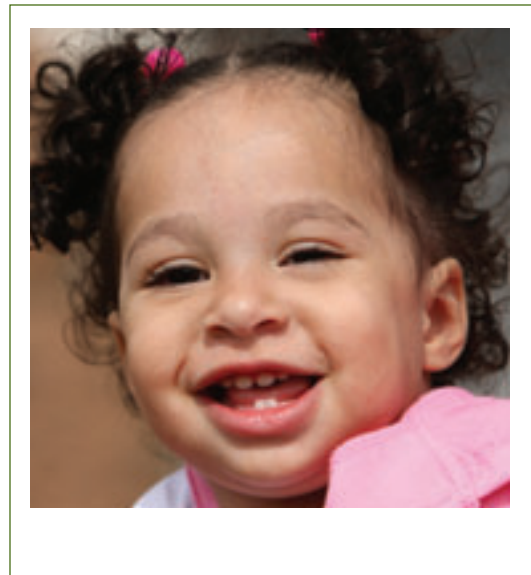
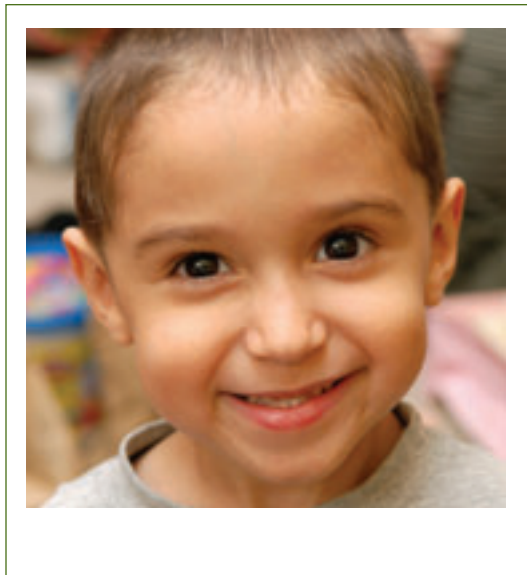
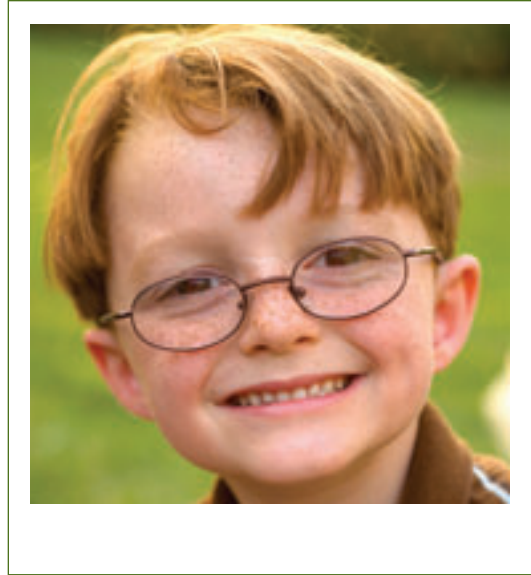
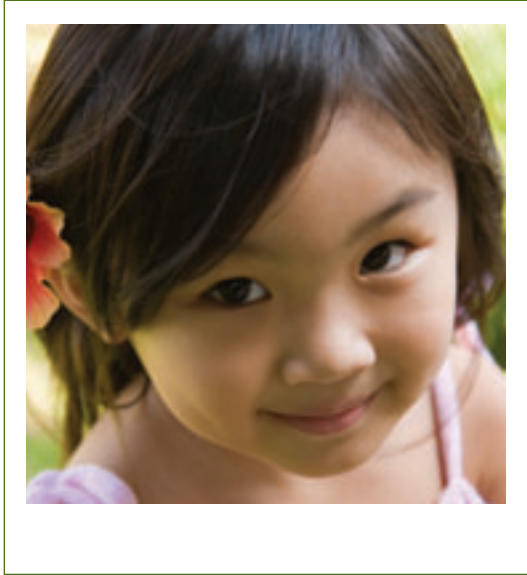


REPORT CARD 2008

KERN COUNTY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN



REPORT CARD 2008

KERN COUNTY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN

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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.

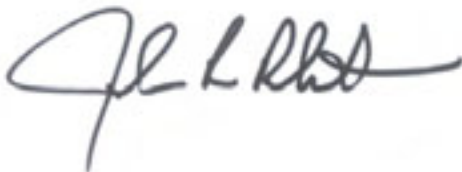
WELCOME

The Kern County Network for Children is pleased to present the 2008 Conditions of Children Report Card. This is our tenth annual Report Card of the status of the children in our community. Each year it serves as a barometer on where we are in terms of the health and well-being of our children. We are reminded of the challenges we face as a community when it comes to child well-being in our county, but it also gives us an opportunity to identify the success we have had in working together to provide services within Kern County that improve the conditions of our children and their families.

You will notice this year that we have highlighted some of the programs and efforts in our community that have had an impact on strengthening the lives of our children and their families. The Kern County Network for Children believes in the power of local ownership and collaboration to increase the services and resources that are necessary for safe and healthy children. We continue to take pride in developing and implementing integrated service delivery models that are rooted in research and based on best practices. The long standing success of established community collaboratives is an example of empowered people coming together to make successful changes in their neighborhoods and effectively turn shared vision into reality making this a better community for all of us.

Everyone in our community can and should play a part in improving the lives of people in Kern County. The Kern County Network for Children is a gathering place for everyone who cares passionately about children and the Report Card serves as a tool to gauge areas of need as well as progress. Working together, we can achieve much more than we ever could working alone. Many communities realize this, but few have taken to Kern County's level.

Sincerely,



John Roberts, Chief Probation Officer
KCNC Governing Board President





In 2006, the Census Bureau estimated nearly 232,000 children lived in Kern County, or about 30 percent of the population. More than 102,000 families were raising related children.

-- American Community Survey 2006



COUNTY OVERVIEW



Kern County became home for 19,657 new residents between July 1, 2006 and July 1, 2007. This population growth makes Kern County the third fastest growing county in the state.

-- California Department of Finance

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 809,900 residents on July 1, 2007.

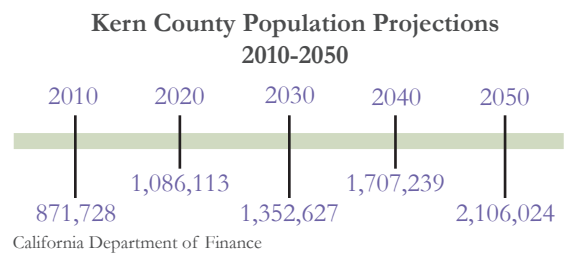
According to the California Department of Finance, Kern was the third fastest-growing county in California based on its one-year percentage growth of 2.84 percent. This population growth was attributed primarily to new residents from other states or counties throughout California.

Between July 2006 and July 2007, Kern grew by 19,657 individuals. Natural increase (births minus deaths) contributed 10,040 individuals (51%) and net migration (domestic migration plus foreign immigration) contributed 9,617 individuals (49%).

The chart below provides a breakdown of population by children's age and ethnicity. This information is taken from the California Department of Finance's most recent population projections, which include a base population from the 2000 Census and 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 ten counties to have gained over 100,000 persons in the last seven years. Department of Finance projections released in 2007 estimate Kern's population to grow to near 1.1 million by 2020 and 1.7 million by 2040.



DATA SOURCES:

California Department of Finance
<http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/DEMOGRAP/ReportsPapers/Estimates/E6/E6-00-05/documents/E-6%20Report%20July%202007.xls>

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

Center for Social Services Research, UC Berkeley
http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/population/data/POPf_EA0-17_2007_15.html

Kern County Child Population by Ethnicity & Age (2007)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/Pac Islander	Native American	Other	Total
Total Children (0-17)	13,171	86,811	133,200	7,867	1,471	5,598	248,118
Percentage of Total Children	5.3%	35.0%	53.7%	3.2%	0.6%	2.3%	100.0%
Under 1	785	5,094	9,026	473	66	186	15,630
1-2	1,392	9,138	16,902	848	89	793	29,162
3-5	1,939	12,408	22,598	1,068	68	1,690	39,771
6-10	3,396	22,452	34,495	2,013	388	1,397	64,141
11-15	3,979	26,523	36,200	2,431	606	1,076	70,815
16-17	1,680	11,196	13,979	1,034	254	456	28,599

FAMILY ECONOMICS

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. However, the figures used to calculate income differ depending on the government agency providing the information.

US Bureau of Economic Analysis

The US Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) takes income figures from business receipts. In 2006, the per capita income in Kern County was \$25,748. By comparison, the per capita income in California was \$38,956 and in the nation was \$36,307 during the same year. Using the BEA measure, Kern County's per capita income is 33.9 percent less than the state and 29.1 percent less than the nation.

US Census Bureau

The US Census Bureau uses individual and business surveys for income figures. These numbers are presented annually in the Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

According to the 2006 Survey, the Kern County per capita income was \$19,132. By comparison, the per capita income in California was \$26,974 and in the nation was \$25,267 during the same year. Using the Census measure, Kern County's per capita income is 29.1 percent less than the state and 24.3 percent less than the nation.

Unemployment

In Kern County, an annual average labor force of 351,900 was available for work during 2007. Of these, 322,800 were working and 29,100 were seeking employment.

The annual average unemployment rate for Kern County was 8.2 percent during 2007. By comparison, California's annual average rate of unemployment was 5.3 percent.

Unemployment rates fluctuate throughout the year, especially in regions with seasonal economies like agriculture. In 2007, the county's highest monthly unemployment rates (9.4% and 9.1%) occurred during December and February, respectively.

Outlying communities often have higher unemployment rates than Metro Bakersfield. The following communities had the highest unemployment rates in the County during 2007.

Community	2007 Annual Avg Unemployment Rate
Arvin	22.7
Delano	22.1
McFarland	17.4
Wasco	15.4
Lamont	14.8
Shafter	14.7
Mojave	10.2
Lake Isabella	9.8
Oildale	8.6
Taft	7.9
Frazier Park.....	7.0
Rosamond.....	6.5
California City.....	6.3

Note: seasonality. City-level data are not adjusted for



In 2006, 30,366 children lived with families in which neither parent was in the labor force. Additionally, two out of five of these children were under six years of age.
-- American Community Survey 2006

DATA SOURCES:

US Bureau of Economic Analysis
<http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/reis>

US Census Bureau
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

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

CSUB Kern Economic Journal
<http://www.csub.edu/kej/Publish/Indicators.pdf>





Single mothers with children under age five are the families most likely to live in poverty. During 2006, 53 percent of Kern County's single mothers with young children lived at or below the poverty line.

