

REPORT CARD 2010

KERN COUNTY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN

Kern County Network for Children. Thomas J. Corson, Executive Director.
Report Card 2010. Bakersfield, California: April 2010.

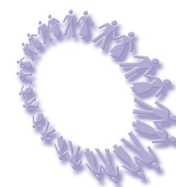
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The mission of the Kern County Network for Children is to protect and enrich the lives of children in Kern County through the commitment of all community partners by helping to build and sustain healthy families.

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WELCOME

Reading Report Card 2010 should be a wake up call for our community. One out of every 20 infants in Kern County is abused or neglected. Kern County has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the State. Over one in four children live in poverty. In many ways, Kern County children and families are worse off than they were a year ago.

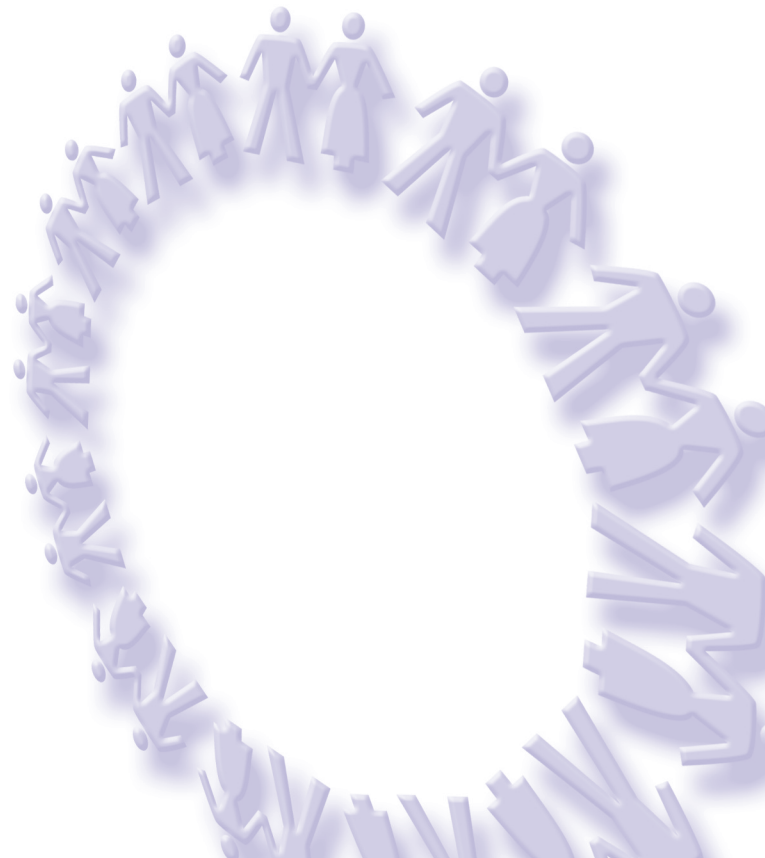
While the economic crisis is clearly related to the decline in the condition of children and families, is it sufficient to blame the economy and hope things turn around? The crisis we are in extends well beyond the economy and should encourage introspection. Are we doing everything we can personally and professionally do to improve the lives of children and families in Kern County? The answer for me is no. We can do more.

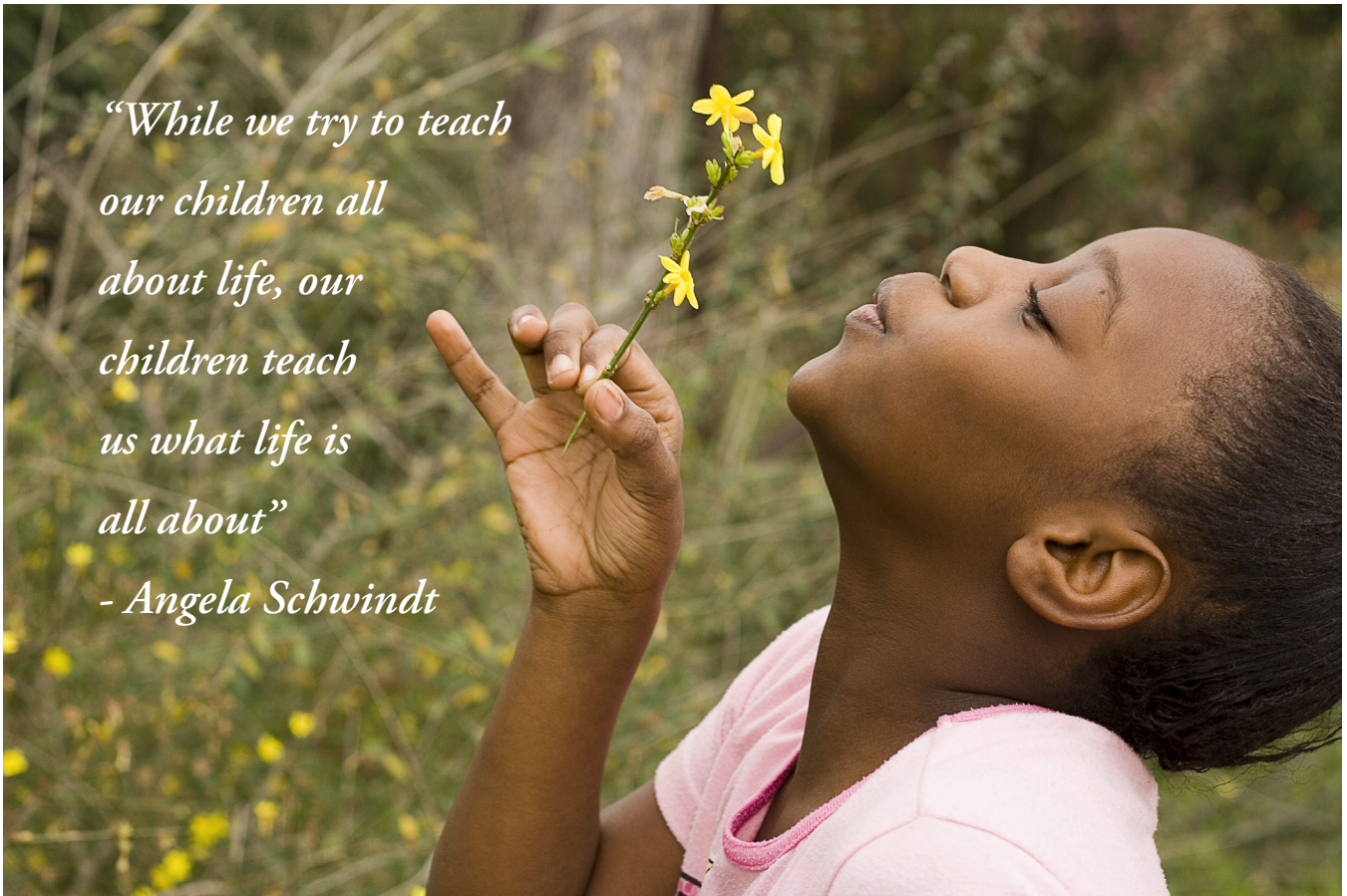
Behind all of the statistics are real children in our community who deserve better. The Kern County Network for Children produces the Report Card not to discourage you but as a call to action. Despite the challenges, we can be inspired by the incredible work of dedicated individuals and organizations highlighted in this report. Let's make children a priority in our community and support these efforts.

Sincerely,



Stephen M. Pelz,
KCNC Governing Board President





*“While we try to teach
our children all
about life, our
children teach
us what life is
all about”
- Angela Schwindt*

In 2008, the Census Bureau estimated 238,845 children under age 18 lived in Kern County, or 30 percent of the total population. More than 100,000 families were raising related children.

-- American Community Survey 2008



COUNTY OVERVIEW

Kern County, California

Kern County is the state's third-largest county in land area, covering 8,170 square miles with three distinct physical environments: valley, mountain, and desert. Its 11 incorporated cities and 41 unincorporated communities were home to an estimated 834,041 residents as of July 1, 2009.

According to the California Department of Finance, Kern was the sixth fastest-growing county in California, based on its one-year percentage growth of 1.36 percent. Statewide, California's population increased 0.93 percent.

Between July 2008 and July 2009, Kern grew by 11,167 individuals. Natural increase (births minus deaths) contributed 10,019 individuals (90%) and net migration (domestic migration plus foreign immigration) contributed 1,148 individuals (10%).

The chart below provides a breakdown of child population by age and ethnicity. This information is taken from the California Department of Finance's most recent population projections, which combine a base population from the 2000 Census with additional data based on birth/death rates, school enrollment, migration patterns,

and other factors. Population figures reported elsewhere in this document may differ slightly, as they are based on the US Census Bureau's annual American Community Survey.

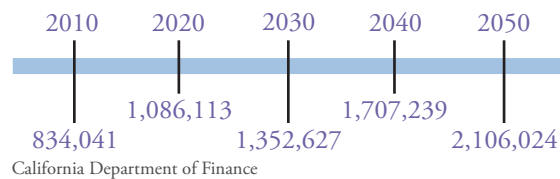
Kern County is one of eight counties to have gained more than 150,000 people in the last nine years. Department of Finance projections released in 2007 estimate Kern's population will grow to almost 1.1 million by 2020 and 1.7 million by 2040.



Kern County's annual population growth has slowed for the fourth consecutive year. The primary source of Kern County's 1.36 percent growth was the 15,257 new births between July 1, 2008 and July 1, 2009. Net migration contributed 1,148 new residents.

-- California Department of Finance

Kern County Population Projections 2010-2050



DATA SOURCES:

California Department of Finance
http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-2/2000-09/documents/E-2_Report.xls

<http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/DEMOGRAP/ReportsPapers/Projections/P3/documents/KERN.XLS>

Kern County Child Population by Ethnicity & Age (2009)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/Pac Islander	Native American	Other	Total
Total Children (0-17)	13,783	87,331	140,175	8,092	1,410	5,450	256,241
Percentage of Total Children	5.4%	34.1%	54.7%	3.2%	0.6%	2.1%	100.0%
Under 1	841	5,326	9,511	494	70	198	16,440
1-2	1,637	10,377	18,375	971	135	372	31,867
3-5	2,192	13,467	25,063	1,247	119	1,377	43,465
6-10	3,430	21,769	36,318	1,954	265	2,084	65,820
11-15	3,939	25,263	36,086	2,376	552	1,009	69,225
16-17	1,744	11,129	14,822	1,050	269	410	29,424

FAMILY ECONOMICS

Households Raising Children

American Community Survey reports 101,793 (42 percent) of Kern County households were families raising children below the age of 18 years in 2008, compared to 34 percent across the state.

In 2008, most Kern County families raising children were married couples (66%). Among single parents raising children, 68 percent were mothers. In Kern County, 45,310 children, or 22 percent of the child population, were being raised by single mothers in 2008. Statewide, the 2008 rate of children in single mother homes was slightly higher at 23 percent.

More children in Kern County are being cared for by their grandparents. In 2008, 5 percent of Kern County's total child population, or 10,915 children, were being raised by their grandparents, compared to 3 percent in 2006. Statewide, 3 percent of California's children were being cared for by their grandparents during 2008. Among grandparents raising their grandchildren in Kern County, 38 percent had cared for their grandchildren for at least 5 years and 13 percent lived in poverty during 2008.

The percentage of children being raised by immigrant parents is decreasing in Kern County. In 2008, 95,462, or 43 percent of the children less than 18 years of age, lived with either one or both parents who were foreign born, compared to 44 percent during 2006. Statewide, the 2008 rate was 50 percent of California children.

Income

The Census Bureau reports Kern County's median income for families with children in 2008 was \$43,183, a decrease of \$1,286 from the previous year's figure. By comparison, the median income in 2008 for families with children was \$64,155 in California and \$60,944 nation wide. Kern County's median family income was 32.7 percent less than the state and 29.1 percent less than the nation.

Per Capita Income

The per capita income figure is often used to measure the economic health of counties and other regions. It is calculated by dividing an area's total income by the number of residents.

According to the 2008 American Community Survey, the Kern County per capita income was \$20,124. By comparison, the per capita income in California was \$29,388 and in the nation was \$27,589 during the same year. Using the Census measure, Kern County's per capita income was 31.5 percent below the state and 27.1 percent less than the nation.



More single parent homes are being led by fathers in Kern County. From 2005 to 2008, the percent of children being raised by single fathers increased from 24% to 29%. In Kern County, 18,631 children were being raised by single fathers in 2008.

-- American Community Survey 2008

Employment

In Kern County, an average labor force of 366,900 was available for work during 2009. Of these, 314,100 were working and 52,800 were seeking employment.

The annual average unemployment rate for Kern County jumped from 9.8 percent in 2008 to 14.4 percent in 2009. By comparison, California's 2009 annual average rate of unemployment was 11.4 percent. Unemployment rates fluctuate throughout the year, especially in regions with seasonal economies like agriculture. During 2009, the county's highest monthly unemployment rates occurred in December (15.7%) and March (15.2%), respectively.

