every baby guilford | ELIMINATING DISPARITIES. ENDING INFANT DEATHS. EMPOWERING FAMILIES.

GUILFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES PUBLIC HEALTH

Every baby and family deserves equitable access to achieve the healthiest start in life. In Guilford County, too many babies don't have that opportunity.

In 2023:

5,757	**53**	**70%**
babies were born in Guilford County	of these babies died before their first birthday	were Black from all socioeconomic levels

Every Baby Guilford's mission is to ignite and mobilize Guilford County through partnerships and unified strategies to eliminate racial disparities and prevent infant deaths.

We are a collective action movement building collaborative solutions within the community to disrupt longstanding racial disparities in infant mortality in Guilford County.

Our Bold Goal

Every Baby Guilford and our partners will reduce racial disparities in infant death by **50% by 2026 and eliminate them by 2031.**

Our Strategies

Advance Health Equity	Center Inclusive Community	Strengthen Reproductive Healthcare	Promote Infant Wellness
Addressing systemic racism and implicit bias within the continuum of maternal and infant care	Profoundly inclusive community engagement to create equitable solutions together	Ensuring equitable access to quality care at every stage of reproductive health	Supporting infant health and positive child development within the community

2025 Crucial Conversations

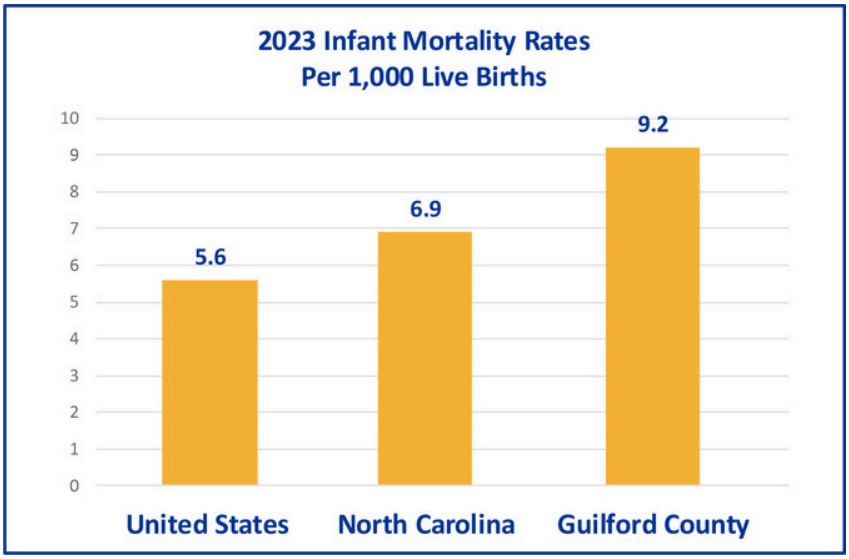
The State of Infant and Maternal Health in Guilford County

Maternal and infant health outcomes are key indicators for gauging the overall health and wellbeing of a community. Guilford County's infant mortality rate increased by 4% in 2023 from 8.8 to 9.2 per 1,000 births and remains higher than the state and national rates.

Infant mortality: *the death of an infant before their first birthday*

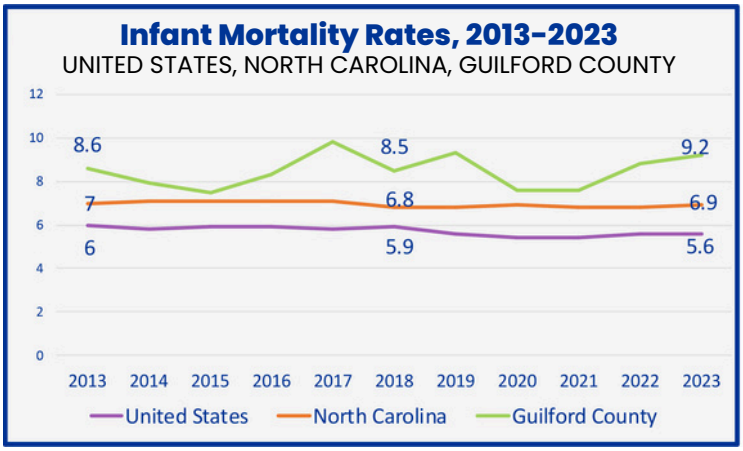
Infant mortality rate: *the number of infant deaths for every 1,000 live births*

