



INFANT DEATH IN OUR COMMUNITY

Forsyth County Report

**Forsyth County
Infant Mortality Reduction Coalition**

www.HelpOurBabies.org

**Statistical information provided by the Forsyth County
Department of Public Health & North Carolina State Center
for Health Statistics**

December 2009

What is Infant Mortality?

- Infants who are born alive, and die before their first birthday, are counted as infant deaths.
- Stillborn babies are fetal deaths, and are not counted among infant deaths.

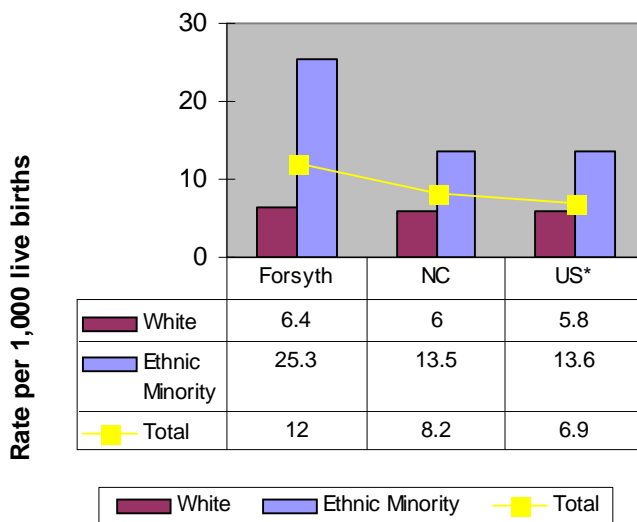


“Nothing really affects you unless it knocks on your door, and I don’t want this to knock on anyone else’s door.”

—Local mother of an infant who died.

Is This a Problem in Our Community?

Infant Mortality in Forsyth County 2008



- Each infant death is a tragedy in the life of a family.
- North Carolina ranks 44th in the nation for infant deaths (CDC)
- The U.S. ranks 29th among industrial nations for infant mortality, tying with Poland and Slovakia (CDC, 2004 data)

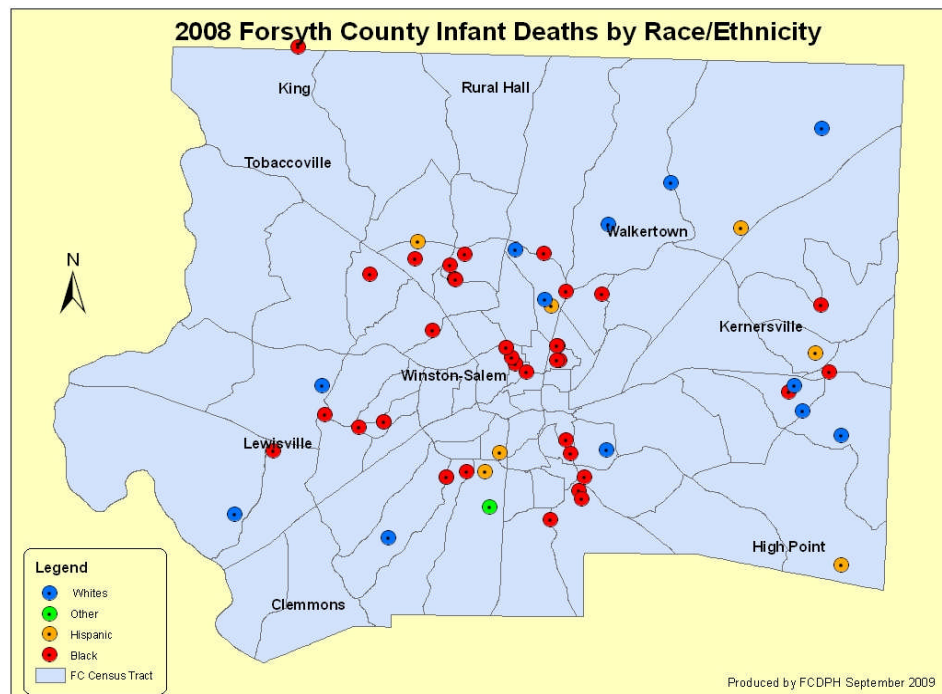
Why Are Our Babies Dying?



- **Premature birth (<37 weeks gestation) and health problems related to prematurity** continues to be the leading cause of death for infants under one month of age.
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the leading cause of death for postneonatal infants (1 month to 1 year).
- 3 out of 4 infants (70%) who died in Forsyth County during 2008 were born premature. (NC-SCHS query of infant deaths in Forsyth County 2008)
- Other causes of death include birth defects, respiratory problems, other medical conditions, infections, injury, and homicide.

Who is Affected?

- Infant mortality affects families in all racial and ethnic groups.
- Babies are dying in all parts of town, not just in one neighborhood or one area of the county.
- The map to the right shows each of the infant deaths in Forsyth County in 2008.



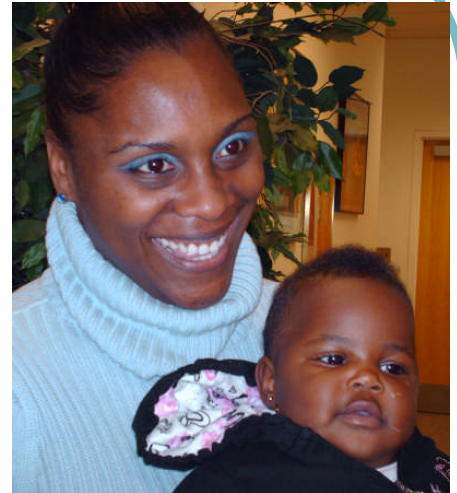
17 Alpha-hydroxyprogesterone (17P)

- 17P is a medicine that may reduce repeat preterm birth by up to one-third (33%) in some women.
- 17P is a weekly shot of progesterone given between 16 and 36 weeks of pregnancy, and has been proven safe for mothers and babies.
- 17P is not effective for women who are pregnant with multiple babies such as twins or triplets.

Candis, from Winston-Salem, lost several premature infants before hearing about 17P from her doctor and friend during her last pregnancy. 17P extended her pregnancy to 34 weeks gestation, resulting in the birth of a healthy baby girl !

"I would absolutely recommend 17P to other women. It really worked for me!"

~Candis Boykins



Candis with baby Dezini
—now 9 months old.

Preconception Health—Grow a Healthy Baby !

- ❑ **Stop Smoking:** Smoking , including secondhand smoke, reduces oxygen to the baby, prevents adequate growth, and can cause preterm labor.
- ❑ **Avoid Drugs and Alcohol:** Alcohol and drug use increases a woman's risk having a miscarriage or stillborn baby.
- ❑ **Eat Well:** Eating habits before and during pregnancy have a huge impact upon the health of women and their babies. Daily folic acid 400 mcg should be taken daily prior to pregnancy.
- ❑ **Establish a Medical Home:** Pre-existing medical conditions like uncontrolled diabetes can cause preterm labor, stillbirth, miscarriage, or serious birth defects.
- ❑ **Reduce Stress:** Pregnant women under stress may have higher levels of hormones that trigger preterm labor. Events such as the loss of a job, death of a family member, divorce, or racial discrimination can significantly increase stress hormones.
- ❑ **Plan Your Pregnancy:** All couples need a reproductive life plan. Pregnancies should be at least two years apart to improve birth outcomes.

Women can take the preconception health assessment quiz at:

www.MomBaby.org

This report is available online at:

www.HelpOurBabies.org