Outlying communities often have higher unemployment rates than Metro Bakersfield, with some areas exceeding 20 percent and 30 percent unemployment rates. In 2009, Arvin (36.3%), Delano (35.0%), and Onyx (34.4%) had the highest unemployment rates in the county.

In Kern County, 61 percent of children had all parents (married and single) in the labor force compared to 65 percent statewide. Children between the ages of 6 and 17 years were more likely to have all parents in the family in the labor force (64%) than children under 6 years of age (57%). In addition, 10 percent of Kern County children had no parents in the labor force in 2008, compared to 8 percent of children statewide.

In 2008, 77 percent of children living in single-parent homes had their parent in the labor force in Kern County. Children living in single father homes were more likely to have their parent in the labor force (87%) than children in single-mother households (73%).



In 2008, Kern County's poverty rates for families headed by single mothers ranged from 51% for women with less than a high school diploma to 2% for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.
-- American Community Survey 2008

DATA SOURCES:

2008 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

California Employment Development Department
<http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/>

Children in Poverty (0-17)	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	29.0%	24.7%	27.1%
California	17.7%	16.9%	18.1%

Children in Poverty (0-4)	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	32.6%	28.8%	32.1%
California	19.2%	18.7%	20.1%

All Families with Children Percent Living in Poverty	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	23.9%	21.2%	24.5%
California	14.3%	13.7%	14.7%

Children in Poverty (5-17)	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	27.6%	23.0%	25.0%
California	17.2%	16.1%	17.3%

Single Moms with Children Percent Living in Poverty	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	48.7%	40.8%	46.3%
California	31.7%	31.8%	32.0%

Students Enrolled in Free or Reduced Price Meal Program	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Kern County	62%	64%	68%
California	51%	54%	51%

Poverty

According to the 2008 American Community Survey, 63,718 children in Kern County (27% of all children) lived in families with incomes below the federal poverty level, which was \$21,200 a year for a family of four. By comparison, 18 percent of children in California were living in poverty. Kern County's child poverty rate increased from the previous year's rate of 25 percent.

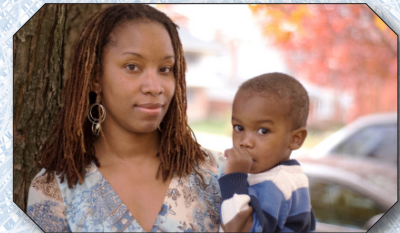
For children, poverty can impede every aspect of well-being including their physical, social emotional health and ability to learn and escape poverty as adults. Among Kern County's poor children, African-American (39%) and Latino (34%) children were more likely to live in poor families than were Caucasian (28%) and Asian (9%) children during 2008.

In 2008, 27,526 families (25% of all families) were raising their children below the poverty line. Single parent families were most likely to be poor. In 2008, 53 percent of the families raising children in poverty were single-parent families. Additionally, 45 percent of single parent families living in poverty were headed by mothers and 9 percent were headed by fathers.

Educational attainment is an important factor in rates of poverty. Among families whose householder had less than a high school diploma, 37 percent lived in poverty in 2008. Of those families whose householder had a high school diploma, the rate of poverty dropped to 18 percent. For those families with householders having at least a bachelor's degree, the poverty rate fell dramatically to 2 percent.

Young Children in Poverty

- Kern County



The most sensitive time for a child's development is before the age of five making very young children especially vulnerable to the effects of poverty. In 2008, 22,373 children under five years of age lived in low-income families throughout Kern County. Moreover, very young children are at greater risk than older children to have more health, social and emotional difficulties and perform poorly in school as they grow up in poverty.

Kern County's youngest children are the most likely to live in poverty than any other age group. The percentage of Kern County children living in poverty who were younger than five years of age grew from 29 percent in 2007 to 32 percent in 2008. Moreover, Kern County's young child poverty rate was higher than the state rate of 20 percent.

In Kern County, poverty rates among young children were highest among African-American children in 2008, with nearly half of all African-American children under the age of five years living in poverty (48%). During the same year, the poverty rate among young Latino children was 36 percent, compared to 23 percent of Caucasian children and 9 percent of Asian children.

Comparing all families, young children being raised by single mothers were the most at risk of growing up in poverty in Kern County. The 2008 poverty rate for children in families headed by single mothers was 59 percent; single fathers 28 percent, compared to 22 percent of children in married-couple families. Since 2006, the percentage of young children being raised in poverty by married couples and single mothers has been increasing. In contrast, the percentage of children being raised in poverty by single fathers has decreased.

Child Support

Child support is vital to the economic well-being of many children, especially those who are poor. During Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008-09, Kern County Department of Child Support Services served 70,675 children represented by 60,000 open support cases. Seventy-four percent of these open support cases had a formal support order established for the custodial parent by the court system.

In 2008, Child Support Services transitioned to a new statewide child support automated system to enhance customer service delivery and ensure more children receive support. Of the \$67.5 million owed to Kern County children from non-custodial parents, \$38.8 million (52%) was collected and distributed as current support.

The percentage collected and distributed during FFY 2008-09 was higher than FFY 2003-04, when only 47 percent of owed child support was collected and distributed.

DATA SOURCES:

2008 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

US Department of Health and Human Services
<http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/09poverty.shtml>

Kern County Department of Child Support Services
<http://www.co.kern.ca.us/childsupport>

Housing

The Census Bureau's 2008 American Community Survey reports 98,718 renting households in Kern County, or 40 percent of the 244,186 total households. Almost half of Kern's renter-occupied housing had children under 18 years (48%). Further, 49 percent of these children live in single parent families.

Families paying more than 30 percent of their gross income for housing are cost burdened and often have difficulty meeting other important financial obligations.

From 2007 to 2008, the percent of renting households that spent 30 percent or more of household income on rent climbed from 46 percent to 57 percent. According to Kern County's Census Bureau median gross rent during 2008 was \$801, a 55 percent increase over the 2000 median gross rent of \$518.

Fair Market Rents are determined annually by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and can differ substantially from the median gross rent reported by the Census Bureau. The current Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Kern County is \$799 a month.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition calculated a housing wage, which is the amount a household must earn to afford a two-bedroom unit. For 2010, the monthly housing wage is \$2,663; the full-time hourly housing wage is \$15.37. Kern County's housing wage represents 192 percent of the current minimum wage. A renter in Kern County earning minimum wage must work 77 hours per week to afford a two-bedroom rental unit at Fair Market Rent.

DATA SOURCES:

2008 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

HUD User
<http://www.huduser.org>

National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)
<http://www.nlihc.org/>



During the 2008-09 funding year, \$38.8 million, or 52% of total child support owed, were collected and distributed to increase parents' ability to consistently provide life's necessities for their children.

-- Kern County
Department of
Child Support
Services



Food Security

As defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), food security for a household means all family members at all times have access to enough food for an active, healthy lifestyle. Several food and nutrition assistance programs are in place to help low-income families and their children avoid hunger and poor nutrition.

Food Stamps

The Food Stamp Program provides benefits in the form of electronic allotments to increase the food purchasing power of eligible low-income households so that they are able to purchase a nutritionally adequate diet. In October 2009, 43,938 Kern County households participated in the food stamp program administered by the Kern County Department of Human Services.

According to the Census Bureau, the percentage of Kern County households with children under 18 years of age receiving food stamps in the past year increased from 11 percent in 2007 to 20 percent in 2008. By comparison, California's rate of households with children receiving food stamps in 2008 was 11 percent. In Kern County, 60 percent of the families with children receiving food stamps in 2008 were headed by a single parent, the overwhelming majority of whom were women (84%).

Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is a federally-funded health and nutrition program for low-income (up to 185% of the federal poverty level) pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women and their children under age five. Community Action Partnership of Kern and Clinica Sierra Vista administer WIC in Kern County. WIC provides vouchers for specific nutritious foods, counseling, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to other needed services.

In November 2009, 53,975 women, infants, and young children in Kern County received WIC services. The California Department of Health Services estimated that 89 percent of Kern County's eligible women, infants, and young children were enrolled in the WIC program, a figure higher than the state rate of 82 percent.

In 2008, there were 171 WIC-authorized stores throughout Kern County, a rate of 0.2 WIC-authorized stores per 1,000 population.

Free & Reduced School Meals

Administered by the USDA, the National School Lunch Program is a federal meal program that assists schools in providing nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free breakfasts and lunches to students from income-eligible families. School meal programs are important social safety nets that according to research improves the academic performance as well as the nutrition, health, and food security status of low-income children. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Children families receiving food stamps or TANF public assistance are automatically eligible for free school meals. Those with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch also can eat school breakfast for the same price.

In October 2009, 68 percent of Kern County's total K-12 school enrollment were enrolled in the

school meals program, its highest level of enrollment. In comparison, California's enrollment in school meals programs was 51 percent. In some Kern County schools, the percentage of students enrolled to receive free or reduced-price meals was much higher. More than half of Kern's public schools had 70 percent or more of their students were enrolled to receive free or reduced-price meals (57%). In addition, most of Kern County's students enrolled in the meal program were qualified to receive free meals (87%).

The number of students enrolled to receive free and reduced-price meals has steadily increased over the last 10 years in Kern County. The total number of students enrolled in the free/reduced meals program grew 16 percent from 83,935 in 1999-00 to 97,685 in 2009-10. The proportion of students receiving free/reduced meals as a percent of the total public school enrollment also increased from 57 percent in 1999-00 to 68 percent in 2009-10.

Some eligible students may not be identified by schools because application forms may be ignored or lost. Further, some children, especially older youth, resist participation in free or reduced-price school meals due to the fear of being stigmatized as poor. According to the California Food Policy Advocates, of the Kern County students eligible for free/reduced meals, 22 percent do not receive lunches and 58 percent do not receive breakfasts.

DATA SOURCES:

California Department of Social Services
<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/default.htm>

2008 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

California Department of Education, DataQuest
<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

Food Environment Atlas
<http://ers.usda.gov/foodatlas/downloadData.htm>

2010 Nutrition and Food Insecurity Profiles
www.cfpa.net



“In these tough economic times, sometimes the only nutritious meal a child gets is through the National School Lunch Program at school.”

-- Jack O'Connell, the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION



Kern County parents need full-time care. Ninety-five percent of child care requests to Community Connection Child Care for children birth to five years were for full-time care. Seventy-eight percent of parents were requesting care because they are working.

Quality Child Care & Early Education

Current research in brain development supports what parents and early childhood educators have long recognized that the first years of life are critical to a child's development. Brain growth and learning are extraordinarily rapid during a child's early years and early experiences can have a long lasting impact on how children develop and their ability to learn. Quality child care and early education has been linked to improved language, academic skills and social development when children enter school.

While studies show that good quality child care can help children's development, they also demonstrate that children in poor quality child care are delayed in language and reading skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults. Additionally, child care and early education support the family in its child rearing role and serves as a vital part of the local economy by enabling parents to enter and remain in the workforce, improving workforce productivity and reducing employee absenteeism.

Supply & Demand

The California Child Care Resource & Referral Network estimated that 100,093 children under the age of 14 years in Kern County were in need of some kind of care--whether for part or all of the day--while their parents worked in 2008. This number represents 53 percent of the child 0-13 population.

There is a wide selection of child care and early education programs available to Kern County families. A total of 1,016 licensed family child care providers and 203 licensed child care centers/ half-day child development programs are located throughout Kern County. There are also 148 programs with a capacity to serve 13,493 school-age children before and after school. Combined, these providers and programs have the capacity to serve 37 percent of Kern's estimated child care need.*

Child care has become an essential work support for families as more working mothers contribute

**Footnote: Kern County's reported capacity does not include license-exempt care provided by relatives, friends, neighbors, and nannies. This type of care is not required to meet the State's child care licensing requirements and the extent to which families choose license-exempt care is unknown.*

to household incomes. The overall labor force participation rates of mothers with children under 18 was 65 percent in 2008 and 59 percent for mothers with children under 6 years of age. Moreover, 25 percent of all Kern County families with children under 18 in 2008 were headed by a single mother and the majority of these mothers were in the labor force (73%).

Cost of Early Care & Education

Quality child care is unaffordable for many Kern County families. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that parents should not spend more than 10 percent of their family income on child care. However, to purchase child care for an infant and a four-year old in a Kern County child care center, a family would have to spend 36 percent of their median annual income for child care.



Kern County's supply of child care falls far short to demand. Licensed care and school age programs in the county are available for only 37% of children with parents in the labor force.

-- California Child Care Resource & Referral Network

Kern County Child Care Supply By Provider/Setting & Spaces (March, 2010)	Number of Providers/Settings	Percentage of Total Providers/Settings	Number of Spaces	Percentage of Total Spaces	Average Number of Spaces Per Provider/Setting
Family Child Care Homes	1,016	74%	10,180	28%	10.0
Licensed Child Care Centers/ Half-Day Enrichment Programs	203	15%	12,882	35%	63.5
License-Exempt Programs (School-Age: 6 years and up)	148	11%	13,493	37%	91.2
Total*	1,367	100%	36,555	100%	26.7

Each California county has a Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) to expand low-income families' access to all of the area's subsidized child care and development programs. CEL data is a valuable tool to accurately address regional demand for subsidized care and plan for funding needs strategically. In the summer of 2009, there were 3,638 families waiting to enroll 5,566 children in subsidized child care or child development programs through the Kern County CEL. The majority of these families need financial assistance with child care in order to work (70%) and 76 percent of the children required full time care. Unfortunately, limited funding offers very few subsidized slots to meet this need, and even fewer opportunities for children under two years of age.