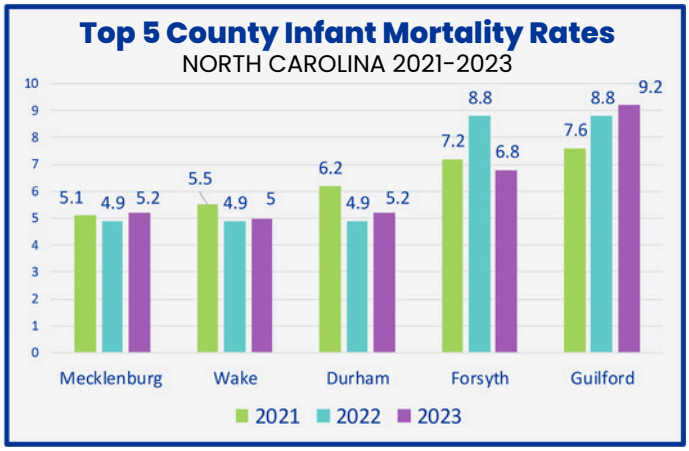
When poor birth outcomes lead to higher infant mortality rates, one should ask what is wrong with the community, not the individual, that causes poor outcomes? As Alexander Den Hiefer stated, "When the flower does not bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower."



Infant Mortality Rates

US, NC, Guilford County and Comparison Counties

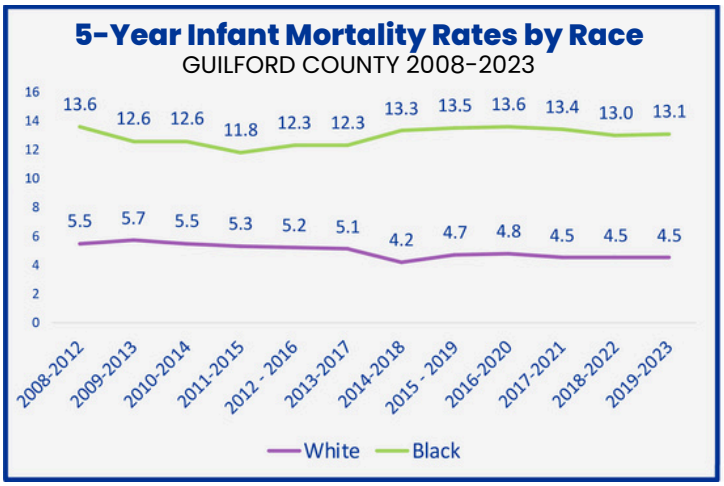


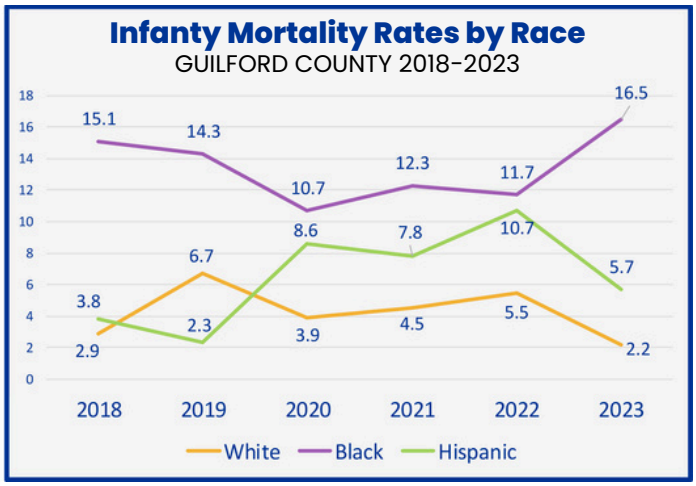


For many years, Guilford County's rate of infant deaths has been consistently higher than both North Carolina and the country as a whole. Guilford County's infant mortality rate decreased by 18% from 2019 to 2021. However, it increased by 19% between 2021 and 2023. While Guilford and Forsyth Counties retain two of the highest rates for infant deaths, Forsyth County experienced a dramatic decline of nearly 26% from 2022 to 2023.