-- American Community Survey 2006

Children in Poverty (0-17)	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	28.0%	28.8%	29.0%
California	18.9%	18.2%	17.7%

Children in Poverty (0-4)	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	33.2%	31.6%	32.6%
California	20.5%	19.6%	19.2%

Children in Poverty (5-17)	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	25.4%	27.8%	27.6%
California	17.7%	17.7%	17.2%

All Families with Children Percent Living in Poverty	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	23.2%	25.9%	23.9%
California	15.3%	14.9%	14.3%

Single Moms with Children Percent Living in Poverty	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	39.4%	49.8%	48.7%
California	34.2%	32.6%	31.7%

Hourly Wage Needed to Afford Two-Bedroom Apt.	2006	2007	2008
Kern County	\$12.00	\$12.42	\$13.06
California	\$22.09	\$22.86	\$23.83



Poverty

According to the American Community Survey conducted by the US Census Bureau, 231,659 children live in Kern County during 2006. Of these, 29.0 percent were living in poverty. By comparison, 17.7 percent of children statewide were living in poverty.

Among all Kern County families raising children, 23.9 percent were impoverished. In 21.4 percent of Kern County's families living in poverty, the householder worked full-time and year-round. Families headed by single mothers were the poorest with 48.7 percent living in poverty.

Educational attainment is an important factor in rates of poverty. Among families whose householder had less than a high school diploma, 32.6 percent lived in poverty. Of those families whose householder had a high school diploma, the rate of poverty dropped to 17.3 percent. For those families with householders having at least a bachelor's degree, the poverty rate fell dramatically to 1.8 percent.

The US Department of Health and Human Services uses an annual poverty guideline to determine eligibility for federal assistance programs. During 2008, the federal poverty guideline for a family of four in California is set at \$21,200.

The Kern County Department of Human Services administers the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program and food stamp program to help low-income Kern families move out of poverty with temporary financial assistance and services.

According to the American Community Survey, 26,205 Kern County households in 2006 received public assistance or food stamp benefits within the last 12 months. This represents 11 percent of total households in the County, a figure twice as high as the State.

Child Support

During Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2006-07, Kern County Department of Child Support Services served 62,931 children represented by 56,566 open support cases. Eighty-three percent of these open support cases had a formal support order established for the custodial parent by the court system.

Of the \$71.7 million owed to Kern County children from non-custodial parents, \$35.9 million (50.2%) was collected and distributed as current support.

The percentage collected and distributed during FFY 2006-07 is significantly higher than FFY 2002-03 when only 41.0 percent of owed child support was collected and distributed.

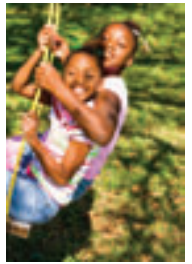
DATA SOURCES:

2006 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

US Department of Health and Human Services
<http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/08poverty.shtml>

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

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



“Preventing and reducing childhood poverty is not only doing what’s right and just – it’s also one of the smartest investments a society can make.”

-- Jane Knitzer,
Director,
National Center
for Children in
Poverty (NCCP)





Kern County's median-priced home was \$255,000 in August 2007 - significantly higher than the median home value of \$110,000 just five years earlier. Homeowners need to earn an annual income of \$62,057 to buy a median priced home with a 5 percent down payment.

-- California

Budget Project
and NAHB/
Wells Fargo
Housing
Opportunity
Index

Housing

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

The Census Bureau's 2006 American Community Survey reports 90,746 renting households in Kern County, or 38 percent of 238,229 total households. Of these renting households, 51 percent spent 30 percent or more of household income on rent. Kern County's median gross rent during 2006 was \$712, a 38 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 \$679.

Using this rental rate, the National Low Income Housing Coalition calculates a housing wage, or the amount a household must earn to afford a two-bedroom unit. During 2008, the monthly housing wage is \$2,263; the full-time hourly housing wage is \$13.06.

DATA SOURCES:

2006 American Community Survey
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

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

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

Community In Action – Greenfield Homes



In 2007, the Housing Authority of the County of Kern completed the **Greenfield Homes** development in Bakersfield. Greenfield Homes provides 35 affordable rental homes for farm workers and their families. Over 175 residents, mostly children, now enjoy the three and four bedroom single-family homes with rents set at 30 percent of the tenant's income.

Greenfield Homes features a community center with services for the residents, including a computer lab, community room and offices where Clinica Sierra Vista provides WIC and preventative health services. A Housing Authority service coordinator arranges for on-site ESL classes, Boy Scout and Girl Scout activities and a teen club.

Before moving to Greenfield Homes, some residents lived in substandard and overcrowded housing. A few families lived in unheated garages and one family lived in a two-bedroom home crowded with 13 residents. Lucy Martinez, a Housing Authority employee who observed the families' living conditions prior to moving into Greenfield Homes, stated,

“My heart was touched upon seeing the smiles, happiness and gratitude the families showed when housed and the tears that came afterwards. The gratitude they expressed when they found out they would have a warm, comfortable, un-crowded home to live in, and especially by Christmas time, was a blessing to them.”

The United States Department of Agriculture, the Rural Community Assistance Corporation, Enterprise Community Investment Corporation, the City of Bakersfield and the Housing Authority of the County of Kern provided funding to make Greenfield Homes a reality.

Stephen Pelz, *Housing Authority of the County of Kern*
www.kernha.org



EARLY CARE & EDUCATION



“Experience is the chief architect of the brain. Early childhood experiences are powerful enough to completely change the way a person turns out.”

-- Harry Chugani, M.D., Pediatric Neurologist

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

According to the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network, 96,565 children under the age of 14 years are in need some kind of care-whether for part or all of the day-while their parents work. This demand for care grew 14 percent since 2000 compared to 5 percent statewide.





Since 1997, local efforts have resulted in a 190 percent increase in the number of slots in family child care homes and a 26 percent increase in slots in licensed child care centers and child development programs.

-- Child Care Resource & Referral Network

There is a wide selection of child care and early education programs available to Kern County families. A total of 1,071 licensed family child care providers and 216 child care centers/half-day child development programs are located throughout Kern County. There are also 56 programs with a capacity to serve 5,681 school-age children before and after school. Combined, these providers and programs have the capacity to serve 31 percent of Kern's estimated child care need.

Kern County's reported capacity does not include all avenues in which care to children is provided. For example, families can also choose to have a relative, friend or neighbor care for their children in addition to in-home caregivers such as "nannies" or "au pairs." This type of care is not required to meet the State's child care licensing requirements. Unfortunately, the extent to which families choose license-exempt care is unknown which adds to the challenge of identifying an accurate supply/shortage rate for Kern County. Often parents use a combination of different types of care to meet their needs.

Infant/Toddler Care

In 1997, both TIME and Newsweek magazines displayed cover stories about breakthroughs in early brain development and the importance of quality care for infants and toddlers. Since then the demand for non-parental child care for infants and toddlers

remain high. Currently, one out of every two of Kern County's 29,019 infants and toddlers, have all available parents — a single parent or both parents — in the labor force. Moreover, 31 percent of child care referral requests to Community Connection for Child Care in 2007 were from families looking for infant/toddler care, a decade high for the agency.

Infant care requires a higher ratio of adults to children than care for preschoolers and school-age children and is therefore financially unsustainable for many centers and family child care homes. Countywide, licensed child care is available for only 24 percent of children with parents in the labor force, but only 5 percent of licensed child care center slots are dedicated to infants and toddlers.

Traditionally, family child care has taken the lead in caring for infants and toddlers, but because these programs serve mixed age groups at any given time, it is difficult to know the exact ages of children being served. The 2006 California Early Care and Education Workforce Study estimates 2,200 infants and toddlers are currently in the care of family child care providers.

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

Kern County Child Care Supply By Provider/Setting & Spaces (March, 2008)	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	1,071	80%	10,554	35%	9.9
Licensed Child Care Centers/ Half-Day Enrichment Programs	216	16%	14,097	46%	65.3
License-Exempt Programs (School-Age: 6 years and up)	56	4%	5,681	19%	101.4
Total	1,343	100%	30,332	100%	22.6



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 two-parent family with both parents working full-time as entry level public school teachers (\$60,740 a year before taxes) would have to spend 28 percent of their income for child care.

Infant/toddler care has become increasingly expensive and difficult to find in Kern County. The average annual cost of full-time care for an infant or toddler in a Kern County center has increased 44 percent from \$7,020 in 1997 to \$10,116 in 2007. Moreover, a year of care for an infant or toddler in a family child care home averages \$6,457. The cost of care for a preschooler is \$6,903 for a licensed center and \$5,840 in a family child care home. In addition, the high cost of housing means that Kern County families have less to spend on other necessities such as child care which may limit the number of choices in the quality of care their children receive.

Many Kern families are caught between the difficulty of finding care and the need to work. Families with both parents working full-time at California’s minimum wage earn only \$16,640 per year, which puts licensed child care out of reach. State and federal child care subsidies are intended to help these working families pay for child care. However, funds are limited. In 2006, the families of 15,321 Kern County children ages 0-13 years benefited from center-based subsidized child care services.

Each California county has a Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) to expand low-income families’ access to all of the county’s subsidized child care and development programs. CEL data is a valuable tool to more accurately address regional demand for subsidized care and strategically plan for funding needs. At the end of 2007, there were 7,472 families with 11,181 children waiting for subsidized child care or child development programs on the Kern County CEL. The majority of these families need financial assistance with child care for their preschool age children to participate in the labor force. Unfortunately, limited funding offers very few subsidized slots to meet this need, and even fewer opportunities for children under two years of age.

Early Care & Education Workforce

Although child care costs more than many Kern families can afford, it is not enough to pay competitive wages and benefits to child care workers. Despite the importance of their work, child care professionals such as family child care providers and center staff earn on average \$20,870 each year in Kern County. Earnings of family child care providers vary depending on the number of hours worked, the number and ages of children and location. Preschool teachers in centers, pre-kindergarten programs and other child development facilities earn approximately \$30,380.