DATA SOURCES:

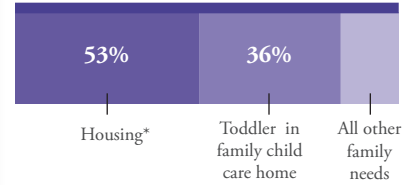
Community Connection for Child Care
<http://www.kernchildcare.org>

California Department of Education
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/cdcls.asp>

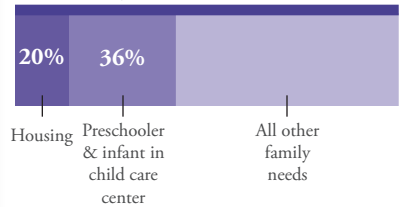
California Child Care Resource & Referral Network
<http://www.rrnetwork.org>

Child Care & Family Budgets

One minimum wage earner
 \$16,640 Annual Income



Median Family Income with Children
 \$44,469 Annual Income



*Housing (rent for 2 bedroom unit)

Infant Child Care

- Kern County



Ninety percent of a child's brain development occurs during his/her first three years, making quality child care in the early years critical to a child's later success. However, choices for licensed child care for infants are in short supply across Kern County. From 2000 to 2008, the population for children under age two years increased by 9 percent, a higher rate of growth than Kern's child population overall. Further, the 2009 Child Care Portfolio showed that while 34 percent of referral requests were from parents seeking infant/toddler care, only 5 percent of licensed center slots in Kern County were for children under age 2.

In general, the younger the child, the more expensive the child care. Quality infant/toddler care requires a lower provider-to-child ratio, smaller group sizes, special equipment and additional health and safety regulations thus making it more expensive for families to afford and child care programs to provide. Current statistics show the average annual cost of full-time care for an infant or toddler in a Kern County center is \$9,410. In a family child care home, a year of care for an infant or toddler averages \$5,994.

Affordable licensed infant/toddler care is even harder for low-income families to find. Parents of an infant or toddler who make minimum wage will spend 57 percent of their annual income on care in a child care center or 36 percent of their income on care in a family child care home.

Parents who cannot either find or afford licensed child care for their infants or toddlers must rely on poorer quality child care settings during these valuable years. These caregivers may not be able to provide the nurturing and support that these very young children need to grow and thrive. For more information about selecting quality infant care, contact Community Connection for Child Care (CCCC) at (661) 861-5200 or visit www.kernchildcare.org.

K-12 EDUCATION

K-12 Education Overview

During the 2008-09 school year, Kern County was home to 47 school districts (K-12). Nearly all of the county's 8,460 teachers had full credentials (96%). The majority of teachers in Kern classrooms were Caucasian (77%) followed by Latino (17%) and African-American (2%) teachers.

Kern County's pupil/teacher ratio was 20.7 students for every teacher during the 2008-09 school year, comparable to the state's ratio of 20.9 students per teacher. The average size of Kern's public school classrooms was 24.5 students, a figure slightly lower than California's average classroom size of 25.4 students.

Enrollment & Student Diversity

In the 2008-09 school year, 174,132 students were enrolled in the county's 264 public schools. California's school enrollment has steadily declined over the past four years most likely a result of the state's economic downturn. Throughout the decade, Kern County schools have added an average of 3,500 students each year, culminating in a high of 174,180 students during the 2007-08 school year. However, during the 2008-09 school year, Kern County school overall enrollment experienced no growth and, in fact, enrolled 48 less students. Trends in student enrollment are critical when it comes to predicting local education funding.

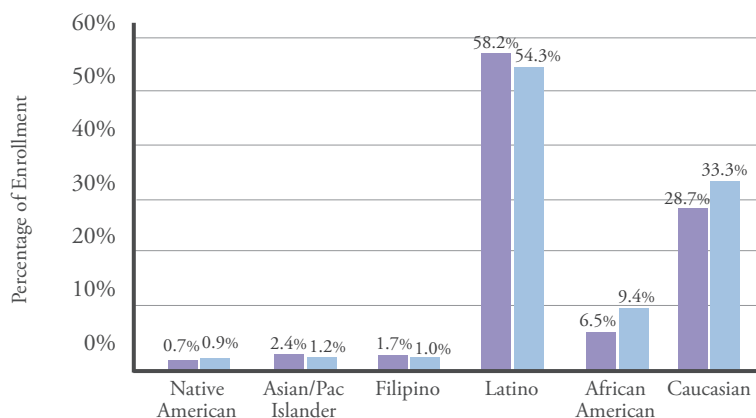


There were 5,525 teachers providing instruction to English Learner students in Kern County schools during the 2008-09 school year, an average of 6.9 English Learner students per teacher. Since 2000-01, this group of teachers has grown 86 percent to meet the needs of students learning English as a second language.

-- California Department of Education

Total Enrollment and Special Education* Enrollment by Ethnicity

Kern County 2008-09



California Department of Education

■ Total Enrollment ■ Special Education

Latino students comprised 58 percent of Kern's total student enrollment. This student population has grown 57 percent since the 1998-99 school year. In comparison, 29 percent of Kern County students were Caucasian, a decrease of 19 percent over the same 10 year period. The percentages of students of African-American (6.5%), Asian/Pacific Islander (2.4%), Philippine (1.7%) and Native American (0.7%) descent have stayed relatively constant since the 1998-99 school year.

Kern schools are linguistically diverse, with 45 languages or dialects represented by students countywide. During the 2008-09 academic year, 38,281 students (22% of total county enrollment) were English Learners. Most of Kern County's English Learner students were in the earlier grade levels, and nearly all spoke Spanish as their first language (96%).

Special Education

Kern County's Special Education system served 16,629 children and young adults from newborn to age 22 during the 2008-09 school year. Of these students, 1,479 children were under the age of five and 14,473 children were between the ages of five and 17.

Additionally, 677 young adult students continued to receive educational and transitional services after the age of 18. Overall, 9 percent of the total public school enrollment (age 5-22 years) were enrolled in special education services in 2008-09, compared to 11 percent statewide.

Almost half of the children and youth receiving Special Education services had a learning disability (44%). Further, 26 percent had a speech or language impairment, 10 percent had mental retardation and 5 percent were diagnosed with autism.

Alternative Education

To be successful in school, students may need a variety of alternative education options to meet their individual needs. These can be mandated, such as continuation schools, or voluntary, such as magnet schools.

In Kern County during the 2008-09 school year, 8,026 students were served through a variety of alternative education programs. This figure represents 5 percent of the total student population in the county.

Of these students, 47 percent were enrolled in independent study, 22 percent participated in Alternative Schools and Programs of Choice and 19 percent attended Magnet Schools.

GATE is the Gifted and Talented Education Program and during the 2008-09 school year, 8,567 students participated in the program. This represented 5 percent of the total Kern County student population.



Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) is the fastest growing serious developmental disability in California. In the 2008-09 school year, 848 or 5 percent of children/youth ages 3-22 who received special education services in Kern County had autism. Kern's student population with autism has increased 79 percent since the 2005-06 school year.

-- California Department
of Education

California

3rd Grade Test Scores (CST) Percent "Proficient" or Above	06-07	07-08	08-09
Reading	37%	38%	44%
Mathematics	58%	61%	64%

7th Grade Test Scores (CST) Percent "Proficient" or Above	06-07	07-08	08-09
Reading	46%	49%	54%
Mathematics	39%	41%	43%

Out-of-School Youth Percent of youth ages 16-19 not in school and without high school diploma	2006	2007	2008
American Community Survey, US Census	3.9%	3.9%	3.9%

Graduation Rates	05-06	06-07	07-08
National Center for Educational Statistics formula	83.4%	80.6%	80.2%

College Prepared Youth	05-06	06-07	07-08
% Grads w/ CSU/UC Require	35.9%	35.5%	33.9%
% 12th Graders Taking SAT	36.7%	36.9%	35.9%

Community Education Levels Percent of all adults 25 and older without at least high school diploma	2006	2007	2008
American Community Survey, US Census	19.9%	19.8%	19.8%

Kern County

3rd Grade Test Scores (CST) Percent "Proficient" or Above	06-07	07-08	08-09
Reading	31%	30%	34%
Mathematics	48%	50%	55%

7th Grade Test Scores (CST) Percent "Proficient" or Above	06-07	07-08	08-09
Reading	38%	39%	44%
Mathematics	34%	34%	36%

Out-of-School Youth Percent of youth ages 16-19 not in school and without high school diploma	2006	2007	2008
American Community Survey, US Census	6.3%	5.4%	7.7%

Graduation Rates	05-06	06-07	07-08
National Center for Educational Statistics formula	81.6%	73.5%	73.5%

College Prepared Youth	05-06	06-07	07-08
% Grads w/ CSU/UC Require	22.6%	23.9%	25.1%
% 12th Graders Taking SAT	23.2%	23.7%	22.5%

Community Education Levels Percent of all adults 25 and older without at least high school diploma	2006	2007	2008
American Community Survey, US Census	28.1%	29.9%	29.8%

Student Testing

The Standardized Testing and Reporting Program (STAR) uses several tests to measure student performance in California schools. The California Standards Tests (CST) are used to measure mastery of state-adopted standards.

3rd Grade Reading and Math

In Kern County during the 2008-09 school year, 34 percent of 3rd graders were proficient or above in English Language Arts and 55 percent were proficient or above in Mathematics.

Statewide, 44 percent of 3rd grade students were proficient or above in English Language Arts and 64 percent were proficient or above in Mathematics.

7th Grade Reading and Math

In Kern County during the 2008-09 school year, 44 percent of 7th graders were proficient or above in English Language Arts and 36 percent were proficient or above in mathematics.

Statewide, 54 percent of 7th grade students were proficient or above in English Language Arts and 43 percent were proficient or above in Mathematics.

CST scores are increasing throughout Kern County schools, however, an achievement gap between those students who are economically

disadvantaged and those who are not continues to exist. In 2008-09 school year, 34 percent of Kern's economically disadvantaged students (2nd – 7th grade) scored at proficient and advanced in English-Language Arts compared to 62 percent of non-economically disadvantaged students.

In math, 42 percent of economically disadvantaged students scored at proficient and advanced in comparison to 61 percent of non-economically disadvantaged students.

High School Exit Exam

The goal of the California High School Exit Exam (or CAHSEE) is to make sure that every California student that receives a high school diploma has a basic understanding of English-language arts and mathematics. The exam is given several times throughout grades 10, 11 and 12 to allow students multiple opportunities to pass the exam before graduation.

CAHSEE Exam data from the 2008-09 school year indicate that the majority of Kern County students pass the exam on their first opportunity in the tenth grade. Seventy-five percent of the Class of 2011 passed the English Language Arts portion and 76 percent passed the exam's Mathematics section. Statewide, 79 percent of California's 10th graders tested passed the English Language Arts portion and 80 percent passed the exam's Mathematics section.



Among grades 3 through 7, girls consistently outscored boys in the English-Language Arts portion of the CST in Kern County. In the 2008-09 academic year, girls were 21 percent more likely than boys to score proficient or better in English-Language Arts.

--California Department of Education

Kern County 3rd & 7th Grade Students Scoring Proficient or Above (CST) 08-09	3rd Grade		7th Grade	
	English Language Arts	Mathematics	English Language Arts	Mathematics
All	34%	55%	44%	36%
Male	33%	57%	39%	36%
Female	37%	54%	49%	36%
Economically Disadvantaged	27%	50%	36%	30%
Students With Disabilities	18%	33%	9%	7%
Migrant Students	19%	46%	31%	29%
English Learners	12%	39%	6%	9%

California Department of Education

When compared, African-American and Latino 10th grade students were less likely to pass the CAHSEE the first time than Caucasian and Asian/Pacific Islander 10th graders. Students in special education and English Learners were also less likely to pass the CAHSEE exam during their first attempt than other student groups.

College Preparation

In California, students are believed to be fully prepared for a four-year college when they have completed all of the “A-G” class requirements for entering the California State University (CSU)/University of California (UC) system with a grade of “C” or better. In Kern County during 2007-08, 25 percent of students graduated with all “A-G” classes completed, a figure higher than the previous school year rate. At the same time, 34 percent of seniors statewide completed these requirements.

In Kern County, female graduates (29%) had a much higher likelihood of graduating with CSU and UC college prep classes than male graduates (20%) during the 2007-08 school year. Asian/Pacific Islander (55%), Filipino (39%) and Caucasian (31%) graduates exceeded the County’s A-G requirement completion rate. In contrast, African-American (21%), Latino (19%) and Native American (16%) graduates each had a completion rate lower than the Kern’s overall rate.