Data provided by NC Center for HealthStatistics, National Center for Health Statistics.

Five Year Comparisons By Race





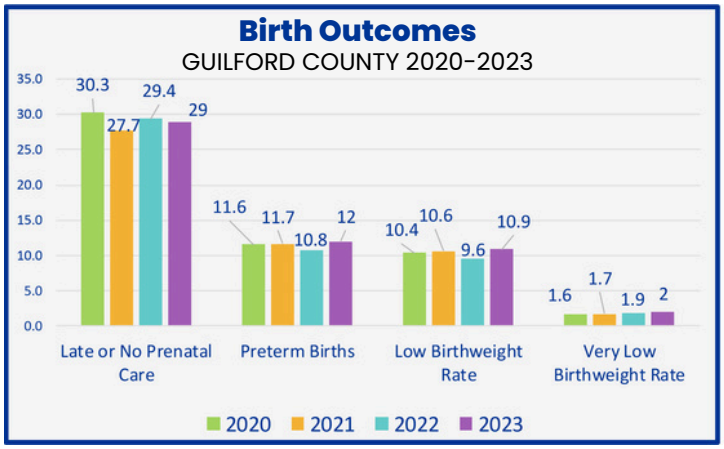
Rolling five-year infant mortality rates over the past decade are showing a slight overall improvement of 3.7% for Black infants in Guilford County.

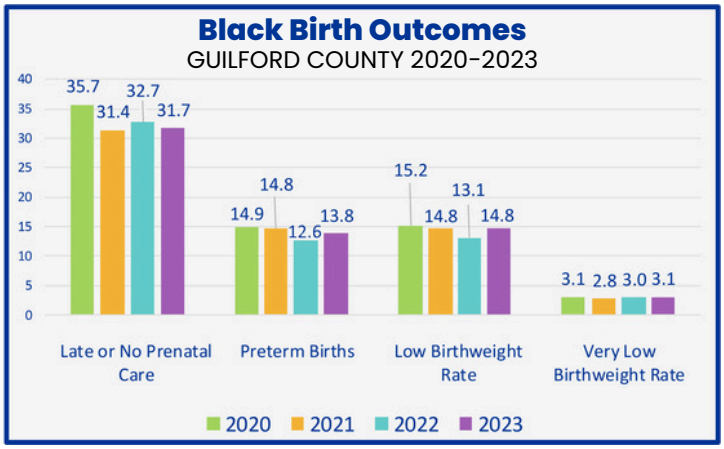
Yearly infant mortality rates by race show a lot of fluctuation. It is more reliable to focus on five-year trends rather than year-to-year fluctuations.

Birth Outcomes Impacting Infant Mortality

Every Baby Guilford uses three measurements for defining our success towards reaching our bold goal: late or no prenatal care, preterm birth, and low or very low birthweight rates.