Low wages, inadequate benefits and limited career advancement in the early childhood education field mean that is hard to recruit and retain highly trained, skilled teaching staff and family child care providers. The UC Berkeley Center for the Study of Child Care Employment estimates the turnover rate of early childhood education teachers is 22 percent, twice that of public school K-12 teachers.

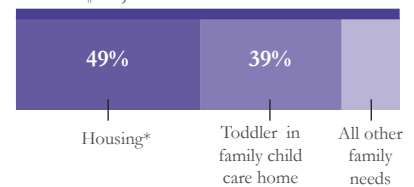


“The cost of child care is out of reach for too many families. No parent should have to choose a poor quality child care setting just because they cannot afford or find anything better for their child.”

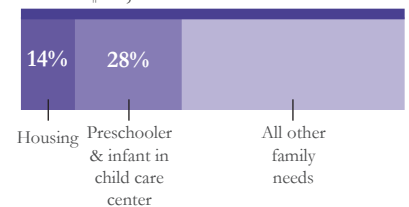
-- Linda Smith, Executive Director of NACCRRRA

Child Care & Family Budgets

One minimum wage earner
\$16,640 Annual Income



Two entry-level public school teachers
\$60,740 Annual Income



*Housing (rent for 2 bedroom unit)





In 2007, one out of six family child care providers (16%) went out of business in Kern County. When a family child care provider leaves the profession, the families she once served must begin the search for quality care all over again. The current housing market may also impact these rates in the future as providers find it increasingly difficult to afford housing that will accommodate their child care business.

Program Standards & Oversight

Parents who place their children in early childhood education programs expect them to be safe and to have quality learning experiences. However, a 2007 report produced by National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA) ranked California 47 nationally in setting program standards and conducting oversight for early care and education programs.

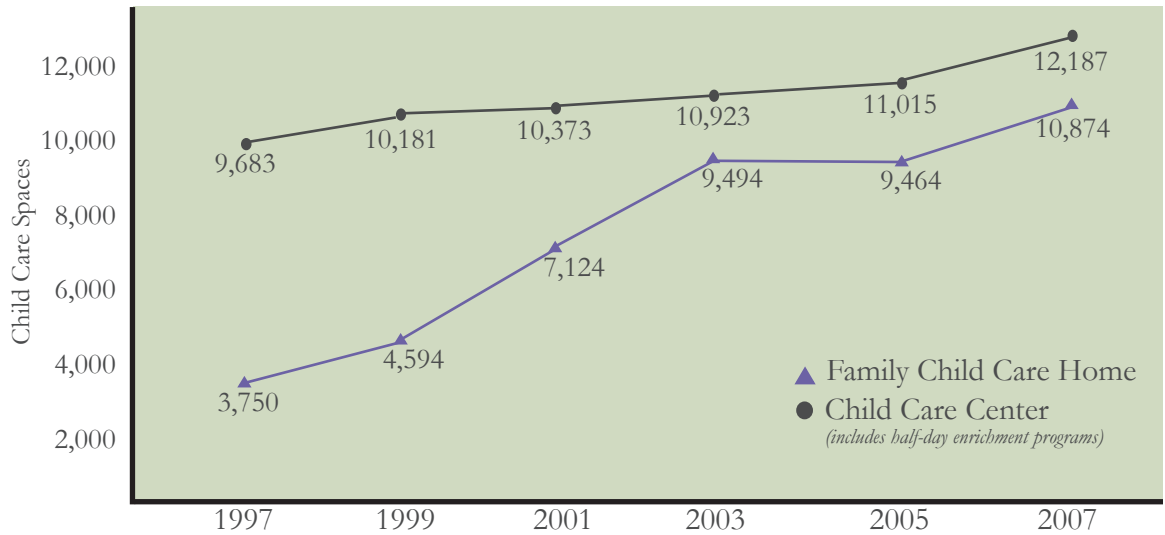
California Community Care Licensing (CCL) performs the essential function of protecting the basic health and safety of children in care. Yet, budget cuts and ineffective compliance procedures have resulted in a program that provides inadequate oversight and monitoring of child care facilities. Currently, CCL may visit child care programs and providers once every five years if there are no compliance issues – hardly frequent enough to ensure accountability to parents in an industry with high staff turnover. State child care advocates argue that new funding, a state audit of compliance procedures and an informed Legislature providing oversight are needed to restore an effective licensing program.

The Kern County Child Care Council believes that a quality child care setting should include:

- *Healthy, safe & nurturing environments*
- *Varied learning activities*
- *Knowledgeable & skilled providers*
- *Nutritious meals & snacks*
- *Frequent, positive & warm provider-child interactions*
- *Training & support to staff*

Growth in Licensed Child Care Capacity

Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes 1997 - 2007



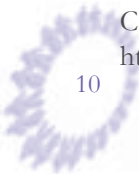
California Resource & Referral Network

DATA SOURCES:

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

Community Connection for Child Care
<http://kcsos.kern.org/cccc>

The CEL of Kern County
<http://kcsos.kern.org/cel>



Community In Action

– Kern County Child Care Council



Each of California's 58 counties is required to maintain a Child Care and Development Planning Council. Locally this entity is the Kern County Child Care Council. This 30-member advisory body is funded and governed by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division with local oversight and support by the Kern County Board of Supervisors and the Kern County Superintendent of Schools. County Supervisors and the Superintendent each appoint an equal number of council members.

Local child care planning has been present in Kern County since 1988 and has evolved since that time to address a wide range of issues related to early care and education. The Council is primarily advisory in its capacity however additional responsibilities include the assessment of child care needs throughout Kern County and to plan for services based on the needs identified. Through collaborative efforts with individuals and organizations interested in positive outcomes for Kern's children and families, the Council supports the child care infrastructure by creating an awareness of the services that are locally available. The Council is committed to its public and private partnerships and believes that these strong community linkages allow Kern to address the barriers to high quality early care and education and improve access to these services.

High quality early care and education experiences are paramount for the Council. Through the work of its committees and community collaborations, the Council provides various training opportunities throughout the year many of which have a specific focus such as Infant/Toddler, Preschool or School-Age care and events that are designed for center directors, the faith based community and others. In addition, the Council coordinates a stipend program which provides incentives for individuals working with young children in state funded programs to continue their education and thereby enhancing quality and improving the staff retention rates for Kern.

In recent years, the Council has become more active with public policy related to child care issues. The development of its Public Policy Platform allows the Council to address legislative issues as they arise such as the need for increased licensing and quality enhancement. The Council is collaborating with the Local Investment in Child Care (LINCC) project to increase child care capacity throughout Kern County. These efforts have resulted in a process by which the development and financing of child care facilities has been streamlined, resources are now available on the Web site and technical assistance is available to those interested in developing, owning or operating a child care center. This group is also working with city planners and administrators in Kern and its eleven cities to incorporate supportive child care language into their General Plans. Collectively, these strategies are expected to significantly close the child care supply and demand gap by the year 2015.

In 2008, the Council will be conducting a county-wide, comprehensive needs assessment. In order to be fully reflective of the child care needs of Kern County families, the Council will be calling upon agencies, parents, providers and others to help collect the most relevant information possible. Anyone interested in being a part of this process can contact the Council office for more information.

Tammy Burns, *Kern County Child Care Council*
kcsos.kern.org/kcccc



K-12 EDUCATION



Of the 38,175 students designated as English Language Learners in Kern County schools, 96 percent spoke Spanish. The remaining 4 percent of English learners spoke 40 different languages or dialects.

-- California Department of Education

K-12 Education Overview

During the 2006-2007 school year, Kern County was home to 47 school districts (K-12). Nearly 95 percent of the county's 8,404 teachers had full credentials, the remainder worked with a waiver based on a full credential or Intern Credential for teachers completing their teacher preparation and two types of permits, the Provisional Intern Permit and Short Term Permits, which are good for one year. The majority of teachers in Kern classrooms were Caucasian (78.7 %) followed by Latino (15.8 %) and African-American (2.4 %) teachers.

Enrollment & Student Diversity

In the 2006-07 school year, 171,584 public school students were enrolled in the county's 269 schools. Approximately 6,000 additional students attended private schools countywide during the same year.

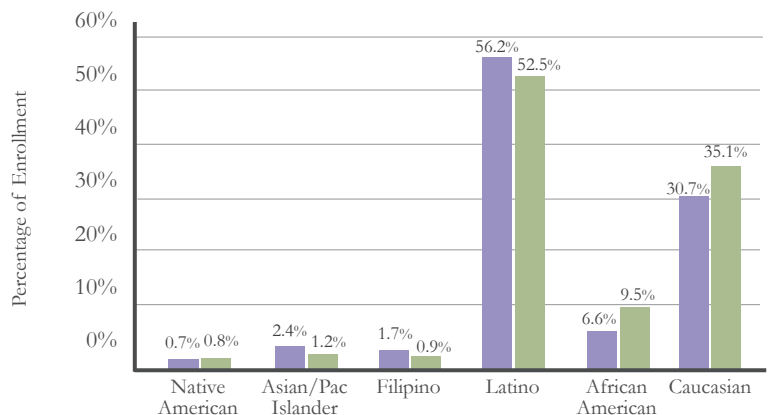
Kern schools are ethnically and linguistically diverse, with 41 languages represented by students countywide. During 2006-07, 38,175 students (22.2 % of total county enrollment) were English learners; another 30,284 students (17.6 % of total enrollment) were newly designated English-proficient students.

In 2006-07, 103,926 Kern students or 61.4 percent of the total public school enrollment participated in the free and reduced lunch program, compared to California's rate of 50.7 percent.

Additionally, 9.8 percent of the county's K-12 enrollment were students with special education and/or medical needs.