Most college bound students take the SAT college admissions exam, now called SAT Reasoning Test. The SAT contains three sections with scores of 200 to 800 for a maximum score of 2400. During the 2007-08 school year, 23 percent of Kern’s 12th graders took the SAT exam, compared to 36 percent of 12th graders statewide. Kern County students averaged 485 in Math, 463 in Writing and 469 in Critical Reading. Kern’s average scores were below the State’s scores of 513 in Math, 493 in Writing and 494 in Critical Reading.

Graduation

In Kern County, 9,849 students met graduation requirements during the 2007-08 school year, nearly 1,000 more students than the previous school year. Despite this rise in student graduates, Kern County’s high school graduation rate remained unchanged from 2006-07 to 2007-08 at 73.5 percent. High school graduation rates within Kern County have consistently been lower than the statewide rate. California’s graduation rate was 80.2 per 100 students for the 2007-08 school year.

During the 2007-08 school year, 3,835 students - or 26.9 percent of the students in grades 9 through 12 - dropped out of Kern County high schools. By comparison, Kern’s dropout rate in 2006-07 was 25.2 percent. The county’s drop-out rate remains higher than California’s drop-out rate of 18.9 percent in the 2007-08 academic year.

In Kern County, male students (31%) had a higher drop-out rate than female students (22%) in 2007-08. African-American (37%), Native American (33%) and Latino (30%) students were most likely to drop-out of Kern County’s schools. Moreover, the drop-out rate of Kern’s socioeconomically disadvantaged students jumped from 19 percent in 2006-07 to 29 percent in 2007-08.

DATA SOURCES:

California Department of Education, DataQuest
<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

California Postsecondary Education Commission
<http://www.cpec.ca.gov>

2008 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov>



A college education serves as the gateway to better options and more opportunity. In 2008, 44% of Kern public high school students attended a UC (3%), CSU (9%) or a community college (32%). Kern County’s college going rate was below the statewide rate of 47%.

-- California
Postsecondary
Education
Commission

Bullying

- Kern County 2010



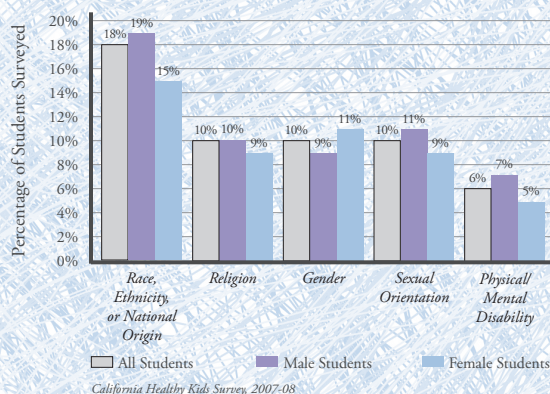
Some adults dismiss bullying among youth as a normal part of childhood. However, bullying has severe academic, health and safety consequences for students. The California Department of Education defines "bullying" as aggressive behavior repeated over time that intends to harm or distress an individual or group. Bullying involves either a real or perceived imbalance of power, with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. Bullying may be physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing), verbal (taunting, teasing, racial slurs, verbal harassment), or emotional (spreading rumors, purposely excluded someone from a group or activity, extorting, or intimidating). With more youth accessing the Internet and cell phones, bullies can now spread rumors, harass, threaten or stalk their targets at all times of the day.

According to the 2007-08 California Healthy Kids Survey, 41 percent of Kern County's students in grades 5, 7, 9 and 11 reported they were pushed, hit or kicked in the past year by someone at school who was not just kidding around. In addition, over half of these students have had mean rumors or lies about themselves spread by other students at their schools (52%). Not only does it harm victims, bullying creates a climate of violence and intimidation within the school. Overall, less than one-third of surveyed students reported feeling very safe at school at all times (28%).

Survey data show physical bullying and harassment are greater problems in the elementary and junior high years, and decreases as students move into high school. Over half of 5th and 7th graders reported being physically bullied (51%) or had rumors/lies told about them (53%) at least one time as school.

Older students were more often bullied through rumor-spreading than physically bullied in school. Of the high school students who reported having mean rumors and lies told about them, 39 percent were 9th graders and 42 percent were 11th graders. In comparison, 32 percent of 9th graders and 23 percent of 11th graders reported being pushed, hit, or kicked in the past year by someone at school who was not just kidding around. Although older students reported lower bullying rates, students in grades 9 (17%) and 11 (16%) were less likely to report feeling very safe at school than students in grade 5 (51%) and 7 (21%).

Reasons for Bullying and Harassment
Among Students in Grades 7, 9 and 11
Kern County 2007-08



Bullying reduces the opportunities for youth to learn at school and achieve. Recent research indicates that students who are bullied experience higher levels of depression, low self-esteem, absenteeism and lower grades resulting from the fear of being bullied at school. Moreover, if bullying persists, victims may feel forced to defend themselves by carrying a weapon or planning vengeance against the bully. Students may also consider running away or suicide to escape being bullied or harassed at school.

Schools, parents and students can work together to ensure schools are safe for all students. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office offers trainings on bullying and cyber-bully to school staff to help them recognize and address school violence and bullying. Parents and students may visit www.bullying.org and www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov for bullying prevention resources for all ages.



“A baby is born with a need to be loved--and never outgrows it.” -- Frank A. Clark

CHILD & ADOLESCENT HEALTH

Prenatal Care

Adequate and accessible prenatal health care is vital to the well being of both mother and baby. According to the California Department of Public Health, 68.8 percent of pregnant mothers in Kern County obtained prenatal care services during the first trimester in 2008. In California overall, 80.7 percent of mothers received care during their first trimester.

Prematurity and Low Birthweight

Babies born too soon or too small are at greater risk of disability and dying during infancy. In 2008, 15,315 babies were born in Kern County. Of those with a reported gestation period, 13.9 percent were born prior to 37 weeks - the point which defines prematurity. By comparison, 10.7 percent of California's babies were premature.

Newborns have a low birthweight when they weigh less than 5.5 pounds. These infants have increased risk of health complications. The three year (2006-2008) average percentage of low weight births in Kern County was 7.1 percent. By comparison, the three-year average was 6.9 percent for all live births in California.

Teen Pregnancy

In 2008, Kern County reported the highest teen birth rate among females between the ages of 15 and 19 years in California - 64.9 births for every 1,000 females. This figure has increased for the third consecutive year. In contrast, California's teen birth rate has declined to 35.2 per 1,000 females, a state record low.

Teen mothers and their babies are at greater risk of birth complications and long term health issues. In addition, children born to young mothers are more likely to experience poverty, abuse and neglect during their childhood. In 2008, 2,285 babies or 14.9 percent of Kern's total births were born to mothers between the ages of 15 and 19. In California, the percentage of births to young mothers was 9.4 percent.

Kern County's teen birth rates increased for all racial/ethnic groups during 2008 with the exception of the rate for Latino females (90.0 births per 1,000 females), which declined 4.4 percent compared with the 2007 data. When compared to 2007 teen birth rates, African-American teens (79.1 per 1,000 females) increased by 1.9 percent; Caucasian teens (34.9 per 1,000 females) increased 24.5 percent; and Asian/Pacific Islander teens (17.5 per 1,000 females) increased 12.6 percent.

Fewer babies are being born in Kern County to females under the age of 15 years. In 2008, 19 babies were born to mothers younger than 15 years in age compared to 30 babies in 2005. During this period, the birth rate for this younger female population dropped by 33 percent.

Breastfeeding

California Department of Health Services promotes breastfeeding as the most healthy and preferred method of infant feeding for at least the first year of life. In 2008, the breastfeeding rate in Kern County was 80 percent of total births. Statewide, the breastfeeding rate was 86 percent. Moreover, among infants enrolled in the WIC program in 2008, 6 percent of 2-month-olds were exclusively breastfed, while 65 percent were fed formula solely.

Immunizations

The California Department of Health Services conducts an immunization assessment of enrolling Kindergartners to monitor compliance with California's School Immunization Law. In the fall of 2008, 91.3 percent of children enrolling in Kindergarten had all required immunizations. Statewide this figure was 91.7 percent.

Infant Death

During 2008, 110 Kern County babies died before their first birthday. The three-year (2005-2007) average mortality rate for infants in Kern County was 6.5 per 1,000 live births. This figure was higher than the California three-year average rate of 5.3.



California's Safely Surrendered Baby Law allows distressed birth parents to confidentially surrender their baby within 3 days of birth to any fire station or hospital emergency room without fear of arrest for abandonment. Since the law was enacted in 2001, 12 newborns in Kern County have been surrendered safely.

--Kern County Department of Human Services

Nationwide, African-American infants die more frequently than those of any other race/ethnicity. In Kern County, the three-year (2005-2007) average mortality rate for African-American infants was 17.0* per 1,000 live births; in California the figure was 12.4 per 1,000.

**Unreliable, relative standard error greater than or equal to 23 percent.*

DATA SOURCES:

CA Dept of Public Health
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/data/statistics>

CA Dept of Health Services, Immunization Branch
<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/izgroup/shared/levels.htm>

CA Dept of Health Services, County Health Profiles
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/pubsforms/Pubs/OHIRProfiles2010.pdf>

Kern County Public Health Department
<http://www.kern.publichealth.com>

Sleep-Related Infant Deaths

- Kern County



Positional asphyxia was the second leading cause of infant death in Kern County from 2004 to 2008. Positional asphyxia occurs when an infant cannot move out of a sleeping position in which his/her mouth and nose is blocked, or where his/her chest may be unable to fully expand, and suffocates. Positional asphyxia differs from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), the unexpected, sudden death of a child under age 1, in which normal autopsy procedures indicate no other cause of death. Almost all SIDS deaths occur without any warning or symptoms when the infant is thought to be sleeping.

Kern County's Child Death Review Team identified positional asphyxia as the cause in 14 percent of the 93 infant deaths reviewed between the years 2004 and 2008. There were four deaths in 2005 and nine deaths in 2008. During that same time, three infant deaths in 2004 and one death in 2008 were linked to SIDS.

Infant deaths related to unsafe sleep practices are preventable. To reduce the risk of both SIDS and accidental suffocation, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) urges parents and caregivers to place an infant for naps and at night on his or her back in a safety-approved crib on a firm and fitted mattress. Items such as blankets, pillows, propped bottles, and stuffed animals provide opportunities for asphyxia and should not be in the crib.

The AAP also recommends that infants should not sleep in adult beds and should not be placed in bed with parents or siblings. An adult or older child sleeping in the same bed with an infant can roll on top of the infant accidentally causing severe brain damage or death by suffocation. Moreover, an infant is at greater risk of severe injury or death from positional asphyxia if a co-sleeping adult in the bed is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The Kern County Department of Public Health has information and brochures on safe sleeping on its website at www.kernpublichealth.com. Child safety advocates encourage parents to use these materials to help them discuss the importance of safe sleep practices with anyone caring for their infant such as a child care provider, a family member, babysitter or a friend.

Late or No Prenatal Care	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	5.4%	5.7%	6.3%
California	2.8%	3.2%	3.2%

Overweight Youth (Percentage of 5 th /7 th /9 th grade)	2006 -2007	2007 -2008	2008 -2009
Kern County	36.6%	38.3%	35.8%
California	31.9%	31.2%	31.0%

Premature Births (Percentage of live births)	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	13.4%	13.8%	13.9%
California	11.0%	11.1%	10.7%

Chlamydia Infection in Female Youth (Rate per 100,000 population)	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	3179.7	3189.8	3303.3
California	2283.3	2314.7	2615.9

Births to Teen Mothers 15-19 (Percentage of live births)	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	14.0%	14.4%	14.9%
California	9.4%	9.4%	9.4%

Infant Mortality Rate - 3yr avg (Rate per 1,000 live births)	2003 -2005	2004 -2006	2005 -2007
Kern County (All Races)	6.4	6.7	6.5
California (All Races)	5.4	5.3	5.3
Kern County (African-American)	16.4	16.5	17.0
California (African-American)	12.0	12.3	12.4

Births to Teen Mothers 15-19 (Rate per 1,000 population)	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	62.5	63.8	64.9
California	37.8	37.1	35.2

* Unreliable, relative standard error greater than or equal to 23 percent.

Kern County Births to Teens 15-19 (2008)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/ Pac Islander	Native American	Total *
Number of Live Births	168	477	1,555	24	8	2,285
Teen Birth Rate per 1,000 females in race/ethnicity group	79.1	34.9	90.0	18.8	25.5	64.9

* Figures will not total 100 percent as unknown or multiple races are excluded from these tables.

Childhood Obesity & Fitness

A healthy lifestyle, including good nutrition and fitness levels, can significantly reduce an adult's risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer. For best lifelong health, good nutrition and activity habits must begin in childhood.

