



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Infant mortality rate in Alabama remains stable in 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health announces that the state's infant mortality rate of 8.7 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014 remained stable. Infant mortality nationally was 5.8 in 2014.

A total of 517 infants born in Alabama died before reaching 1 year of age in 2014; there were 59,532 live births to state residents during the year. For reasons not fully understood, perennial disparities in infant mortality between black and white infants continue. The 2014 infant mortality rate for black infants was more than twice that of white infants--13.9 per 1,000 for blacks and 6.0 for whites. The disparity exists for both Alabama and the U.S.

Acting State Health Officer Dr. Tom Miller said, "We must enhance strategies to reduce infant mortality. We hope to address modifiable risk factors that have been shown to contribute to poor birth outcomes."

Twenty-three percent of births in 2014 were to mothers with an interval between births of less than two years. Only 75 percent of births in 2014 were to women who had adequate prenatal care.

Teen births and teen smoking during pregnancy are risk factors that contribute to infant mortality, and both are trending in a positive direction. The percentage of births to teens (8.5) and the percentage of teen mothers who smoked (9.7) are the lowest ever recorded in Alabama. Another positive indicator in 2014 is that the percentage of elective early deliveries decreased slightly. The percent of births at less than 37 weeks of pregnancy declined to 11.7 in 2014 from 11.8 in 2013.

Alabama's infant mortality rates in recent years are as follows:

2013, 8.6

2012, 8.9

2011, 8.1

2010, 8.7

Graphs and detailed charts on infant mortality are available at the Alabama Department of Public Health website at www.adph.org/healthstats.

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