Total Enrollment and Special Education* Enrollment by Ethnicity

Kern County 2006-07



California Department of Education
*Ages 5-21. Graph excludes multirace and those not reporting ethnicity

■ Total Enrollment ■ Special Education

California

3rd Grade Test Scores (CST) Percent "Proficient" or Above	04-05	05-06	06-07
Reading	31%	36%	37%
Mathematics	54%	58%	58%

7th Grade Test Scores (CST) Percent "Proficient" or Above	04-05	05-06	06-07
Reading	43%	43%	46%
Mathematics	41%	41%	39%

Out-of-School Youth Percent of youth ages 16-19 not in school and without high school diploma	2004	2005	2006
American Community Survey, US Census	6.5%	6.8%	6.4%

Graduation Rates Interim graduation rate - see discussion	03-04	04-05	05-06
National Center for Educational Statistics formula	85.3%	85.0%	83.3%

College Prepared Youth	03-04	04-05	05-06
% Grads w/ CSU/UC Require	33.8%	35.2%	35.9%
% 12th Graders Taking SAT	35.2%	35.9%	36.7%

Community Education Levels Percent of all adults 25 and older without at least high school diploma	2004	2005	2006
American Community Survey, US Census	19.6%	19.9%	19.9%

Kern County

3rd Grade Test Scores (CST) Percent "Proficient" or Above	04-05	05-06	06-07
Reading	26%	30%	31%
Mathematics	46%	49%	48%

7th Grade Test Scores (CST) Percent "Proficient" or Above	04-05	05-06	06-07
Reading	35%	35%	38%
Mathematics	29%	34%	34%

Out-of-School Youth Percent of youth ages 16-19 not in school and without high school diploma	2004	2005	2006
American Community Survey, US Census	9.4%	9.8%	8.2%

Graduation Rates Interim graduation rate - see discussion	03-04	04-05	05-06
National Center for Educational Statistics formula	83.7%	84.4%	81.6%

College Prepared Youth	03-04	04-05	05-06
% Grads w/ CSU/UC Require	19.8%	21.6%	22.6%
% 12th Graders Taking SAT	22.1%	22.1%	23.2%

Community Education Levels Percent of all adults 25 and older without at least high school diploma	2004	2005	2006
American Community Survey, US Census	27.9%	27.2%	28.1%





Special Education

Kern County's Special Education system served 16,418 children and young adults from newborn to age 22 during the 2006-07 school year. Of these students, 1,990 children were under the age of six and 13,887 children were between the ages of six and 17.

Additionally, 541 young adult students continued to receive educational and transitional services after the age of 18. Overall, 8.8 percent of the total public school enrollment (age 5-21 years) were enrolled in special education services in 2006-07, compared to 10.1 percent statewide.

Almost half of students enrolled in Special Education had a learning disability (46%) and 27 percent had a speech or language impairment.

Alternative Education

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

In Kern County during the 2006-07 school year, 7,749 students were served through a variety of alternative education programs. This figure represents 4.5 percent of the total student population in the county.

Of these 7,749 students, 46 percent were enrolled in independent study, 21 percent in magnet schools, 24 percent in continuation schools, and 9 percent in other alternative programs.

Community In Action

– Project D.R.E.A.M.



Statewide and national studies identify foster youth residing in group homes as one of the most educationally at risk population. Research shows that more than 75 percent of foster care students work below grade level and half are retained at least one year in school. In addition to the abuse and neglect that initially brought them into the child welfare system, youth in foster care encounter numerous obstacles to school success including frequent changes in home and school placements, low educational expectations and lack of access to special education and mental health services. Youth in foster care also experience higher rates of absenteeism, dropout rates and disciplinary referrals.

Although children in foster care are clearly entitled to educational services under the law, their unique educational needs often go unmet by courts and the child welfare system, who primarily focus upon the child's immediate safety and welfare. In September of 2006, in an attempt to address the unmet educational needs of Kern County foster youth, the Kern County Network for Children/Foster Youth Services (FYS), and the School of Education at California State University of Bakersfield (CSUB) offered foster youth from Kern County group homes the chance to participate in a unique tutoring project called Project D.R.E.A.M. (Delivering Real Education and Mentoring). Project D.R.E.A.M. is a creative partnership that began with 8 tutors and 15 students, and has doubled in size in just over a year. The program has proven outcomes of academic and social growth, such as school stability, decreases in educational placement changes, and placements in higher level facilities.

Project D.R.E.A.M. tutoring sessions vary according to the individual student's needs; the primary focus is homework help, but the tutors also prepare lesson plans for those students who have no homework. Tutors are trained in specific interventions in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. Each tutor spends several hours a month working with the University Site Coordinator Dr. Kristina LaGue to develop tools of engagement for all students regardless of grade level. A new concept introduced in 2007 has been the communication between the school site/teachers and the tutors themselves as a way to bridge the gap between classroom and tutoring success.

Project D.R.E.A.M. specifically targets academic growth, but new indicators reveal that the relational/social component is just as important to the overall academic success for each student. The mentor-like relationships forged between tutor and student have been the crux of the success for the program. These relationships have changed the perceptions of the tutors, the students, and even the staff.

Tutoring is a process of enlightenment, as noted by the following quotes;

“Tutoring . . . has enriched my life in so many ways . . . As I see these kids develop academically, emotionally, and socially, it gives me great pleasure to know that the time I invest is appreciated.” –Project D.R.E.A.M. Tutor, Christian.

“Without tutoring I wouldn't have made it.” –Project D.R.E.A.M. Student

Project D.R.E.A.M. is in its second year. We are looking forward to 2009 as another wonderful year of partnership with the dedicated staff and tutors at CSUB.

Carrie Bloxom, *Foster Youth Services*
www.kcnc.org/fys





“The goal of closing the achievement gap demands a kind of focused desire. It calls for a willingness to change, to be bold, and to try new ideas. The time has come for us to answer this call. Together we can close the achievement gap and open the door to a better future for every student, without exception. “

-- Superintendent
 Jack O’Connell,
 State of
 Education
 Address -
 January 22, 2008

Student Testing

Standardized student testing is only one measure of achievement used today in California’s education system. Standardized tests help schools and educators continually improve instructional methods so children have the best opportunity to learn. Additionally, test scores are provided to parents as a tool for following the progress of their child in school.

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.

California uses five levels of performance when reporting student achievement: advanced, proficient, basic, below basic, and far below basic. The target performance level for all students in California is proficient or above.

3rd Grade Reading and Math

In Kern County during the 2006-07 school year, 31 percent of 3rd graders were proficient or above in English Language Arts and 48 percent were proficient or above in Mathematics.

Statewide, 37 percent of 3rd grade students were proficient or above in English Language Arts and 58 percent were proficient or above in Mathematics.

7th Grade Reading and Math

In Kern County during the 2006-07 school year, 38 percent of 7th graders were proficient or above in English Language Arts and 34 percent were proficient or above in Mathematics.

Statewide, 46 percent of 7th grade students were proficient or above in English Language Arts and 39 percent were proficient or above in Mathematics.

High School Exit Exam

The California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) has been controversial because passing rates vary widely among students of different ethnicity, economic status, and learning ability.

During the 2006-07 school year, 70 percent of 10th graders tested passed the English Language Arts portion and 69 percent passed the exam’s Mathematics section. Statewide, 77 percent of California’s 10th graders tested passed the English Language Arts portion and 76 percent passed the exam’s Mathematics section.

CAHSEE Exam: Percent of Passing 10th Graders (2006-07)	English-Language Arts	Mathematics
Native American	75%	67%
Asian/Pacific Islander	79%	87%
Filipino	83%	88%
Latino	63%	63%
African-American	59%	54%
Caucasian	83%	80%
English Learners	23%	35%
Special Education	17%	18%
Economically Disadvantaged	61%	61%



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/University of California system. In Kern County during 2005-06, about 23 percent of students graduated with all “A-G” classes completed. Thirty-six percent of seniors statewide completed these requirements.

The percentage of 12th graders taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is also a measure of graduates considering college education. In Kern County during 2006-07, 23.7 percent of 12th graders took the SAT exam, compared to 36.9 percent of 12th graders statewide.

Graduation

In Kern County, 8,712 students met graduation requirements during 2005-06. However, the actual number of students who dropped out between their freshmen and senior years and did not finish high school, has been impossible to capture because the California Department of Education (CDE) had no coding system for students. But this is changing. To comply with federal education mandates and California Senate Bill 1453, CDE began collecting official enrollment, graduate and dropout data via a student-level tracking system using identification numbers in the fall of 2007.

Until data is available that tracks children throughout their school career, the state is reporting county-level graduation rates based upon a formula used by the National Center for Educational Statistics. During 2005-06, Kern County had an estimated graduation rate of 82 percent. Statewide, the estimate was 83 percent.

DATA SOURCES:

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

Education Data Partnership
<http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/>

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

2006 American Community Survey
<http://FactFinder.census.gov>



A college education serves as the gateway to better options and more opportunity. College going rates steadily increased over the past four years for Kern public high school students. In 2006, 43 percent of graduates from Kern County public high schools attended a CSU, UC or community college, ranking the region 22nd in the State.

-- California Postsecondary
Education Commission



Major advances in medical research and technology, along with increased access to prenatal and newborn medical care, have reduced infant deaths in California. Despite these achievements, African American babies in California are twice as likely to die before their first birthday in comparison to babies of other racial groups.

-- California Department of Public Health

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, 79.4 percent of pregnant mothers in Kern County obtained prenatal care services during the first trimester in 2005. In California overall, 86.5 percent of mothers received care during their first trimester.

Prematurity and Low Birth Weight

The leading causes of infant death are prematurity and low birth weight. During 2005, 14,022 babies were born in Kern County. Of those with a reported gestation period, 13.1 percent were born prior to 37 weeks - the point which defines prematurity. By comparison, 11.2 percent of California's babies were premature.

Newborns have a low birth weight when they weigh less than 5.5 pounds. These infants have increased risk of health complications. The three year (2003-2005) average percentage of low weight births in Kern County was 7.0 percent. By comparison, the three-year average as 6.7 percent for all live births in California.

Births to Young Mothers

Teen mothers and their babies are at greater risk of birth complications and long term health issues. In 2005, 2,024 babies or 14.4 percent of Kern's total births were born to mothers under the age of 20.

According to the 2007 County Health Status Profile, Kern County's three-year (2003-2005) average rate for births to adolescent mothers was 62.3 per 1,000 live births, the fourth highest rate among California counties. Although the pregnancy rate for adolescents aged 15 to 19 in Kern County was significantly higher than the state overall (38.2), rates have fallen dramatically over the past decade.

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. The three-year (2003-2005) average breastfeeding rate in Kern County was 80.8 per 1,000 live births. This was the sixth lowest rate of all California counties. Statewide, the breastfeeding rate was 86.0 per 1,000.

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 2006, 93.0 percent of children enrolling in Kindergarten had all required immunizations. Statewide this figure was 92.7 percent.

Infant Death

The three-year (2002-2004) average mortality rate for infants in Kern County was 6.3 per 1,000 live births. This figure was higher than the California three-year average rate of 5.4.