Preterm = <37 weeks gestation
Low = <2500 gms/5.5 lbs
Very Low = <1500 gms/3.3 lbs

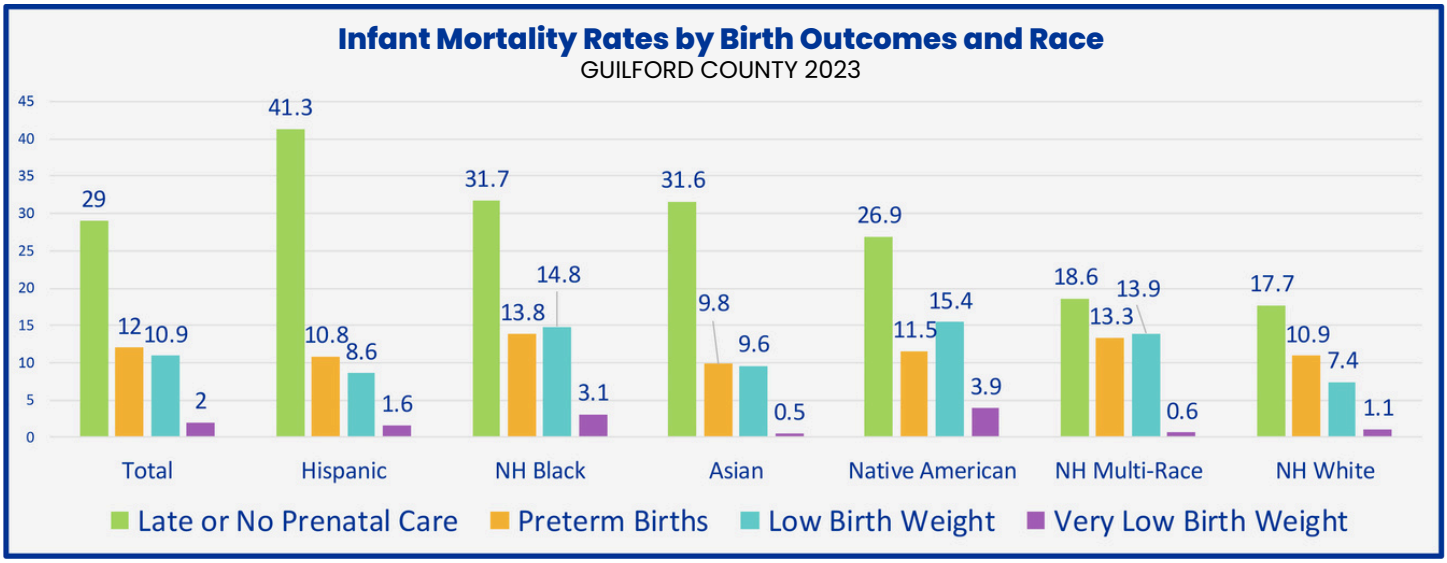




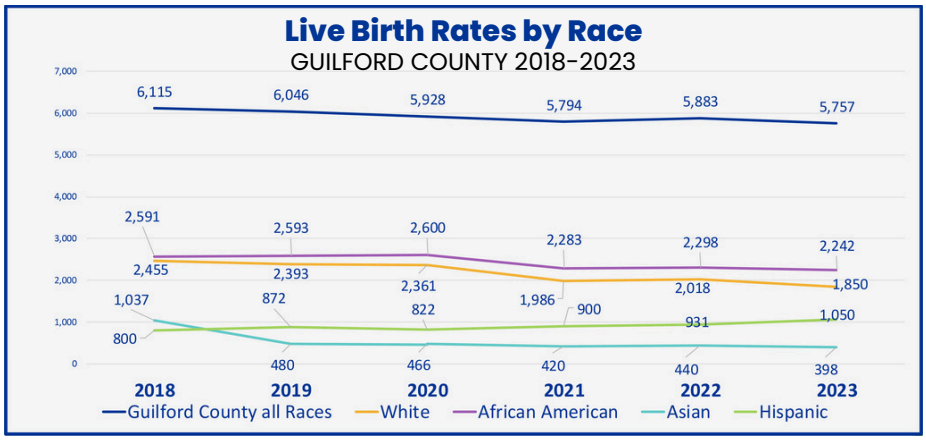
**per 1,000 live births*

While Guilford County has succeeded in reducing rates in all four infant health indicators, when looking at health outcomes across race it is clear that Black women and their babies are continuing to do disproportionately worse than White women and infants.