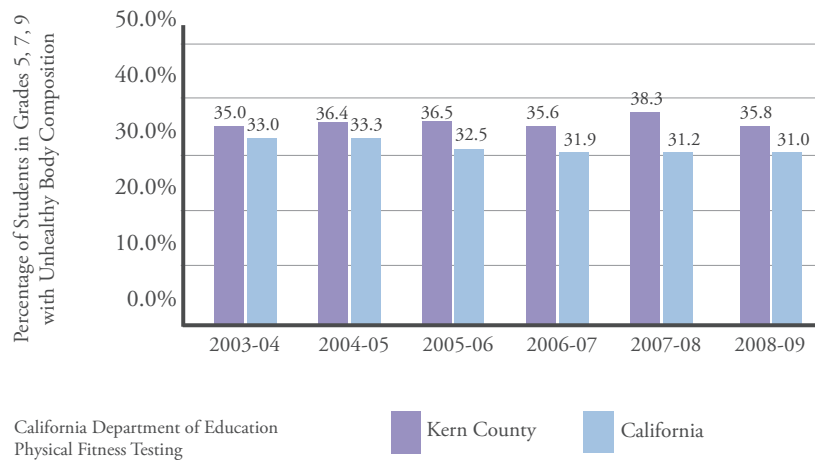
During the 2008-09 school year, 39,058 Kern County 5th, 7th and 9th graders completed California Physical Fitness Testing. Among these students, 35.8 percent had unhealthy body composition based on individual Body Mass Index (BMI) scores. This rate has decreased from the previous year's 38.3 percent, but remains higher than California rate of 31.0 percent.

The rates of students with unhealthy body composition declined among all racial and ethnic groups. However, Latino (40.3%), Native American (38.5%) and African-American (36.3%) students continue to have the highest rates of unhealthy body composition. On average, boys (40.8%) had poorer body composition than girls (30.7%).

Data collected by the 2007 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) showed 16 percent of Kern County school-age youth drink more than two glasses of soda each day and 47 percent had eaten fast food more than once during the last week. The Survey also found that 28 percent of Kern County school-age children and 33 percent of teens did not engage in vigorous activity at least three days per week.

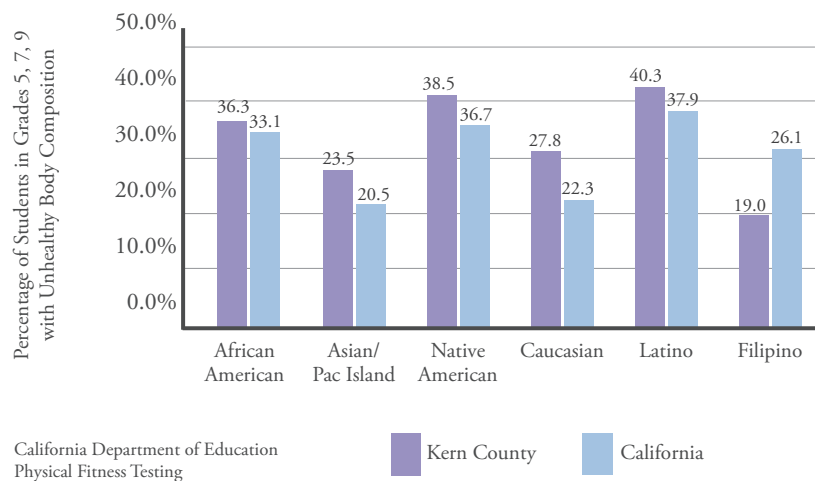
Unhealthy Body Composition of Students 2003-04 through 2008-09

Kern County and California ~ 5th, 7th, & 9th Graders



Unhealthy Body Composition of Students by Ethnicity 2008-09

Kern County and California ~ 5th, 7th, & 9th Graders



Asthma

Childhood asthma is widespread in the Central Valley and is often linked to the Valley's poor air quality, heavy trucking corridors, and physical geography. According to the 2007 California Health Interview Survey conducted by UCLA, 22 percent of children in Kern County have been diagnosed with asthma during their lifetime. Statewide, the figure was 15 percent.

Asthma is the most common cause for emergency room visits and hospitalizations of children. During 2007, Asthma comprised 10 percent of hospital discharges for Kern County children. This figure marks a decade high.

Oral Health

Tooth decay is the most prevalent chronic disease of childhood and can lead to problems with a child's nutrition, growth and academic performance. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends a dental check-up at least twice a year for children. According to the 2007 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), 85 percent of Kern County's children, ages 2-17 years, had visited a dentist at least one time in the last 12 months. Further, an estimated 13,000 Kern County children, ages 2-17, had never seen a dentist.

As of 2007, 7 percent of Kern County children between the ages of 2 and 17 years lived in families that could not afford dental care they needed. In addition, 22 percent of children in this age group did not have dental insurance in Kern County. When compared, 72 percent of uninsured children visited a dentist at least once during the last year versus 87 percent of insured children.

Health Care

Every child has different health care needs throughout childhood. Consistent healthcare and access to health insurance increases the likelihood that children remain healthy by providing early identification and treatment of health problems. As of 2007, 16 percent of Kern County's children under 18 years of age had not visited a physician within the past year, according to the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS).

In 2007, a doctor's office or health maintenance organization (HMO) was the usual place for sick care for 55 percent of children in Kern County. One in three children went to either a community clinic or hospital in Kern County for their health care. Further, 12 percent of Kern County children lack a usual place to go to when sick or need health advice.

CHIS researchers asked parents what type of health insurance coverage they had for their children. Using this measure, most Kern County children in 2007 received their health insurance through their parents' employers (44%) or Medi-Cal (49%). An estimated 11,000 Kern County children, or 5 percent of the child population, were uninsured. When compared, 15 percent of uninsured children had not visited a physician during the last year versus 35 percent of insured children.



Children experiencing dental pain are unable to sleep well, eat well or focus in school. In California, 28% of children from kindergarten to third grade have untreated tooth decay and 4% are in urgent need of dental care because of pain or infection.

-- Children Now

Sexually Transmitted Disease

Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted communicable disease in the United States. It is referred to as a “silent” disease because about 75 percent of infected women and 50 percent of infected men have no symptoms. Chlamydia, if left untreated, can cause irreversible damage to female reproductive organs and can be transmitted to newborn babies.

In 2008, Kern County had the highest rate of chlamydia cases among California counties with 5,613 confirmed cases. From 2007 to 2008, the rate of diagnosed infection in females of all ages increased 3 percent to 752.3 per 100,000 population. For males, the rate jumped 44 percent from last year to 593.9 per 100,000 population. By comparison, California rates were 544.9 and 231.2 for females and males, respectively.

In Kern County, the rates of chlamydia were highest among young women between the ages of 15-19 (3,341.3 per 100,000) and 20-24 (3,264.1 per 100,000). These rates were significantly higher than the California rates of 2,354.4 and 2,907.3 for females in the same age groups, respectively. The highest rates of chlamydia in 2008 were within the African-American and Latino populations. When compared to 2007, the rate of chlamydia infections for African-American men (1,864.5 per 100,000 population) increased 49 percent; Latino men (648.4 per 100,000 population) increased by 46 percent; African-American women (2,222.6 per 100,000 population) increased by 17 percent; and Latino women (791.9 per 100,000 population) increased by 4 percent.

Mental Health

In 2007, the California Department of Mental Health estimated 18,912 children and youth, 8 percent of Kern’s child population, had a serious emotional disturbance that significantly interfered with their day-to-day life. Children living in poverty within the county had a prevalence rate of 10 percent. These rates reflected the statewide estimates of 8 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

Depression is one of the most frequently diagnosed mood disorders in children and adolescents. Stress and experiencing a loss as well as attention, learning, conduct and anxiety disorders place youth at a higher risk for depression. Moreover, growing research strongly suggests a genetic link to depression.

Findings from the 2007-08 California Healthy Kids Survey show older students and female students were most likely to report feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more consecutive weeks in the last year. Thirty-one percent of 7th graders, 33 percent of 9th graders and 38 percent of 11th graders admitted feeling sad or hopeless. Almost half of Kern’s community school students (44%) reported that they stopped some of their usual activities during the past year because of feelings of sadness or hopelessness.



Chlamydia is the most commonly reported sexually transmitted disease in young females ages 15-19 years. In 2008, the chlamydia infection rate among females in this age group was 42 percent higher than the state’s rate and 31 percent higher than the US rate.

--California Department
of Public Health

In California, 28 percent of 7th graders, 31 percent of 9th graders, 33 percent of 11th graders and 39 percent of students in non-traditional schools reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more consecutive weeks during the past 12 months.

When compared to male students, 39 percent of female students in Kern County admitted feeling sad or hopeless, while 28 percent of male students indicated they felt the same way. This gap was greatest among community school students where female students were almost twice as likely to report symptoms of depression than male students (59% vs. 32%).

Compared to data from the 2006-07 survey, higher percentages of Kern County students in grades 7, 9 and 11 reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more consecutive weeks during the past 12 months. The greatest percent increase was among community school students, an increase of five percentage points. A greater proportion of female students also reported symptoms of depression than during the 2006-07 school year. Female students in community schools had the greatest increase of reporting feelings of sadness or hopelessness since the 2006-07 school year, an increase of 11 percentage points.

For youth experiencing mental health issues, the transition to adulthood can be particularly challenging. According to a 2009 study from the Urban Institute, youth with depression engage in more risk-taking behaviors by age 18 such as using drugs, early sexual activity, stealing, fighting and running away than youth experiencing less or no depression. Youth with depression were also twice as unlikely to complete high school than peers with less or no depression.

The early diagnosis of depression and its treatment are critical to a youth's emotional, social, and behavioral development. Even though the recovery rate from a single episode of major depression is high, future episodes are likely to recur among children and adolescents. Left untreated, depression can increase a youth's risk of suicide.



From 2000 to 2006, female youths in Kern County had higher rates of suicide attempts than male youth, 68% compared to 32%. Young males, however, died much more often by means of suicide than did females. Males made up 81% of suicide deaths in recent years.

--California Department
of Public Health

DATA SOURCES:

CA Department of Mental Health
<http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov/>

California Health Interview Survey
<http://www.chis.ucla.edu>

California Healthy Kids Survey
<http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/pj/245>

California Department of Public Health,
STD Control Branch
<http://www.std.ca.gov>

California Department of Education, Data Quest
<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>

The Urban Institute
http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/411948_depression_anxiety.pdf

Suicide

From 2000 to 2006, Kern County lost 21 youth between the ages of 15 and 19 years to suicide. Male youth accounted for 81 percent of Kern's suicides in this age group, a figure 4.3 times higher than the female rate. Youth committed suicide with either a firearm (62%) or by hanging/suffocation (38%) during 2000 to 2006. The annual number of youth suicides fluctuated throughout the 2000 decade with a high of 6 suicides in 2001 and a low of 1 suicide in the years 2000 and 2002.

Between the years 2000 to 2006, 1,993 Kern County residents of all ages were hospitalized for suicide attempts. A total of 244, or 12 percent, of these suicide attempts were youth between the ages of 15 and 19 years. Among these youth, females (68%) had a higher rate of attempted suicide than males (32%). The attempted suicide rate for Caucasian youth (75%) was considerably higher than any other racial or ethnic group. Latino (18%), African American (4%) and Asian (1%) comprised the remaining racial/ethnic groups.

Most youth attempted suicide by poisoning themselves (82%). The remaining methods used by youth during suicide attempts were cutting/piercing (11%), firearms (2%) and hanging/suffocation (1%). In addition, there were seven attempts in which the method was unknown and one that was by jumping.

DATA SOURCES:

EPICenter, California Injury Data Online
<http://www.applications.dhs.ca.gov/epicdata>

Smoking, Alcohol & Substance Abuse

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) is administered every two years in order to meet the requirements of the federal Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act. In the 2007-08 school year, the Survey asked 7th, 9th, 11th graders and community school students health and behavior questions to find out what problems students face in regards to substance abuse and violence to help put programs in place to effectively address problems.

During the 2007-08 school year, the rates of smoking, alcohol and marijuana use among Kern's 7th, 9th, 11th graders and community school students were higher among older students, males and community school students with the exception of alcohol use which was higher among female students than males.

Cigarette Smoking

In Kern County, 6 percent of 7th graders, 10 percent of 9th graders and 13 percent of 11th graders responded that they had smoked cigarettes during the past 30 days. Almost half of Kern's community school students (47%) admitted they smoked cigarettes during the past month. In California, 5 percent of 7th graders, 9 percent of 9th graders, 14 percent of 11th graders and 39 percent of students in non-traditional schools reported use of cigarettes in the past 30 days during the same school year.

The majority of 11th graders (73%) and community school students (73%) considered it easy to obtain cigarettes in Kern County compared to 9th graders (56%) and 7th graders (32%).