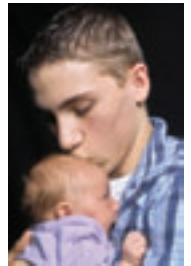
Nationwide, African-American infants die more frequently than those of other race/ethnicity. In Kern County, the three-year (2002-2004) average mortality rates for African-American infants was 12.2 per 1,000 live births; in California the figure was 11.6 per 1,000.

DATA SOURCES:

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

CA Dept of Health Services, County Health Profiles
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/OHIR/Documents/Profiles2007.pdf>

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



Kern County has the third highest rate of births to teen fathers in the State. In 2006, 5.6 percent of Kern's total births were to fathers under the age of 20. These young fathers tend to achieve less education and lower earnings over time than their non-parenting peers.

-- California
Department of
Education



Late or No Prenatal Care (Percentage of those reporting)	2003	2004	2005
Kern County	2.4%	3.3%	4.5%
California	2.5%	2.6%	2.7%

Overweight Youth (Percentage of 5 th /7 th /9 th grade)	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Kern County	36.4%	36.5%	35.6%
California	33.3%	32.5%	31.9%

Premature Births (Percentage of live births)	2003	2004	2005
Kern County	12.6%	13.6%	13.1%
California	10.7%	10.9%	11.2%

Chlamydia Infection in Youth (Rate per 100,000 females 15-19)	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	3274.4	3300.6	3179.7
California	2227.6	2280.8	2283.3

Births to Teen Mothers 15-19 (Percentage of live births)	2003	2004	2005
Kern County	14.7%	14.7%	14.2%
California	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%

Infant Mortality Rate - 3yr avg (Rate per 1,000 live births)	2000 -2002	2001 -2003	2002 -2004
Kern County (All Races)	6.8	6.0	6.3
California (All Races)	5.5	5.3	5.4
Kern County (African-American)	14.8	12.9	12.2
California (African-American)	11.6	11.2	11.6

Births to Teen Mothers 15-19 (Rate per 1,000 live births)	2003	2004	2005
Kern County	64.0	65.8	65.4
California	38.9	38.1	38.8
United States	41.6	41.2	41.1

Immunization Rates (% of Kindergarteners enrolling with all required immunizations)	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	94.1%	93.3%	93.0%
California	92.9%	92.8%	92.7%

Kern County Births to Teens 15-19 (2003)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/ Pac Islander	Native American	Total *
Number of Live Births	144	447	1,246	18	10	1,893
Teen Birth Rate per 1,000 Births	75.8	36.6	92.9	16.4	26.0	64.0

* 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.

In Kern County during the 2006-07 school year, 38,057 students in 5th, 7th, and 9th grades completed California Physical Fitness Testing. Among these students, 35.6 percent had unhealthy body composition based on individual Body Mass Index (BMI) scores.

A review of this physical fitness testing by ethnicity and gender indicates about 40 percent of Latino children in Kern County had unhealthy body composition. Also, on average, boys had poorer body composition than girls.

The 2005 California Health Interview Survey found that 29 percent of Kern County youth (about 22,000) aged 12 to 17 did not engage in vigorous activity as least three days per week. During the survey, these youth were also asked about eating patterns on the previous day; 66 percent of youth had eaten fast food.

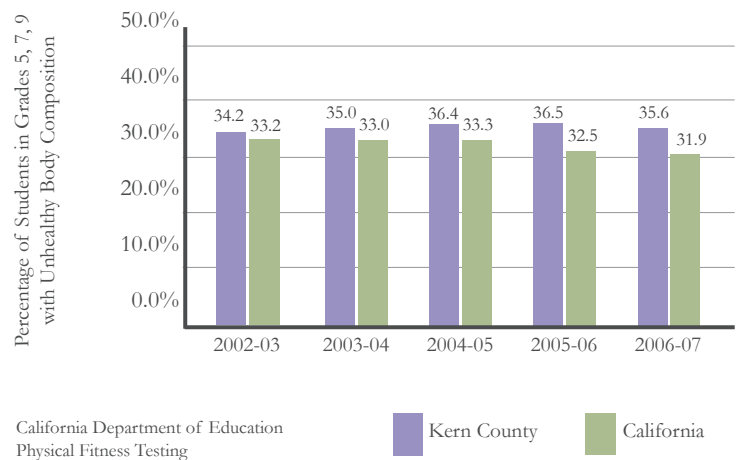
Asthma

Asthma is the leading serious chronic disease of childhood and among the most common cause for emergency room visits and hospitalizations of children. According to the 2005 California Health Interview Survey conducted by UCLA, 22.2 percent of children in Kern County had been diagnosed with asthma during their lifetime. Statewide, the figure was 16.1 percent.

Asthma is prevalent throughout the Central Valley and is often linked to agriculture-generated dust, heavy trucking corridors, rapid population growth and the physical geography of the southern Valley.

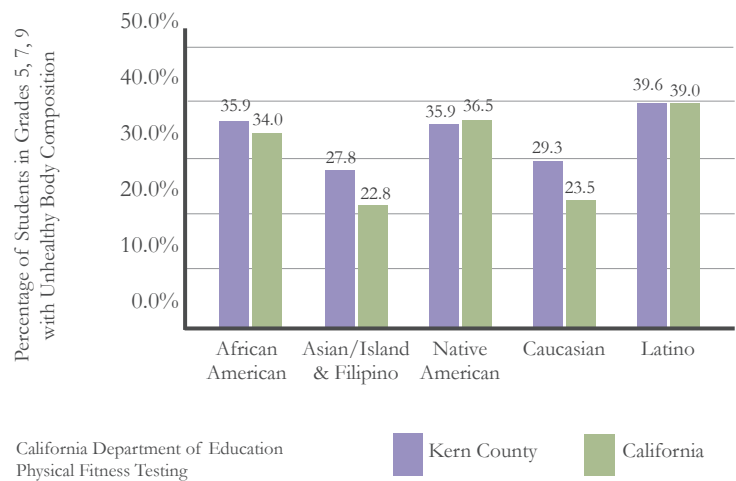
Unhealthy Body Composition of Students 2002-03 through 2006-07

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



Unhealthy Body Composition of Students by Ethnicity 2006-07

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



Community In Action

– Greenfield Walking Group



The empowering story of the Greenfield Walking Group demonstrates how residents can work in partnership with decision makers to create healthier communities. The group of neighbors originally met during a nutrition class held at the Greenfield Family Resource Center. In order to continue supporting their healthy lifestyle choices, they organized a walking group to meet routinely at Stiern Park. However, once at the park, the group encountered aggressive dogs, stepped on hypodermic needles, walked past park lights that had been shot out and looked at graffiti. The park was also a hub for drug and gang activity, as well as the location of a recent attempted kidnapping. This situation truly personified the fact that although these residents were trying to do something positive and proactive to improve their health and the health of their children, they could not walk in their current environment because it was not safe.

The park's situation motivated the group to take action, not only for themselves, but also their community. The Walking Group members were able to conduct a walkability assessment of Stiern Park with assistance from Jennifer Lopez, the group's Healthy Living Outreach Facilitator. They invited residents and families throughout the school district in addition to law enforcement, city staff, graffiti abatement, maintenance, park and recreation and animal control to walk through the park, to map out all of the problem areas, and to share their experiences.

Through this process, the group learned the best ways to assist city officials in responding to situations that occurred in the park and city officials were able to see the ownership residents were taking and the effectiveness of their efforts as partners in community improvement. The results to the environment of Stiern Park were dramatic. The lights were replaced, the graffiti and dogs were removed and police surveillance and maintenance efforts were increased. Walking group members also learned what number to call, what people to talk to and what information to give in case further problems arose. Today, Stiern Park is inundated with empowered crowds of walkers and provides a safe and pleasant place for aerobics classes, soccer games and family celebrations.

The Group's efforts have helped show organizations initially involved in nutrition education, how the step can be made to include residents in environmental and policy change and solidify their commitment to healthy eating and active living. The success that the Greenfield Walking Group has had in transforming their local park is now used as a model throughout the state. The Group's insight has also been sought in improving public transportation services and regional blueprint plans. Additionally, group members have partnered with the school district to implement physical activity after school programs districtwide.

The Greenfield Walking Group serves as an inspirational example of what can happen when resident leaders partner with decision makers to contribute towards healthier communities. Group members have lent their voice to letters advocating for menu labeling and made calls to their state senators, assembly members and the governor to advocate for affordable health care. They participated in a rally that helped lead to the passing of a Senate Bill that permits a scientist and a health professional to sit on the Valley Air Board. Additionally, one of the members of the walking group was named Hero Mom of the Central Valley as a Champion for Change. The group will soon be constructing a walking path in the park, will be highlighted by a national foundation for their work and will be featured with Mayor Harvey Hall in a Foto Novella that will be used throughout the Central Valley to motivate other families to come together with their neighbors and create healthier environments and policy changes towards obesity prevention.

The Greenfield Walking Group serves as Kern County's Obesity Prevention Task Force for the Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP), an initiative funded by the California Endowment in partnership with the Central California Public Health Partnership and the California State University Fresno's Central California Center for Health and Human Services. The initiative links communities with health departments in six counties throughout the Central Valley and takes a regional environmental and policy change approach to obesity prevention. Get Moving Kern, the Kern County Network for Children and the Kern County Department of Public Health serve as the initiatives local administrators.

Health Insurance

The California Health Interview Survey also asks many questions about health insurance because it increases the likelihood that children remain healthy by providing early identification and treatment of health problems. Parents were asked if their children had been covered by health insurance for the entire previous twelve months. Using this measure, 16.2 percent of Kern County children in 2005 did not have coverage for the entire previous year. Statewide, the figure was 9.4 percent.

Communicable 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.

According to the California Department of Public Health, Kern County has the second highest rate of chlamydia cases among California counties. In 2006, the rate of diagnosed infection in females of all ages was 745.5 per 100,000. For males, the rate was 332.4 per 100,000. By comparison, California rates were 521.6 and 203.8 for females and males, respectively.