Data provided by NC Center for HealthStatistics, National Center for Health Statistics.

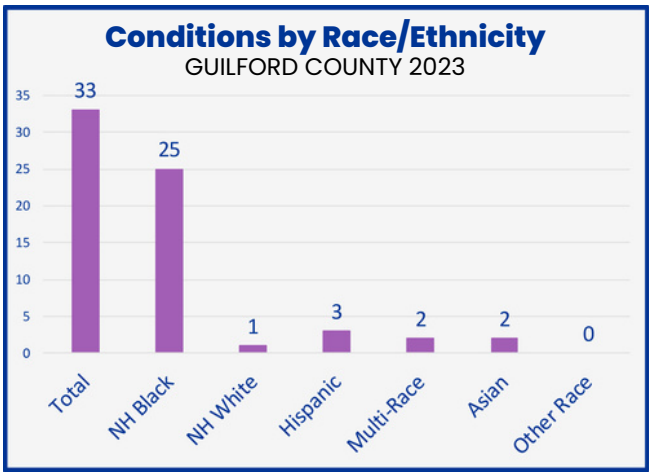


Guilford County experienced 358 fewer births since 2018. This trend is consistent across all races and ethnicities except Hispanic births, which increased by 250 births. Asian births experienced the highest decrease of 639 births, followed by White births with a decrease of 605 births.



2023 Causes of Infant Death

Conditions Originating in the Perinatal Period



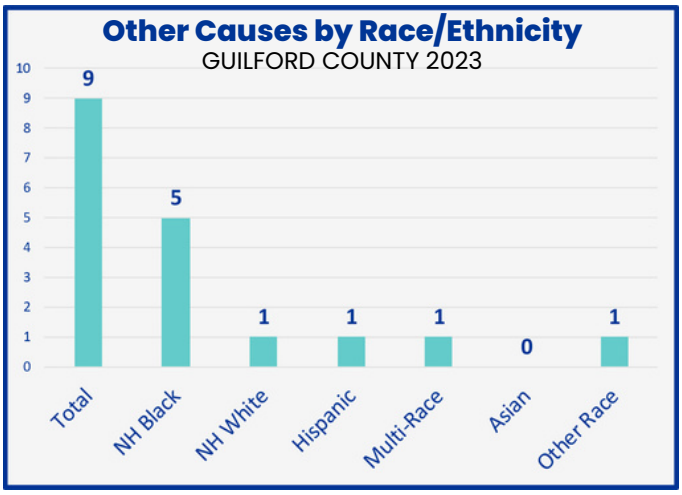
Types of Conditions:

- Extreme prematurity or premature newborn (12)
- Respiratory distress syndrome of newborn
- Newborn affected by premature rupture of membranes
- Newborn affected by incompetent cervix
- Primary atelectasis of newborn/respiratory failure
- Persistent fetal circulation
- Bacterial sepsis of newborn
- Blood clotting disorder of newborn
- Excessive fluid accumulation
- Neonatal cardiac failure
- Perinatal intestinal perforation

Of the 53 infant deaths in Guilford County in 2023, 33 (62%) were caused by conditions originating in the perinatal period, and 25 (76%) of these deaths occurred in Black infants.

Data provided by NC Center for HealthStatistics, National Center for Health Statistics.

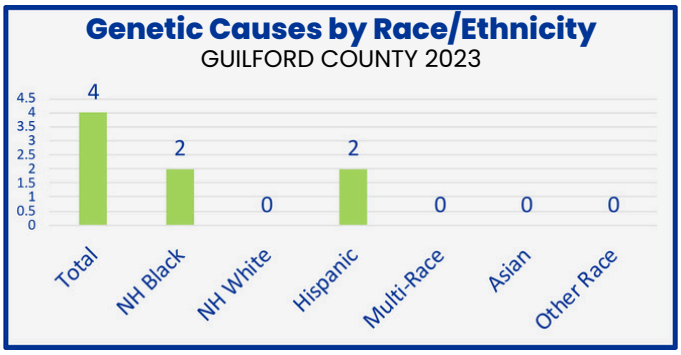
Other Causes

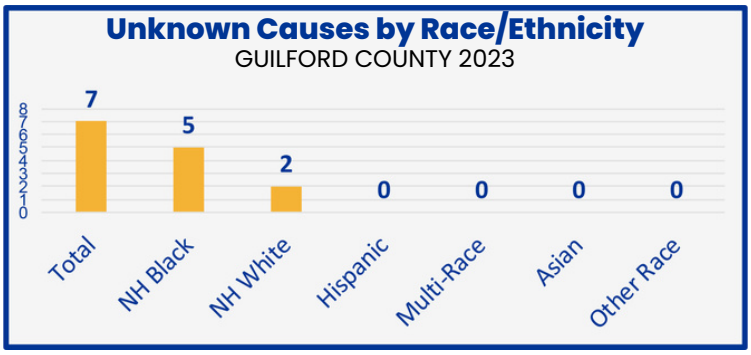


Types of Causes:

- Suffocation, undetermined
- Other & unspecified gastroenteritis & colitis of infectious origin
- Other specified hereditary hemolytic anemias
- Dehydration
- Anoxic brain damage, not elsewhere classified
- Accidental drowning and submersion while in a bathtub
- Maltreatment & neglect, unspecified perpetrator
- External causes; Other specified events, undetermined intent

A total of 9 infant deaths were due to other causes, 4 of which were unsafe sleep. Five (55%) Black infants died from this classification.

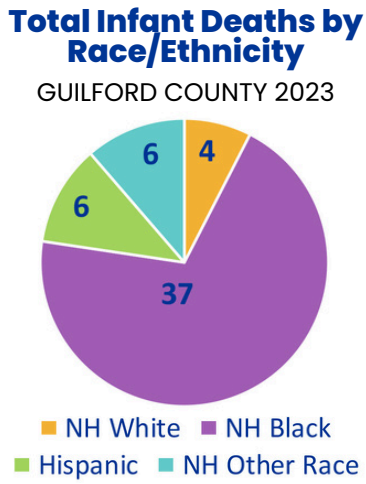




Unpreventable congenital malformations or chromosomal abnormalities accounted for 4 infant deaths. The remaining 7 infant deaths occurred under ill-defined or unknown causes with Black infants having a higher disparity in both categories.

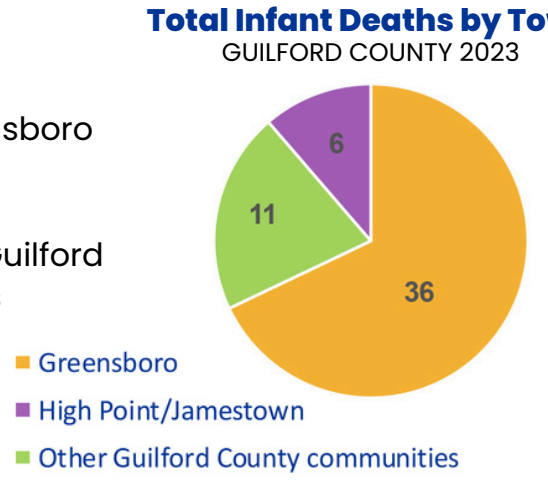
Racial Disparities in Infant Mortality

In 2023, Black babies made up 39% of births in Guilford County but 70% of infant deaths, an increase of 30% from 2022)



Of the 53 infant deaths:

- 68% resided in Greensboro
- 21% resided in High Point/Jamestown
- 11% resided in other Guilford County communities



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