Most 7th graders (79%), 9th graders (76%) and 11th graders (80%) disapproved of their peers smoking cigarettes. In contrast, 56 percent of community school students disapproved of someone their age smoking cigarettes. Despite peer disapproval, when compared to the 2005-06 survey, more 7th grade, 9th grade and community school



Youth who begin smoking at younger ages are more likely to become strongly addicted to nicotine than youth who begin smoking at older ages. During the 2007-08 school year, 60% of Kern County students reported they first experimented with smoking cigarettes when they were 12 years old or younger.

--California
Healthy Kids
Survey

students reported smoking cigarettes in the past 30 days. Only students in the 11th grade had a lower percentage of cigarette use when compared to the previous survey.

Male students were more likely to report smoking cigarettes than female students. In 2007-08, 6 percent of male and 5 percent of female 7th graders, 10 percent of male and 9 percent of female 9th graders, 15 percent of female and 12 percent of male 11th graders admitted to smoking cigarettes during the past month. Among community school students, 52 percent of male and 41 percent of female reported smoking during the past month.

Alcohol Use

In Kern County, alcohol had a higher rate of use by responding students when compared to other problem substances such as smoking and marijuana. In the 2007-08 school year, 16 percent of 7th graders, 27 percent of 9th graders and 35 percent of 11th graders self-reported they had drunk alcohol during the past 30 days. Over half of Kern's community school students (47%) responded that they had drunk alcohol during the past month. In California, 14 percent of 7th graders, 26 percent of 9th graders, 37 percent of 11th graders and 55 percent of students in non-traditional schools reported use of alcohol in the past 30 days during the same school year.

The majority of 7th graders (78%), 9th graders (72%) and 11th graders (75%) disapproved of their peers drinking alcoholic beverages nearly every day. In contrast, 55 percent of community school students disapproved of youth their age drinking alcohol on a regular basis. Despite peer disapproval, when compared to the 2005-06 survey, the percentage who reported currently drinking alcohol increased among students in 7th grade, 9th grade and community schools. Only students in the 11th grade had a lower percentage of consuming alcohol in the past 30 days when compared to the previous survey.

In general, female students reported higher rates of alcohol use. In the 2007-08 school year, 16 percent of female and 15 percent of male 7th graders, 30 percent of female and 24 percent of male 9th graders and 35 percent of both female and male 11th graders reported drinking alcohol at least one time during the past month. Among community school students, 67 percent of female and 65 percent of male students reported drinking alcohol sometime over the past 30 days.

Despite laws in every State that make it illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to purchase or possess alcohol, the majority of the 11th graders (75%) and community school students (71%) and more than half of the 9th graders (59%) who responded to the survey admitted that alcohol was easy for them to obtain. Among 7th grade students, 37 percent responded that it is easy to get alcohol.

Fewer than 10 percent of the 7th grade (6%), 9th grade (8%) and 11th grade (6%) respondents admitted to drinking alcohol on the school campus during the past month. However, this rate was highest among community school students where one out of



Those who binge drink as teenagers are significantly more likely to become heavy drinkers as adults. In 2007-08, 15% of Kern's 9th graders and 22% of 11th graders reported that they had consumed five or more drinks of alcohol in a row on at least one occasion during the past month.

-- California Healthy Kids Survey

every five community school students (20%) had drunk alcohol on campus at least once during the past 30 days.

Marijuana Use

When compared to 2005-06 results, the 2007-08 survey showed marijuana use in the past 30 days was unchanged among Kern's 7th graders (5%) and 11th graders (14%) and increased among 9th graders (11%) and youth in community schools (41%). In California, 5 percent of 7th graders, 12 percent of 9th graders, 18 percent of 11th graders and 43 percent of students in non-traditional schools reported use of marijuana in the past 30 days during the same school year.

When compared, male students reported higher rates of marijuana use than female students. In 2007-08, 5 percent of male and 4 percent of female 7th graders, 12 percent of male and 11 percent of female 9th graders and 17 percent of male and 12 percent of female 11th graders reported they had smoke marijuana at least once during the past month. Among community school students, 46 percent of male and 36 percent of female reported smoking marijuana during the past 30 days.

Most 7th graders (79%), 9th graders (71%) and 11th graders (70%) disapproved of their peers using marijuana once a month or more. In contrast, 43 percent of community school students disapproved of someone their age using marijuana on a monthly basis.

The majority of the community school students (74%) and 11th graders (66%) and nearly half of the 9th graders (47%) who responded to the survey admitted that marijuana was easy to obtain. Among 7th grade students, 23 percent responded that it is easy for them to get marijuana.

DATA SOURCE:

California Healthy Kids Survey
<http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/pj/245>



Regular marijuana use can interfere with a youth's learning in school by affecting the parts of the brain that control memory, attention, and learning. Research shows that students do not remember what they learned when they are "high."

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFETY



“Child abuse casts a shadow the length of a lifetime.”

-- Herbert Ward

Child Abuse and Neglect Overview

Child abuse and neglect affect children of every age, race and income level. Mandated reporters and other concerned adults often refer potentially dangerous situations to Child Protective Services (CPS) for investigation. While the number of reports to CPS can indicate about how many children in the county are potentially at risk of abuse and neglect, referral rates also demonstrate the willingness of community members to report events where children may be in danger. Fortunately, most reports of suspected abuse and neglect are later dismissed as unfounded during the investigative phase, however, 22 percent of referrals were re-referrals of the same families from the previous six months.

In 2005, the Kern County Department of Human Services (DHS) in partnership with the Kern County Network of Children (KCNC) implemented Differential Response (DR) to expand the ability of CPS to help support families with unsubstantiated allegations before further problems develop and are referred again. With Differential Response, CPS can now connect these at-risk families to programs and family resource centers in their own communities. Families are able to receive case management services and parenting classes from Clinica Sierra Vista and the Kernville Union, Taft City, and Richland school districts to prevent any future problems that initially brought the family to CPS's attention.

During the 2008-09 funding year, 1,241 families and 3,872 children throughout the county received DR case managed services. Upon completing case management, the majority of families showed substantial improvements in the areas of child safety, parenting skills and family well-being. By assisting these families at the first signs of trouble, DR stabilizes families and reduces the likelihood that a family will be re-referred to CPS. In fact, a 2009 analysis of families referred to DR showed families who chose not to participate in DR services were nearly twice as likely to be referred to CPS than families that received case management services. With Differential Response, more Kern County children and families receive the support they need to help keep children safely in their homes.

CPS Referral Rates

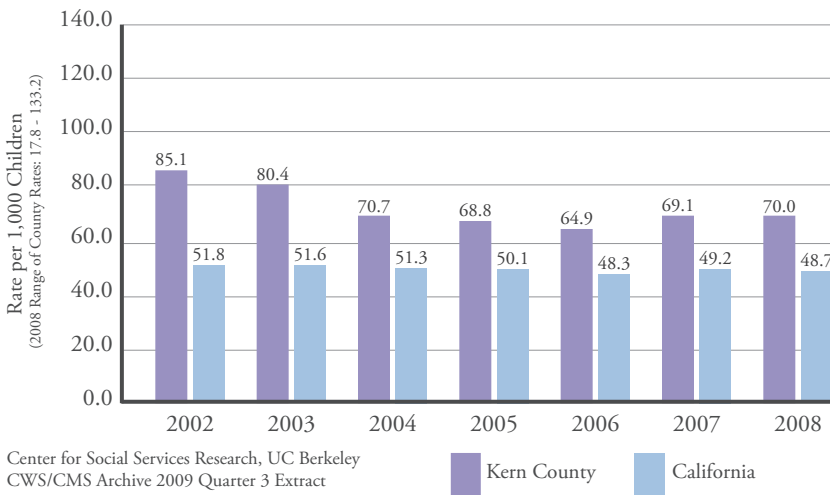
In 2008, Kern County's Child Protective Services (CPS) received reports of suspected child abuse or neglect on 17,643 children, indicating a referral rate of 70.0 per 1,000 children. Statewide, referrals were made for investigation on 487,123 children, a referral rate of 48.7.

Child Abuse Rates

In 2008, 5,616 Kern County children were found to have been victims of abuse and neglect--an average of 108 children per week. Child abuse rates per 1,000 children in California counties ranged from 3.4 to 41.8 during 2008. Kern County's substantiated child abuse rate of 22.3 children per 1,000 children increased from the previous year and was more than twice California's child abuse rate of 9.8. Kern County ranked 53rd in substantiated child abuse rates in the state.

Most victims of maltreatment in Kern experienced general or severe neglect (84%), meaning a caretaker failed to provide for the child's basic needs. Fewer children had substantiated referrals for physical abuse (5%), caretaker absence/incapacity (4%) or sexual abuse (2%).

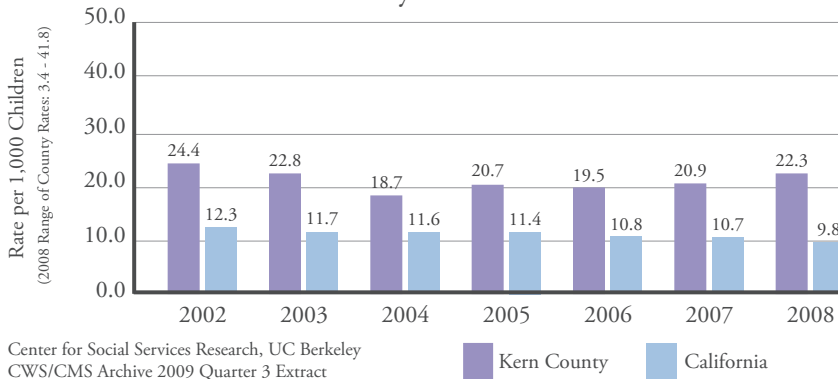
CPS Referral Rates 2002-2008
Kern County and California



In 2008, African-American children had the highest rate of substantiated abuse reports in Kern County with 51.0 per 1,000 children. Native American (25.7 per 1,000) and Caucasian (22.1 per 1,000) children had the next highest rates of substantiated abuse, followed by Latino (19.8 per 1,000) and Asian/Pacific Islander (7.7 per 1,000) children.

Children of all ages experience abuse and neglect, but the youngest children are the most vulnerable. In 2008, children younger than a year old had the highest substantiated abuse rate with 52.2 per 1,000 children, 2.3 times higher than Kern's overall rate of substantiated abuse and neglect.

Child Abuse Rates 2002-2008
Kern County and California



Fewer Kern County children experience repeat abuse/neglect. The percentage of children experiencing another substantiated abuse report within six months has declined steadily to eight percent (October 2008 - March 2009).

Mandated Reporters

- Kern County



In response to the 1974 Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, each state has passed some type of law legally requiring certain professionals who regularly work with or routinely come into contact with children to report their suspicion that the abuse and neglect of a child is occurring. Examples of mandated reporters in California include teachers, school personnel, social workers, doctors, health-care workers, law enforcement, emergency responders, public safety officers, clergy, and commercial film and photographic print processors.

In 2008, 88 percent of referrals for suspected child abuse in Kern County were made by mandated reporters. Legal, law enforcement, and criminal justice personnel made 29 percent of the total child abuse and neglect allegations submitted by mandated reporters to Kern County Child Protective Services (CPS). Teachers and school staff (20%), medical personnel (8%), social services workers (7%) and counselors/therapists (6%) were the next most frequent sources of reports. Statewide, the referral rate for mandated reporters was 87 percent with referrals submitted most often by schools (23%), legal, law enforcement, and criminal justice personnel (19%) and counselors/therapists (14%).

In Kern County, neglect was the most common alleged maltreatment of a child, accounting for 66 percent of all reports. When compared, law enforcement/legal professionals (30%) had the highest rate of reporting general and severe neglect followed by schools (17%) and medical professionals (9%). Among reports of physical abuse, law enforcement/legal professionals (22%), schools (33%), and counselors/therapists (11%) were more likely to report physical abuse than other reporters. Law enforcement/legal professionals (15%), schools (12%), and counselors/therapists (11%) also had higher rates of referring children for alleged sexual abuse. Over half of allegations of emotional abuse (includes domestic violence) were made by law enforcement/legal professionals (59%).

Kern County's legal, law enforcement, and criminal justice personnel had the highest substantiation rate (44%) of mandated report sources in 2008. The next highest rates of substantiated abuse and neglect were from schools (12%), medical professionals (9%) and social workers (7%).

Mandated reporters play an important role in the lives of children, however, most Kern County residents are not mandated reporters and are child not sure what to do when they become aware of child abuse. If you witness a child being harmed, if a tells you about abuse, or if you merely suspect abuse, call the CPS hotline (661) 631-6011 or 911.

Foster Care

Of the 5,616 children in Kern County with substantiated abuse and neglect during 2008, 1,315 were placed into foster care (23% of substantiated cases). The rate of foster care placement was 5.2 per 1,000 children, a decrease of 28 percent since 2002. However, Kern's entry rate was higher than the statewide rate of 3.3 entries per 1,000 children.

During 2008, 1,041 children entered the Kern County foster care system for the first time, a figure of 79 percent of all entries, comparable to California's 80 percent. In addition, 1,592 children and youth exited foster care in Kern County during the same year.