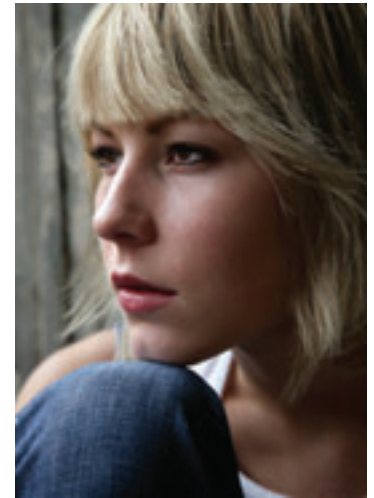
The rates of chlamydia are highest among young women between the ages of 20-24 (3,382.8 per 100,000) and 15-19 (3,179.7 per 100,000). These rates are significantly higher than the California rates of 2,766.0 and 2,283.3 for females in the same age groups, respectively. The highest rates of chlamydia were among African American women (1,644.7 per 100,000) and African American men (812.3 per 100,000), followed by Latina women (803.3 per 100,000), Latino men (339.2 per 100,000) and Caucasian women (329.1 per 100,000).

DATA SOURCES:

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

California Department of Health Care Services
<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/dcdc/STD/stdindex.htm>

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



Having multiple chlamydia infections increases a woman's risk of serious reproductive health complications, including infertility. Experts encourage retesting for women three to four months after treatment. Rescreening is an especially high priority for adolescent girls to lower rates of chlamydia reinfection.

-- Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

CHILD SAFETY

Supporting families by ensuring parents have the knowledge, skills and resources they need is an effective way to protect children from risk of child abuse and neglect.

-- U.S.

Department
of Health and
Human Services



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 for investigation. The number of referrals can indicate about how many children in the county are potentially at risk of abuse and neglect - an important measure of child safety.

However, referral rates also demonstrate the willingness of community members to report events where children may be in danger. Most child abuse referrals are unfounded and dismissed during the investigative phase.

Substantiated cases are those that have been fully investigated and the situation is found to meet specific state criteria for abuse or neglect. When child abuse allegations are substantiated, Child Protective Services must decide quickly if the situation can be easily remedied. If so, they may leave the children in their home while following the family situation closely. When the situation is more extreme, children must be removed from parental care and placed with a foster family.

Child abuse and neglect information for the State of California is processed by the Center for Social Services at the University of Berkeley. Researchers continually revise the data, so rates and other figures change periodically. Statistics used in this document were taken from the California Children's Services Archive, CWS/CMS 2007, Quarter 2 Extract.

CPS Referral Rates

In 2006, 15,831 referrals were made to Kern County's Child Protective Services (CPS), indicating a referral rate of 64.9 per 1,000 children. Statewide, 482,706 referrals were made for investigation, indicating a referral rate of 48.3.

Kern's 2006 child abuse referral rate and the percentage difference between the state and county referral rate are both at the lowest point since 2000.

Of the 15,831 referrals in Kern County during 2006, 30.0 percent were substantiated. All other referrals were inconclusive, unfounded, or evaluated-out during the CPS investigation. Statewide, 22.4 percent of referred cases were substantiated.

African-American children had the highest rates of substantiated abuse reports in Kern County (40.5 per 1,000 children) followed by Latino (19.1 per 1,000 children), Caucasian (18.1 per 1,000 children), Native American (7.4 per 1,000 children), and Asian/Pacific Islander (5.3 per 1,000 children) children.

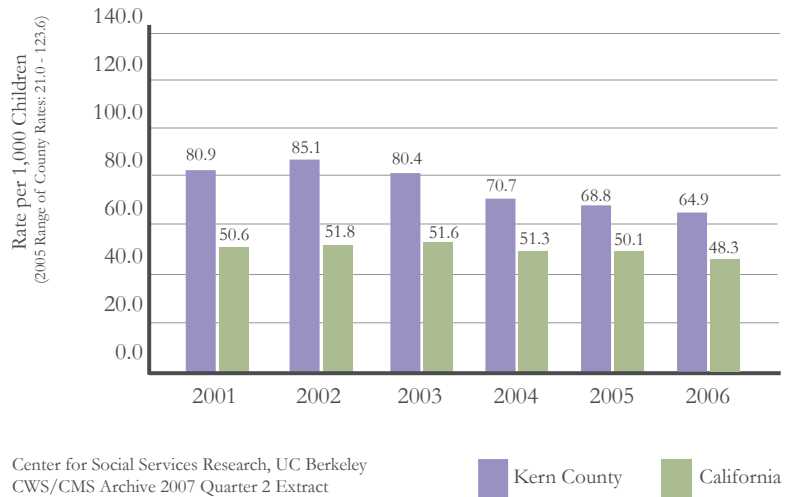
Child Abuse Rates

In 2006, 4,754 referrals were substantiated in Kern County, indicating a child abuse rate of 19.5 per 1,000 children. Statewide, 108,290 cases were substantiated, indicating a child abuse rate of 10.8.

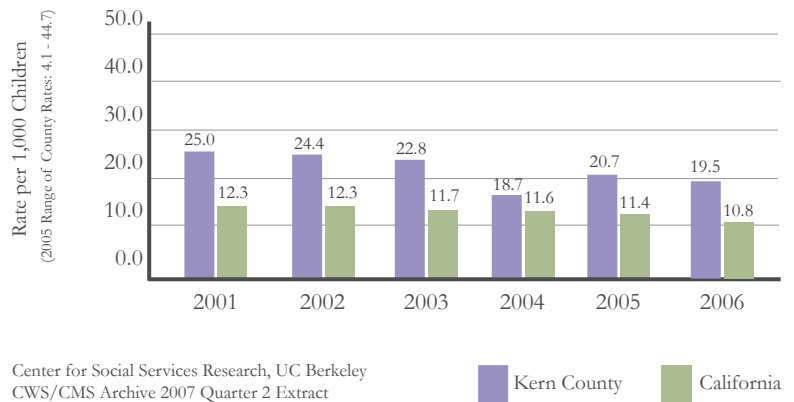
Child abuse rates in California counties ranged from 4.1 to 44.7 during 2006. Substantiated abuse rates at the state level continued to fall.

General neglect is the most prevalent type of abuse in both Kern County and California.

CPS Referral Rates 2001-2006 Kern County and California



Child Abuse Rates 2001-2006 Kern County and California



Community In Action

– Differential Response



In 2005, Kern County's Child and Family Services Review AB 636 System Improvement Plan identified Differential Response (DR) services as a key strategy to improve outcomes for children and families at-risk of experiencing child abuse and/or neglect. In January 2006, with the support of California Outcome Improvement Project funds, DR services were piloted in four Kern communities. The success of those services prompted the blending of state, federal, and local child abuse prevention funds to make the countywide expansion of DR services possible as of March, 2008.

DR expands the ability of the Kern County Department of Human Services (DHS) to respond differently to suspected reports of child abuse and neglect, by including a broader set of responses for working with families at the first signs of trouble.

Community-based, integrated case management services are the foundation for Kern's DR service model. Trained, qualified community-based organizations utilize established best practices and strengths-based approaches to engage at-risk families referred by DHS. By providing a range of supportive services and linking families to services like counseling, parenting education, job training, and food and housing assistance, DR assists families with improving outcomes so that they will become stronger and self-sufficient; child abuse and neglect will be prevented; and, children will remain safely at home, without the need for foster care or a formal Child Protective Services intervention.

"Prior to DR, I felt that my job was largely to work with families to 'put out fires.' Helping families with issues that would improve their skills as parents or their overall functioning were just not possible within the time limitations we have. Now, with DR's partnership with DHS, the ongoing needs of families are being addressed and the families have true advocates. DR case managers are the piece that has always been missing in CPS Emergency Response. Kern County families will grow stronger and children will remain safely with their families through the DR program."

-- Emergency Response Social Worker at DHS

During the 2006-07 funding year, 887 families and 2,284 children received DR case managed services. Data from 2006-07 shows that family functioning improved by an average of 30 percent after six months of case management services. DR service providers and agency partners credit DR's success in Kern County to its ability to provide services that garner together Kern's continuum of resources and build upon family strengths through education, advocacy and support.

Foster Care

Of the 4,754 children in Kern County with substantiated abuse during 2006, 1,792 were placed into foster care. The rate of foster care placement was 7.3 per 1,000 children and represented 37.7 percent of the substantiated cases. Kern's 2006 foster care placement rate represents a one-year decrease of 12.1 percent. During the same year, California had a placement rate of 4.0 per 1,000 children representing

37.2 percent of substantiated cases. Statewide, between 2005 and 2006, the percent of children placed into foster care decreased 2.4 percent.

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, 2007, 2,435 children were in foster care in Kern County, 16 fewer children than July 1 of last year.



“Foster Youth are like beautiful flowers whose seed has already been planted. The best we can do as a community is to nurture them and help them grow up toward the sky.”

-- Kern County
Foster Youth
Advocate

The 2007 rate of children in foster care by ethnicity are as follows: 21.8 per 1,000 African-American children, 10.3 per 1,000 Caucasian children, 9.2 per 1,000 Latino children, 1.9 per 1,000 Asian/Islander children and 7.5 per 1,000 Native American children. In both Kern County and California, African-American children are in foster care at a rate greater than other children. Infants (13.7 per 1,000) and toddlers (11.4 per 1,000) experienced the highest rates of entry in the foster care system. General neglect is the most prevalent type of abuse experienced by these children in both Kern County and California.

Reunification

Returning children safely to their home is the primary goal of Child Protective Services. Rates of family reunification are a way to measure the permanency outcomes of foster children. Of the 1,792 children who entered Kern County foster care in 2006, 586 (32.7%) reunified with family within 12 months. In the state, 39.7 percent were reunited within 12 months. In 2006, the median length of stay for children who had been in foster care for 8 days or longer before they were reunited was 8.5 months in Kern County. Statewide, the median length of time was 7.9 months.

Recurrence

Even when reunification is initially successful, some children must be placed again into foster care when another abuse event occurs. Of all children entering foster care in Kern County during 2005, 12.4 percent of those who reunified within twelve months returned to care during the following year. The rate in California was 11.9 percent.

