



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RSA Tower 201 Monroe Street, Suite 914 Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone 334-206-5300 Fax 334-206-5534

[www.adph.org](http://www.adph.org)

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## Alabama's infant mortality rate decreases in 2008

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### CONTACT:

Albert Woolbright, Ph.D.  
(334) 206-5429

The Alabama Department of Public Health announces a decline in Alabama's infant mortality rate in 2008, with a rate of 9.5 deaths per 1,000 live births and a total of 612 infant deaths. In 2007 Alabama's infant mortality rate was 10.0.

Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer, said, "While our infant mortality rate has decreased, we are concerned that the percentage of births to mothers with adequate prenatal care fell and that there are so many low birthweight infants. As in previous years, having no insurance is associated with the highest infant mortality."

Looking at the statistics by race, black infant mortality decreased from 14.6 in 2007 to 14.1 per 1,000 live births in 2008, while white infant mortality also decreased from 8.0 to 7.6. The infant mortality rate for Hispanic infants increased from 7.3 in 2007 to 8.9 in 2008. Births to teens also declined from 8,776 in 2007 to 8,567 in 2008.

Overall, the infants born to adult women in 2008 had a better infant mortality rate (9.3) than for infants born to teenagers (11.8). Infants of low birthweight had a 61.9 infant mortality rate in 2008, while normal weight infants had a 3.1 rate of infant deaths. The infant mortality rate for single births (8.4) in 2008 was much lower than for multiple births (41.9).

Unfortunately, the adequacy of prenatal care in Alabama fell to its lowest level in more than a decade. Data from the department's Center for Health Statistics show that only 74.2 percent of all live births were to women with adequate prenatal care. By race, white mothers had the highest percentage of births with adequate prenatal care (76.5), followed by black mothers with 70.5 percent and Hispanic with 44.5 percent.

Having no insurance is associated with the highest infant mortality. In 2008, mothers with private insurance had the lowest infant mortality rate (6.9), followed by women receiving Medicaid (10.8), and worst, self pay (20.1).

Twelve percent of Alabama mothers smoked during pregnancy in 2008. The infants born to nonsmoking mothers had an 8.9 rate of infant mortality versus a 13.2 rate for infants born to mothers who smoked.

For detailed infant mortality statistics by county and for other statistical information, visit [www.adph.org](http://www.adph.org).

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