcGIS and ArcMap are the intellectual property of Esri and are used herein under license. Copyright © Esri. All rights reserved.

Note: Noble, Monroe, Morgan, and Vinton counties are excluded due to missing data.

Figure 2. Low Birth Weight Rate per 1,000 Newborns (<5 pounds, 8 ounces) in Ohio by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2017



Source: CFDR Analyses of the Ohio Department of Health Birth Resident Dataset, 2013-2017

Note: Black and White race categories are non-Hispanic. Figures represent all births, not just first births.

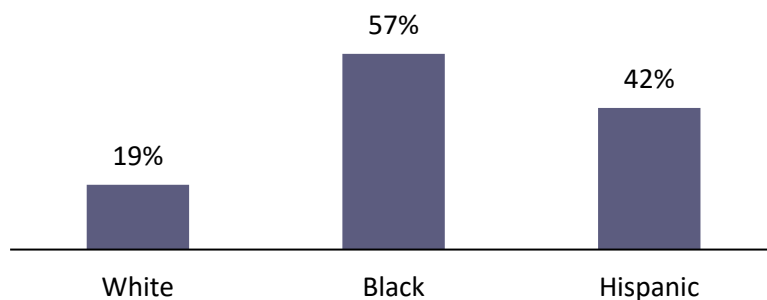


## Newborns in Poverty

Overall, 27% of babies born in Ohio are born into families living at or below the poverty line.

- There are stark racial and ethnic differences in the rates of poverty among newborns.
  - Nearly three in five (57%) of Black babies in Ohio are born into families living in poverty, followed by two in five (42%) of Hispanic babies and about one-fifth (19%) of White newborns.
  - According to the ACS, the share of children born into poverty is higher in Ohio than the United States as a whole. For example, in the United States, 43% of Black babies were born into poverty in contrast to 57% in Ohio.

Figure 3. Newborns Living in Poverty in Ohio by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2017



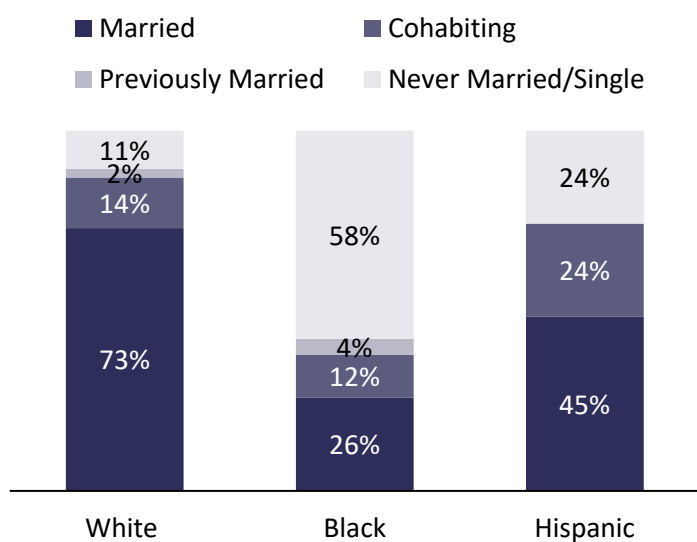
Source: CFDR Analyses of the American Community Survey, 2013-2017

Notes: Poverty is defined as living below the poverty threshold <https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html>. Black and White race categories are non-Hispanic. Figures represent all births, not just first births.

## Union Status of Mothers of Newborns

- Most newborns (59%) are born into married couple families (not shown).
  - A majority of White newborns are born into married parent families (73%), with 45% of Hispanic newborns and roughly a quarter (26%) of Black newborns born into marriage.
- Many unmarried parents live together in cohabiting unions (FP-19-01).
  - In Ohio, 24% of Hispanic newborns, 14% of White newborns, and 12% of Black newborns are born into cohabiting families.
- Over half (58%) of Black newborns in Ohio are born to single mothers. About one-quarter of Hispanic newborns (24%) and only 11% of White newborns are born to single mothers in Ohio.

Figure 4. Union Status of Mothers of Newborns in Ohio by Race, 2013-2017



Source: CFDR Analyses of the American Community Survey, 2013-2017

Notes: Previously married for Hispanic and Other omitted due to small sample sizes. Black and White race categories are non-Hispanic. Figures represent all births, not just first births.

## Fast Facts on the Mothers of Newborns

- The median age at birth for White mothers of newborns in Ohio is 29, while the median age for Black and Hispanic mothers is 27.
- Hispanic newborns have the largest proportion of mothers with less than a high school degree (25%) and a high school or GED education (38%).
  - Among White newborns, 37% are born to mothers who completed at least a bachelor's degree.
  - 42% of Black newborns are born to mothers who have some college education.

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