CPS Referral Rates per 1,000 Children	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	67.8	64.6	64.9
California	49.6	48.3	48.3

Substantiated Child Abuse Rates per 1,000 Children	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	17.9	19.5	19.5
California	11.2	11.0	10.8

Foster Care Rates per 1,000 Children (Entry + Re-Entry)	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	8.2	8.3	7.3
California	3.9	4.1	4.0

Percentage of CPS Referrals Substantiated	2004	2005	2006
Kern County	26.4%	30.2%	30.0%
California	22.6%	22.8%	22.4%

Substantiated Child Abuse Rates (2006)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/Pac Islander	Native American	All Children
Kern County	40.5	18.1	19.1	5.3	7.4	19.5
California	25.5	9.3	11.2	4.3	24.0	10.8

Substantiated Child Abuse Rates (2006)	Under 1	1-2 yrs	3-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11-15 yrs	16-17 yrs
Kern County	50.6	26.6	22.6	18.8	13.0	9.2
California	25.3	12.3	11.1	10.9	9.1	6.7

Foster Care Prevalence Rate (Children in care on 7/1/07)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/Pac Islander	Native American	Total
Kern County	21.8	10.3	9.2	1.9	7.5	9.8
California	32.1	5.9	6.7	1.8	22.7	7.3

Median Time To Reunification (Months In Care) (2006)	Under 1	1-2 yrs	3-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11-15 yrs	16-17 yrs
Kern County	5.6	7.8	7.9	13.4	13.3	11.9
California	2.8	8.2	8.2	8.5	8.2	9.5

Median Time To Reunification (Months In Care) (2006)	African American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian/Pac Islander	Native American	Total
Kern County	6.6	9.6	8.5	6.8	20.1	8.5
California	8.1	7.9	7.9	4.5	8.1	7.9



Preserved Family Relationships

For those children living in foster care, the preservation of natural family relationships is very important. Whenever possible, sibling units are placed in the same foster home.

On July 1, 2007, a total of 1,822 sibling groups were in foster care in Kern County. Of these, 38.6 percent were placed together with all siblings and 65.3 percent were placed with some or all siblings in care. The figures for California were 48.3 percent placed with all siblings and 69.7 percent with some or all siblings.

Additionally, of those Kern County children in care during 2007, 33.8 percent were placed predominately in foster care with extended family.

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, 208 youth emancipated from foster care during the period October 2006 through September 2007.

Of all children in foster care during 2006 who were either discharged to emancipation or turned 18 while still in care, 62.3 percent had been in foster care for 3 years or longer. These youth had been placed either with extended family or in group home settings.

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 2006 through September 2007, 941 foster youth were offered ILP services and 557 (59.2%) accepted those services. Statewide, 71.4 percent accepted ILP services.

Of the students receiving Independent Living Program services, 13.5 percent were parenting their own children, 15.6 percent graduated or completed high school equivalency, 14.9 percent were enrolled in college, and 27.1 percent were employed either full or part time.

DATA SOURCES:

California Department of Social Services
<http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/>

Center for Social Services Research, UC Berkeley
<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/>



In July of 2007, 41 percent of Kern’s children in foster care had been in care for more than two years and 17 percent had been in care five years or more.

-- Center for Social Services
Research, UC Berkeley



“If we don’t stand up for children, then we don’t stand for much.”

-- Marian Wright Edelman



Kern County

Submersion / Drowning (Number of children 0-17 killed or injured)	2002	2003	2004
Fatal Injury	2	1	6
Non-Fatal Hospitalization	8	11	13

Assault/Homicide (Number of children 0-17 killed or injured)	2002	2003	2004
Fatal Injury	3	6	3
Non-Fatal Hospitalization	30	40	41

Motor Vehicle Related (Number of children 0-17 killed or injured)	2002	2003	2004
Fatal Injury	15	30	9
Non-Fatal Hospitalization	130	160	179

Domestic Violence (Calls for Assistance to Law Enforcement)	2004	2005	2006
Number of Calls	3,394	3,117	3,417
Rate per 100,000 pop.	707.2	632.8	623.0

Self-Inflicted Injury / Suicide (Number of children 0-17 killed or injured)	2002	2003	2004
Fatal Injury	2	2	2
Non-Fatal Hospitalization	25	29	36

Crime Rates (Number of crimes per 100,000 pop)	2003	2004	2005
Violent Crimes	521.7	594.0	506.0
Property Crimes	2,225.1	2,395.3	2,558.7

Missing Children

During 2006, 4,803 children were reported missing in Kern County. Of these, 4,660 were suspected runaways, 2 were lost, 47 were suspected family abduction, 13 were missing under suspicious circumstances, and 81 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 2006, 4,521 of the missing child reports previously noted were canceled: 3,434 children were returned, 809 were located, 134 were arrested, 2 were deceased and 142 were removed from the system for other reasons; 282 children remained missing at year end. Some of these children were reported late in 2006 and were not yet located when California Department of Justice reports were compiled.

DATA SOURCE:

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

Childhood Unintentional Injury

During 2004, 636 children in Kern County were hospitalized for accidental injury. Additionally, 24 children died from accidental injuries. In both county and state, the most common nonfatal accidental injuries among children are fall-related. Twenty-five percent of Kern County's hospitalizations for injury were due to falls. Most fatal accidents among children in Kern County were automobile and drowning-related.

The California Health Interview Survey conducted by UCLA, asks health and behavior questions of children and youth. The 2003 Survey found that 22 percent of Kern's youth population aged 12-17 did not always wear seatbelts and 19 percent had, in the past, ridden with a driver that had been drinking. Statewide these figures were 20 percent and 20 percent, respectively.

In California, drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death among toddlers and preschoolers and the fourth leading cause among children of all ages. During 2004, six drowning and 13 near-drowning episodes happened in Kern County.

DATA SOURCES:

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

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

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



Because falls are associated with a child's curiosity and development of motor skills, children ages 10 and under are injured from falls at a rate about twice that of the total population. Preschoolers are at the greatest risk of fall-related death and injury.

-- Safe Kids USA



To reduce the risk of suffocation, infants should be placed for sleep on their back on a firm crib mattress covered by a sheet firm sleep surface. Soft materials or objects such as pillows, quilts and comforters should not be placed under a sleeping infant.

-- American Academy of Pediatrics

Child Deaths

During 2006, Kern County's Child Death Review Team investigated 57 child deaths that met the coroner's review criteria. The preponderance of the cases reviewed were determined either accidental or unintentional (60%). Twenty-three percent of deaths were from natural causes and 11 percent were from homicide. The causes of remaining deaths are still pending.

Nineteen of the reviewed deaths, or 33 percent of the cases, were infants under age one. Among infants, the most common causes of death were positional asphyxia or co-sleeping (26%) and pneumonia or bronchiolitis (21%). One infant died from homicide (5%). Other causes of death included prematurity, aspiration and other health related causes. One cause of infant death was undetermined.

The remaining 38 reviewed deaths, or 67 percent of the cases, were children aged one to 17. Automobile-related accidents continue to be the most common cause of unnatural death among children over age one (42%). Most notable, 69 percent of the children killed in automobile accidents were unrestrained. Other causes of death for children in this age group include: traffic-related means, including ATV, bicycle and as a pedestrian (16%); homicide (13%), unintentional deaths (19%) (i.e., explosives, gun shot, blunt force trauma, drowning, drug overdose, carbon monoxide poisoning); medical conditions (8%); and undetermined causes (5%).

DATA SOURCE:

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

Youth Violence

During the 2005-06 school year, the California Healthy Kids Survey asked health and behavior questions to 13,500 seventh, ninth, and eleventh graders. According to the survey, 26 percent of all students surveyed had been in a physical fight one or more times at school and 16 percent had damaged school property on purpose. Additionally, 13 percent of students had brought a weapon to school and 5 percent had carried a gun onto school property.

Regarding gang membership, 11 percent of Kern's seventh grade students identified themselves as gang members. Among ninth and eleventh grade students, eight percent identified themselves as gang members. Students served by Kern's nontraditional continuation schools were most likely to identify themselves as gang members (15%). In California, rates of gang involvement for the three grade levels were nine, eight, and seven percent, respectively.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has found that too much idle time and too little positive adult supervision are contributing factors to delinquent and risky behaviors among young people. When older teens are not connected to school or jobs, idle time is abundant and supervision is reduced.

In 2006, about 3,100 Kern County youths age 16 to 19 were not enrolled in school and were not employed. Between 2004 and 2006, the percentage of “disengaged youths” increased from 5.7 percent to 6.3 percent. Moreover, Kern County figures remain higher than state (3.9%) and national (4.1%) figures.

DATA SOURCES:

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

2006 American Community Survey
<http://FactFinder.census.gov>

Community In Action

– Early Intervention Program



In May 2007 the Kern County Probation Department launched the Early Intervention Program. The Early Intervention Program is a collaborative evidence based project effort between the Kern County Probation Department, participating schools and school district representatives, community partnerships, mental health providers, the Department of Human Services, local law enforcement agencies, and other community based organizations. The primary target group is minors, and their families, in grades three (3) through six (6) attending participating schools in the Bakersfield City, Standard, and Beardsley school districts.

The program focuses on a multidisciplinary approach towards cognitive skill development for the minor and his or her family. Probation Officers are trained in delivering cognitive behavioral interventions, including TPS (Teaching Pro-Social Skills/Aggression Replacement Training) and the Strengthening Families Program, that target high risk indicators of future delinquency such as family circumstances and parenting, education, personality and behavior, and the minor’s attitude/orientation. Long time registered addiction specialist, community resource specialist, and local legend among those in recovery; Carol Mallory has contracted with the program during the inaugural year. Carol’s RAP (Recovery Activities Program) provides minors and their families with a comprehensive prevention, intervention, treatment/referral, and aftercare approach to addressing substance abuse.

For eight weeks this past summer the Early Intervention Program conducted a summer program in which forty five high risk youth and teen mentors participated in a variety of enrichment activities including archery, rock climbing, gymnastics, swimming, social skill building, in addition to arts and crafts. Some of the feedback from participating families included a grandmother stating that the summer program “completely turned my grandson around. He is doing very well in school, his behavior has changed, and he has a lot of confidence.”

The program is currently intensively serving sixty four minors, and their families, at various phases in the program. Thus far the response from the community, collaborating agencies, and the children served themselves has been favorable. A counselor from one of the schools participating in the program stated, “The EIP program has become a key component of the successful year our students are having.” The Early Intervention Program is currently conducting its second set of groups in Teaching Pro-Social Skills training and the first group of participating families will graduate from the Strengthening Families Program on April 1, 2008.

Lisa Clark, *Kern County Probation Department*
www.co.kern.ca.us/probation/





Teen dating violence is just as serious and lethal as adult domestic violence. Research shows that physical or sexual abuse is a part of 1 in 3 high school relationships.

-- National Domestic Violence Hotline

Domestic Violence

The California Department of Justice reports annually on domestic violence calls for assistance. According to the Department, this data includes cases which resulted in a domestic violence report being written by responding law enforcement officers. The data includes cases where an arrest was made and also incidents where circumstances did not warrant an arrest. Because of complex coding procedures, state statistical reports do not necessarily include all incidences of reported domestic violence.