The number of children in foster care is always changing. However, a point-in-time count is taken on July 1 of each year. On July 1, 2009, there were 2,119 children in the foster care system across Kern County, 117 fewer children than July 1 of last year.

The largest percentage of children in foster care were placed in either foster homes or Foster Family Agency (FFA) homes (41%). More than one-third of children in foster care lived in a relative foster home (34%), while 14 percent resided with a guardian and 5 percent in group homes. The remainder of children and youth resided in pre-adoptive homes (2%), trial home visits (0.1%), shelters (0.1%) and transitional housing (0.1%) on July 1, 2009.

In both Kern County and California, African-American children were in foster care at a rate greater than children in any other racial/ethnic group in 2009 (20.5 per 1,000). Infants (10.7 per 1,000) and toddlers (10.2 per 1,000) experienced the highest in-care rates in Kern's foster care system.

Research shows that placement stability in foster care is essential for a child's healthy development. During 2008, 71 percent of Kern County children who were in the foster care system for less than 12 months experienced two or fewer placement changes, well below the statewide rate of 82 percent.

Reunification

Returning children safely to their home is the primary goal of CPS. About three out of every four foster children exiting out-of-home care in 2008 reunified with their immediate families in less than 12 months (72%). In comparison, California's reunification rate was 68 percent. Kern County's reunification rate declined from the previous year, but has remained higher than the statewide rate since 2006.

During 2008, the median length of time before Kern County children in foster care were reunified with their families was 7.1 months, the same length of time as the state. Throughout Kern County, youth ages 6 to 10 years were in care longest before reunification (7.8 months), and infants were in care the shortest amount of time (1.8 months).



In 2008, younger children between the ages of 0 to 5 (38%) were more likely to have more than two placement changes than older children between the ages of 11 and 17 (17%) during their first year of foster care.

-- Center for Social Services
Research, UC Berkley

CPS Referral Rates per 1,000 Children	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	64.9	69.1	70.0
California	48.3	49.2	48.7

Substantiated Child Abuse Rates per 1,000 Children	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	19.5	20.9	22.3
California	10.8	10.7	9.8

Foster Care Rates per 1,000 Children (Entry + Re-Entry)	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	7.3	5.8	5.2
California	4.0	3.6	3.3

Percentage of CPS Referrals Substantiated	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	30.0%	30.2%	31.8%
California	22.4%	21.8%	20.0%

Substantiated Child Abuse Rates per 1,000 Children (2008)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/Pac Islander	Native American	All Children
Kern County	51.0	22.1	19.8	7.7	25.7	22.3
California	25.0	8.4	10.1	4.0	20.0	9.8

Substantiated Child Abuse Rates per 1,000 Children (2008)	Under 1	1-2 yrs	3-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11-15 yrs	16-17 yrs
Kern County	52.2	30.0	26.2	21.2	16.0	9.6
California	21.8	12.0	10.2	9.4	8.2	6.1

Foster Care Prevalence Rate per 1,000 Children (Children in care on 7/1/09)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/Pac Islander	Native American	Total
Kern County	20.5	8.7	7.3	1.2	8.5	8.2
California	26.6	4.8	5.5	1.6	16.4	6.0

Foster Care Prevalence Rate per 1,000 Children (Children in care on 7/1/09)	Under 1	1-2 yrs	3-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11-15 yrs	16-17 yrs
Kern County	10.7	10.2	7.7	6.7	7.9	9.1
California	6.0	7.0	5.4	4.8	6.1	7.9

Foster Care Population (2004-09)	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Kern County	2,892	2,661	2,475	2,477	2,236	2,119
California	81,499	79,067	76,767	74,964	68,134	62,339

Recurrence After Reunification

Even when reunification is initially successful, some children must be placed again into foster care when another abuse event occurs. Between October 2007 and September 2008, 150 of the 1,008 children who reunified with their families returned to foster care in less than 12 months (15%). Kern's recurrence-after-reunification rate was above the state's rate of 8 percent.

Younger children (0-5 years) were more likely to experience maltreatment recurrence within a year of reunification (20%) than those 11 years or older (15%) in Kern County. Children under age of 1 were at highest risk (26%).

Preserved Family Relationships

For those children living in foster care, the preservation of natural family relationships is important in maintaining a child's positive sense of identity and knowledge of cultural, personal, and family histories. Whenever possible, sibling units are placed in the same foster home. Between 2004 and 2009, the percent of Kern County's foster youth placed with at least one sibling figure has steadily increased each year from 61 percent to 70 percent.

Kinship care is the full time care of children by relatives, godparents, stepparents, or any adult who has a kinship bond with a child. On July 1, 2009, 34 percent of the Kern County children in out-of-home care lived with relatives compared to 33 percent statewide. Among children placed with kin, 42 percent were between the ages of 0 and 5 years and 56 percent were Latino.

Group Home

Foster care agencies prefer to place children with families, however, a shortage of foster parents means some children must be placed in a group home. A foster care group home operates less like a family setting and more like a dormitory. Children with special needs may also be placed in group home settings where they can receive services they need.

On July 1, 2009, there were 110 youth residing in group homes throughout Kern County. From 2004 to 2009, the number of foster youth placed in group homes has declined 34 percent. Caucasian youth (45%) represented the largest share of foster youth in group homes on July 1, followed by Latino (31%), African American (24%) and Native American (0.9%) youth. Most group home youth were males (73%) and were between the ages of 11 and 17 years (87%). Nearly half of the foster youth residing in group homes have been in foster care system for five years or more (44%). Moreover, children from a group home were twice as likely to return to the foster care system within 1 year of reunification than for a child placed with kin.



In July of 2009, 42% of Kern's children in foster care had been in care for two years or more and 19% had been in care five years or more.

-- Center for Social Services
Research, UC Berkeley

Emancipation

Some children remain in foster care until they are 18 or have graduated from high school. These youth are often referred to as “aging out” or emancipating from foster care. In Kern County, 124 youth were either discharged to emancipation or turned 18 while still in foster care in 2008. The majority of these youth (72%) had been in foster care for 3 years or longer.

Because the transition from foster care to adulthood is very difficult, the Department of Human Services offers a voluntary Independent Living Program (ILP) to qualifying foster youth ages 16 and older, and multidisciplinary Urgent Action Team services for youth emancipating without support or plan at emancipation.

In Kern County during the period October 2008 through September 2009, 90 percent of foster youth offered ILP services accepted those services. Statewide, 79 percent accepted ILP services. Of the youth contacted by the Independent Living Program during this 12 month period, 19 percent had obtained employment, 88 percent had housing arrangements, 57 percent had completed high school/GED and 88 percent had a permanency connection.

DATA SOURCE:

Center for Social Services Research, UC Berkeley, 2009, Quarter 3 Extract
<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscms> reports

Missing Children

In 2009, 4,709 children were reported missing in Kern County. Of these, 4,591 were suspected runaways, 9 were lost, 31 were suspected family abduction, 15 were missing under suspicious circumstances and 62 were reported under unknown circumstances.

Law enforcement officers log missing children reports into the Department of Justice Missing Persons System. Statistics taken from this database include the number of children entered into and canceled in the system during the given year. During 2009, 4,500 of the missing child reports previously noted were canceled: 3,498 children were returned, 696 were located, 150 were arrested, 2 were deceased, 2 became emancipated and 152 were removed from the system for other reasons. A total of 91 children remained missing at year end.

DATA SOURCE:

California Office of the Attorney General
<http://ag.ca.gov/missing/stats.php>



Within 18 months of emancipation, nearly 40% of former foster youth will be homeless.

--US General Accounting Office

Childhood Unintentional Injury

During 2006, 525 children in Kern County were hospitalized for accidental injury. Additionally, 40 children died from accidental injuries. In both county and state, the most common nonfatal accidental injuries among children are fall-related. Thirty percent of Kern County's hospitalizations for injury were due to falls. Regardless of age, the most common non-fatal injuries among children in Kern County were caused by falls and automobile-related accidents.

Drowning

In California, drowning is the second leading cause of injury-related death among children of all ages. From 2000 to 2006, there were 73 children who were hospitalized with non-fatal injuries caused by a near-drowning in Kern County. During this period of time, the incidences of near-drowning within Kern County fluctuated each year from a low of 8 to a high of 13. However, Kern County averages 10.4 near-drowning accidents annually.

Male children (64%) and children under the age of six years were most likely to be injured by near-drowning accidents (88%) from 2000 to 2006. Of these young children, 63 percent were Caucasian and 30 percent were Latino. In contrast, African-American youth (67%), had the highest rates of injury caused by drowning among older children. Most children hospitalized because of a near-drowning stayed in the hospital for treatment for three days or less (88%).

Fire and Burn Injury

From 2000 to 2006, there were 120 children who were hospitalized with burn injuries in Kern County. On average, 10 children each year were burn victims in the county since 2000. Children under the age of six years were most likely to be injured by accidents involving fires and hot objects (86%) during these years. Latino and Caucasian

children had the highest rates of fire/burn injuries, 47 percent and 42 percent, respectively.

Injuries to the head and neck (29%) were most common among burn victims, followed by injuries to the torso (23%) and lower extremities (23%). The majority of children injured stayed in the hospital for treatment for three days or less (68%).

Motor-Vehicle–Traffic Injury

From 2000 to 2006, 131 children died and 983 children were hospitalized from injuries caused by motor-vehicle related accidents in Kern County. The number of children with non-fatal injuries has declined since 2004 from a decade high of 179 children to 119 in 2006. On average, 140 children were hospitalized with injuries from motor-vehicle accidents each year from 2000 to 2006.

Most children injured in motor-vehicle related accidents between 2000 and 2006 were occupants in a motor vehicle (60%). In addition, 22% of children that received injuries in motor-vehicle related accidents were pedestrians. Children injured in motor-vehicle related accidents as bicyclists and as motorcyclists each comprised eight percent. Children under the age of six years were most likely to be injured in motor-vehicle accidents as an occupant (57%) and as a pedestrian (39%) from 2000 to 2006. Caucasian children had the highest rates of injuries in motor-vehicle accidents as occupants (68%), pedestrians (67%), bicyclists (73%) and motorcyclists (78%).

In Kern County, 217 children received traumatic brain injuries from 2000 to 2006 as a result of motor-vehicle related accidents. Children were also most likely to receive fractures, internal injuries, open wounds and contusions from their accidents. Most children hospitalized because of motor-vehicle related injuries stayed in the hospital for treatment for three days or less (68%).

Alcohol is the most abused drug among teenagers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Driver inattention is a leading factor in many crashes. The highest incidence of distracted driving occurs in the under-20 age group. In 2009, 43% of American teens ages 16-17 said they have talked on a cell phone while driving and 26% have used text messaging while driving.

-- The Pew Research Center

reported that 25 percent of drivers ages 15 to 20 who died in motor-vehicle crashes in 2008 had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 grams (g) per deciliter (dL) or higher. According to the 2007-08 California Healthy Kids Survey, nearly one-third (32%) of Kern County 11th grade respondents, and 25 percent of 9th grade respondents said they had either driven a car after consuming alcohol or been a passenger in a car when the driver (a friend) had been drinking. For both grades, these rates are slightly higher than the rate for California overall. California as a whole reported 29 percent of 11th grade students and 23 percent of 9th grade respondents had either driven after drinking or been in a car when the driver (a friend) had been drinking.

Among persons age 18 or younger, Kern's arrest rate for driving under the influence in 2008 was 47.2 per 100,000 population. The county's rate is higher than California's overall rate of 32.5 per 100,000 population. In 2008, there were 51 arrests for driving under the influence in Kern County youth ages 16 to 17 years old.

DATA SOURCES:

California Department of Health Services
<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/epic/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov>

California Health Interview Survey
<http://www.chis.ucla.edu/>

California Healthy Kids Survey
<http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/pj/245>

EPICenter, California Injury Data Online
<http://www.applications.dhs.ca.gov/epicdata/>



Children in the vicinity of minivans, trucks and SUVs are at greater risk of being struck in a driveway and/or a parking lot because of these vehicles' poor rear visibility and large blind spots. Child safety advocates recommend drivers in driveways and parking lots where children could be playing nearby should take a five second walk around their cars to check for children before entering and starting their vehicles. Parents and caregivers should also hold the hand of children when near vehicles and should not use the driveway as a play area.

-- Safe Kids USA

Child Deaths

Throughout 2008, Kern County's Child Death Review Team investigated 53 child deaths that met the coroner's review criteria. Just over half of the cases reviewed were determined either accidental or unintentional (51%). Nineteen percent of deaths were from natural causes and 15 percent were from homicide. There was also one suicide and seven cases where the cause of death was either undetermined or unknown. More than half of the deaths reviewed occurred within Metro Bakersfield (57%).

Fifteen of the reviewed deaths, or 28 percent of the cases, were infants under age one. Among infants, the most common causes of death were asphyxia (13%) and pneumonia (13%). Motor vehicle accidents were the most common cause of unnatural death among the remaining 38 cases reviewed of children over age one. During 2008, six children died as passengers in motor vehicles. Most notable, four of these children were restrained in the vehicle. Three children died in motorcycle crashes and one in a bicycle accident. In addition, four children died as pedestrians in motor vehicle accidents.

Homicide was the second leading cause of death among young people ages 1 to 17 overall in 2008. In this age group, five children were killed from injuries caused by trauma, one child was killed with a firearm and two children were killed by undetermined causes. Drowning, asphyxia and medical causes were the next most common cause of child death with each claiming the lives of four children. Other causes of death for children in this age group included accidental crushing and drug overdose.

Caucasian children in 2008 comprised almost half of the child deaths that occurred in Kern County (47%). Latino children (36%) made up the next largest racial/ethnic group followed by African American (9%), Asian (9%) and children from other ethnic backgrounds (4%).

The Child Death Review Team identified any family issues that occurred prior to the child's death with local agencies. About two-thirds of the 53 cases reviewed had at least one reported family issue preceding the child's death (74%). Inadequate supervision (36%), law enforcement (26%), family violence (21%), substance abuse (15%) and neglect condition (13%) were most frequently identified. Three of the child deaths involved gang related issues.



“There’s no tragedy in life like the death of a child. Things never get back to the way they were.”

-- Dwight David Eisenhower

DATA SOURCE:

Kern Child Abuse Prevention Council, CDRT
<http://www.havencounselingcenter.org/>

Submersion / Drowning (Number of children 0-17 killed or injured)	2005	2006	2007
Fatal Injury	5	3	8
Non-Fatal Hospitalization	8	12	n/a

Assault/Homicide (Number of children 0-17 killed or injured)	2005	2006	2007
Fatal Injury	10	5	4
Non-Fatal Hospitalization	35	31	n/a

Motor Vehicle Related (Number of children 0-17 killed or injured)	2005	2006	2007
Fatal Injury	20	21	15
Non-Fatal Hospitalization	166	119	n/a

Domestic Violence (Calls for Assistance to Law Enforcement)	2006	2007	2008
Number of Calls	3,417	4,151	4,066
Rate per 1,000 pop.	6.7	8.0	7.6

Self-Inflicted Injury / Suicide (Number of children 0-17 killed or injured)	2005	2006	2007
Fatal Injury	3	0	0
Non-Fatal Hospitalization	25	19	n/a

Crime Rates (Number of crimes per 100,000 pop)	2006	2007	2008
Violent Crimes	526.1	566.7	562.3
Property Crimes	2,538.0	2,416.7	2,480.0

Gun Violence

- Kern County



The causes of youth violence are complex, however, easy access to guns demands special attention. In Kern County, a total of 110 injuries and 26 deaths among children under 18 years of age involved firearms between 2000 to 2006. These include homicides, assaults, suicides and unintentional injuries.

A national study from RAND reported that 34 percent of children in the United States live in homes with at least one firearm. In addition, in 69 percent of homes with firearms and children, more than one firearm was present. Research continually shows that the presence of a gun in the home will increase the risk of intentional and unintentional shootings and suicide among youth. The 2007-08 California Healthy Kids Survey for Kern County schools showed 811 of the responding students in grades 7, 9, 11 and community schools admitted to carrying a gun onto school property during the last year. Reducing easy access to guns is critical to keeping youth and their communities safe.

Between the years 2000 and 2006, deaths as a result of firearm-related injuries were the third leading cause of injury mortality among Kern County children after motor-vehicle-related incidents and drowning. Homicide accounted for 65 percent of the deaths; 23 percent were the result of suicide and 12 percent were the result of accidents. Male children and youth were nearly eight times more likely to be killed from firearms than females. The average youth who died as a victim of homicide or from an accidental shooting was 15.5 years old.

During this seven year period, another 84 Kern County children required emergency room visits because of gun-related injuries and survived. Sixty-five percent of the injuries were the result of assaults; 33 percent were the result of accidents; 1 percent were the result of self-inflicted injuries. Again, males (79%) were more likely than females to be involved in intentional and accidental shootings. The average youth who were injured in assaults with a firearm were 15.1 years old. Younger children were more likely to be injured accidentally with firearms and averaged in age 11.5 years.

Kern County children and youth injured in accidental shootings between 2000 and 2006 were most likely to receive injuries in their torsos (25%), lower extremities (21%) and other injuries to their heads and necks (21%). Almost half of the children and youth injured from assaults with a firearm received gunshot wounds to their torsos (44%) and 40 percent had injuries to their lower and upper extremities.

From 2000 to 2006, almost half of the victims of nonfatal gunshot wounds from assault and attempted homicide were African-American followed by Caucasian (40%) and Latino (7%) youth. In contrast, Caucasian (54%) and Latino (43%) youth comprised nearly all of the accidental shootings in Kern County from 2000 to 2006.

Child safety advocates believe safely storing all guns is the most important thing parents and gun owners can do to protect children from firearm related injuries. They also encourage community partners to increase public awareness of the role of firearms in accidental injuries and youth suicides.

Youth Violence

Youth violence can start early and continue into young adulthood. During the 2007-08 school year, the California Healthy Kids Survey asked health and behavior questions to 15,196 seventh, ninth, and eleventh graders in Kern County. According to the survey, 23 percent of all students surveyed had been in a physical fight one or more times at school and 16 percent admitted they had damaged school property on purpose. Eleven percent of students had brought a weapon to school and 5 percent had carried a gun onto school property. On average, just over half of students reported feeling safe while they were at school (56%).

Youth who are members of gangs are much more likely to commit serious and violent crimes at their schools and in their communities. Eleven percent of Kern's seventh grade students identified themselves as gang members. Among high school students, 10 percent of ninth grade students and 9 percent of eleventh graders identified themselves as gang members. Students served by Kern's nontraditional continuation schools were most likely to identify themselves as gang members (22%).

When older teens are not connected to school or jobs, idle time is abundant and supervision is reduced. These youth are at greater risk of participation in criminal activities. In 2008, about 4,100 Kern County youths age 16 to 19 without high school diplomas were not enrolled in school and were not employed, a rate of 7.7 percent. Kern's figure remains higher than state (3.9%) and national (4.1%) figures.

In 2008, the California Criminal Justice Statistics Center reported that 451 juvenile arrests for violent felonies occurred in Kern County, of which 267 were for assault and 115 were for possession of weapons. The arrest rate for robbery by juveniles is on the rise. Between 2005 and 2008, the rate at which juveniles were arrested for robbery soared from a decade low of 56.0 per 100,000 youth population to a decade high of 140.7 per 100,000 youth population.

DATA SOURCES:

California Healthy Kids Survey
http://www.wested.org/pub/docs/chks_bsearch.html

2008 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

California Department of Justice
http://stats.doj.ca.gov/cjsc_stats/prof08/



In 2008, there were 19 juvenile arrests for murder in Kern County. All arrested were male youth and almost half of these youth were between the ages of 13 to 15 years (47%).
-- California Department of Justice

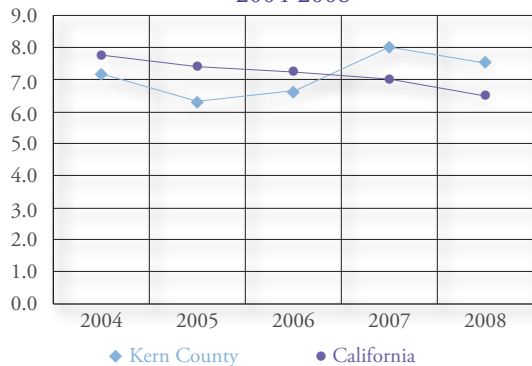
Domestic Violence

A child witnessing abusive behavior between adults in the home is at greater risk of experiencing neglect or abuse.

During 2008, Kern County law enforcement officers recorded 4,066 calls for assistance in domestic violence situations, a rate of 7.6 calls per 1,000 population. This rate decreased from 8.0 calls per 1,000 population in 2007. The California rate of calls for assistance also declined from 7.0 calls per 1,000 in 2007 to 6.6 calls per 1,000 in 2008.

In total, 46 percent of these calls for assistance involved weapons. Nine percent involved the use of firearms, knives, or other dangerous weapons. Another 37 percent involved personal weapons, such as hands, fists or feet.

Rate of Domestic Violence Calls for Assistance
2004-2008



Crime Rates

Violent and Property Crime

In 2008, 4,631 violent crimes were reported to Kern County's law enforcement agencies county-wide. Kern's violent crime rate was 562.3 per 100,000 population, an decrease of 0.8 percent from the previous year. California's rate in 2008 was 485.6 per 100,000 population. All violent crimes in Kern County increased over the year with the exception of aggravated assault (370.6 per 100,000 population), which had a 7.0 percent

decrease. Homicide (6.9 per 100,000 population) increased by 11.3 percent; robbery (156.5 per 100,000 population) increased 11.9 percent; and rape (28.3 per 100,000 population) increased 26.9 percent.

For property crime, Kern County had a reported incident rate of 2,480.0 per 100,000 people in 2008, an increase of 2.6 percent from 2007. California's rate in 2008 was 1,721.5 per 100,000 population. When compared to 2007 rates, burglary (1,123.4 per 100,000 population) increased by 11.0 percent; larceny theft (\$400 or less) (721.2 per 100,000 population) decreased 3.4 percent; and motor vehicle theft (635.4 per 100,000 population) decreased 3.3 percent.

Juvenile Arrests

In 2008, the juvenile felony arrest rate was 1,642.9 per 100,000 youths between the ages of 10 and 17 years. The juvenile felony arrest rate fell for the second consecutive year and is down 7.8 percent since 2006. California's rate in 2008 was 1,410.5 per 100,000 youth population.

Arrests for violent crimes (401.6 per 100,000 population) decreased by 6.1 percent; property crimes (713.3 per 100,000 population) decreased 6.6 percent; drug offenses (57.0 per 100,000 population) decreased 4.4 percent; and sex offenses (29.4 per 100,000 population) decreased 28.1 percent.

Over half of the juvenile arrests in Kern County were for misdemeanor offenses (52%) in 2008. Kern County's juvenile misdemeanor arrest rate jumped from 2,391.1 per 100,000 youth in 2007 18.2 percent to 2,825.5 per 100,000 youth in 2008. Kern's 2008 rate is close to California's rate of 2,824.7 per 100,000.

DATA SOURCES:

California Department of Justice
http://stats.doj.ca.gov/cjsc_stats/prof08/



Kern County's juvenile felony arrest rate is steadily declining. The total juvenile arrests per 100,000 youth 10 to 17 years of age declined by 8% from 1,782.5 per 100,000 in 2006 to 1,642.9 per 100,000 in 2008. However, Kern's juvenile felony arrest rate was 16% higher than the state rate in 2008.

--California
Department
of Justice

2010 COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVES

Since 1992, Kern County communities have partnered together as Community Collaboratives to better care for children and families. Twenty of these partnerships have completed an in-depth application process and review by Kern County Network for Children and have been designated Accredited Community Collaboratives. Most Community Collaboratives host a Family Resource Center (FRC) or Community Resource Center (CRC). The following list can be used to refer individuals or families to needed services within their own community.



Family Resource Centers are “one-stop” centers that provide multiple resources for individuals and families in need within their own community.

Accredited Community Collaboratives

Arvin	Arvin Collaborative and FRC.....	661.854.6525
Bakersfield	34th Street Neighborhood Partnership.....	661.852.5000
	East Bakersfield Community Collaborative and CRC	661.631.5878
	Greenfield H.E.L.P.S. Collaborative and FRC	661.837.3720
	Rosedale Collaborative.....	661.321.3906
	South Chester Collaborative and FRC	661.631.5895
	Southeast Neighborhood Partnership and FRC	661.322.3276
Buttonwillow	Buttonwillow Community Collaborative and CRC.....	661.764.9405
Frazier Park Area	Mountain Communities Collaborative and FRC.....	661.245.4303
Lake Isabella Area	Kern River Valley Collaborative and FRC	760.379.2556
Lamont/Weedpatch	Lamont/Weedpatch Collaborative and FRC.....	661.845.2724 ext. 300
Lost Hills	Lost Hills Collaborative	661.797.3042
McFarland	McFarland Community Collaborative and FRC	661.792.5524
Mojave Area	East Kern Collaborative and FRC	661.824.4118
Ridgecrest Area	Indian Wells Valley Collaborative and FRC.....	760.375.4357
Shafter	Shafter Healthy Start Collaborative and FRC.....	661.746.8690
Taft Area	Greater Westside “Together We Can” Collaborative and CRC.....	661.765.7281
Wasco	Wasco Collaborative	661.852.5693 or 661.746.7592
Kern County	Kern Senior Network	661.868.1051
	Richardson Special Needs Collaborative and FRC.....	661.336.5482

Other Community Collaboratives

Bakersfield	Oildale Collaborative and CRCs	661.392.2110 ext. 118
	Fairfax/Edison Community Collaborative	661.366.6783
California City	California City Collaborative	760.373.8606
Delano	Delano Neighborhood Partnership and CRC	661.721.7036

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