During 2006, Kern County law enforcement officers recorded 3,417 calls for assistance in domestic violence situations, a rate of 623.0 calls per 100,000 population. This rate decreased from 632.8 calls per 100,000 population in 2005. The California rate of calls for assistance also decreased from 707.8 calls per 100,000 in 2005 to 654.7 calls per 100,000 in 2006.

Of the 3,417 calls for assistance in Kern County during 2006, nine percent involved the use of firearms, knives, or other dangerous weapons. Another 38 percent involved personal weapons, such as hands, fists or feet. In total, 47 percent of these calls for assistance involved weapons.

A recent study conducted by Kern County's Domestic Violence Death Review Team indicates 28 children have been impacted by the death of one or both parents due to intimate partner murder or murder-suicide during the five year period from 1999 through 2004. Thirteen of these children witnessed the event.

DATA SOURCES:

California Department of Justice
<http://safestate.org/statereports/index.cfm?navid=395>

Kern Domestic Violence Death Review Team
Report by Doris Hall and others of California State University Bakersfield, Department of Criminal Justice

Crime Rates

Violent and Property Crime

During 2005, the violent crime rate for Kern County was 506.1 per 100,000 population. Following a four-year period of increasing violent crime, the county rate fell 14.8 percent in one year. However, the rate in 2005 remained 6.0 percent higher than the rate in 2000.

By comparison, the statewide rate of violent crime in 2005 was 512.3 per 100,000. The state continued a five-year period of decreasing violent crime. The state rate has fallen 16.0 percent since 2000.

Property crime in Kern County is at the highest rate since 1995. During 2005, Kern's property crime rate was 2,558.7 per 100,000 population. California's property crime rate was 1,952.0.

Juvenile Arrests

The rate of felony arrest among Kern County youth continued to be slightly higher than the California rate. However, the county rate has fallen 37 percent since 2000.

In Kern County during 2005, the juvenile felony arrest rate was 1,536.2 per 100,000 youth. California's rate of juvenile felony arrest during the same year was 1,361.1 per 100,000.

Juvenile misdemeanor arrests have followed a similar trend, falling 51 percent since 2000. In both 2004 and 2005, the county rate has fallen below the state rate.

In Kern County during 2005, the juvenile misdemeanor arrest rate was 2,303.4 per 100,000 youth. The rate is California during the same year was 2,817.9 per 100,000.

DATA SOURCE:

California Department of Justice
http://stats.doj.ca.gov/cjsc_stats/prof05/index.htm



Community In Action

– Domestic Violence Advisory Council



One of the myths of domestic violence is that it is a “Family Issue”...but recent events have broken that perception. It has spilled out into our workplace, our schools, and our neighborhoods. We can no longer leave the participants “to work it out alone” without intervention or consequences. Everyday we learn in the news of another relationship for which the violent consequences have spread to “uninvolved” community members.

The Kern County Domestic Violence Advisory Council (DVAC) is an organization that was formed with the intent to reduce incidences of domestic and relationship violence for the residents of Kern County through effective collaboration among service and government agencies, the courts and members of the community, in order to make victims safer and hold offenders accountable. DVAC accomplishes this mission through a number of standing committees which address specific areas of interest and concern.

By gathering information and identifying domestic violence issues, the members of DVAC inform and recommend to the community at large, as well as the policy makers, modifications which can positively effect the reduction of domestic violence in Kern County. For example, after realizing that Kern’s bail schedule for domestic violence was lower than other counties, DVAC members submitted a request for Bail Review to Superior Court. This collective effort resulted in the implementation of a higher bail schedule for the safety of the victim. DVAC’s vision for change and engaging community partners has also succeeded in producing numerous improvements to the domestic violence training of law enforcement officers, District Attorney filings of domestic violence cases, as well as developing Expert Witness’ for DA to testify when victim’s recant.

Domestic violence rarely has only one victim. Regardless of age, children who witness violence in the home are at increased risk of being injured and neglected. However, children in Kern County, historically, were not mentioned in domestic abuse reports by law enforcement and as a result, local programs such as Victim Witness could not provide services to these children. DVAC brought this deficiency to the attention of law enforcement and policy changes were made to report children who witness domestic violence and share this information with Child Protective Services.

Promoting healthy, non-abusive families and relationships is not the sole responsibility of the domestic violence service providers. Successful intervention depends on a consistent coordinated community response designed to create safety and support for victims of domestic violence and their children. DVAC’s Death Review Team, which began reviewing cases in 1999, finished their 5 year report in 2006 and describe the impact on the survivors of these homicides. The data has been used countywide to develop more effective outreach strategies to families and children living with domestic violence. DVAC offers monthly meetings with training and education in order to build capacity among advocates, organizations and community members committed to preventing domestic violence. Additionally, DVAC hosts on a yearly conference to educate the community about domestic violence and the need for the community and service agencies to work together. Past conferences have focused on the effect of domestic violence on children.

DVAC attributes its success as a collaborative to the memberships’ commitment to staying focused on our mission. No one entity can solve the problem of family violence in our community and the membership realizes this truth. The professional and personnel respect among the membership is what allows us to successfully tackle the problems facing our community.

Teen dating violence is similar to and can be as lethal as adult relationship violence. Knowing that family violence is a crime which is perpetuated from generation to generation, DVAC will focus on the issue of Teen Dating Violence for the 2008 conference. The membership believes that by teaching adolescents how to develop healthy and safe relationships, we can interrupt the generational cycle of violence and reduce the incidence of family violence later in life. DVAC plans to build upon community strengths and existing resources to increase the community awareness of violence in teen relationships and translate ideas into action.

Nada J. Yorke, *Domestic Violence Advisory Council*
www.kerndvac.com



2008 COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVES



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

Since 1992, Kern County communities have partnered together as Community Collaboratives to better care for children and families. Nineteen 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.

Accredited Community Collaboratives

Arvin	Arvin Collaborative and FRC.....	661.854.6526
Bakersfield	34th Street Collaborative	661.326.3051
	East Bakersfield Collaborative and CRC	661.631.5875
	Fairfax/Brundage Neighborhood Partnership	661.979.2635
	Greenfield H.E.L.P.S. Collaborative and FRC	661.837.3720
	South Chester Collaborative and FRC	661.631.5945
	Southeast Neighborhood Partnership and FRC	661.322.3276
	661.836.4165
Buttonwillow	Buttonwillow Collaborative and CRC	661.764.9405
California City	California City Collaborative	760.373.8606
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
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 Collaborative and FRC.....	661.746.8690
Taft Area	Greater Westside Collaborative and CRC.....	661.765.7281
Wasco	Wasco Collaborative	661.720.5835
Kern County	Richardson Special Needs Collaborative and FRC.....	661.336.5482

Other Community Collaboratives

Bakersfield	Oildale Collaborative and CRCs	
	North of the River Case Management Services.....	661.324.0293
	Neighborhood Place (children under age 6)	661.392.2054
	Standard Healthy Start (school children).....	661.392.2163
	Rosedale Collaborative.....	661.633.7197
Delano	Delano Neighborhood Partnership and CRC.....	661.721.7036



2008 GOVERNING BOARD

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Kern County Public Defender

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Kern Child Abuse Prevention Council

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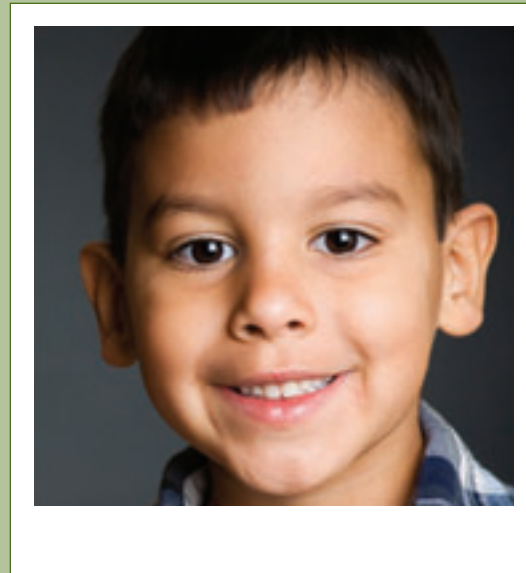
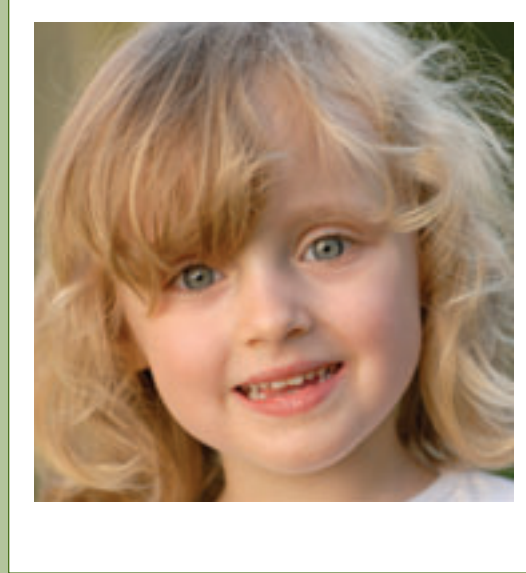
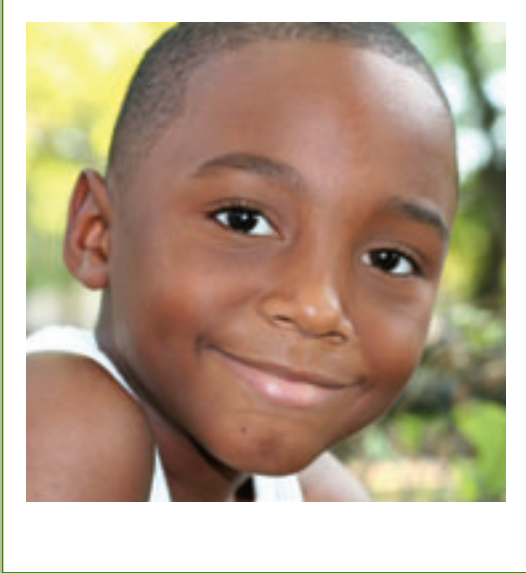
VERNON VALENZUELA
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THOMAS J. CORSON
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Children

BERNARD C. BARMANN
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Counsel



LOCAL COMMUNITIES WORKING IN COLLABORATION
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES