



Low Birth Weight Clark County and Washington State 1995-1997 through 2004-2006

Why it matters:

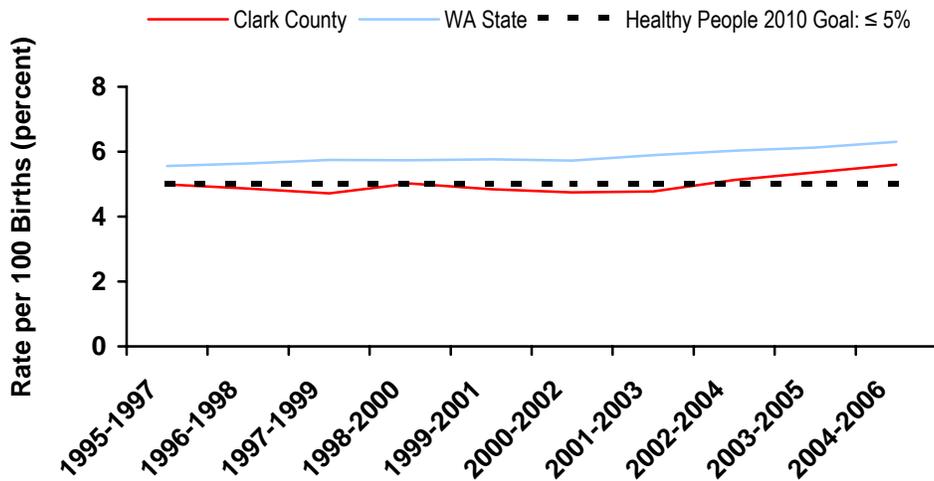
Low birth weight (LBW), defined as less than 2500 grams or 5 1/2 pounds, is a major contributor to infant illness and death. Children born with LBW are at increased risk for health, development, behavioral, and social problems. The large majority of pre-term babies (born before 37 weeks gestation) are LBW. Estimates from 2005 state the lifetime costs to society is \$51,600 annually for each pre-term birth in the U.S. ¹

Status:

- Between 2004-2006 in Clark County, 5.6% of all births were to infants with LBW compared to 6.3% for Washington State.^{2,3}
- Clark County's rate of LBW births is significantly lower than the state's rate of 6.3%.^{2,3}
- Clark County is close to the national target that no more than 5% of all births are LBW.^{2,3,4}
- In Washington State, higher rates of singleton (one baby) LBW exist among infants who are black, who are born to mothers younger than 20, or whose mothers were on Medicaid for prenatal care and delivery.¹

What we can do:

- The most effective interventions to increase birth weight focus on attaining and maintaining optimal maternal health and well-being. These include:
- prenatal care and where possible preconception care (throughout childbearing years) to identify and treat risk factors as early as possible.¹
 - maternal nutrition via increased access to nutritious foods and nutrition education for all women.^{5,7} One effective program is the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) for lower income families.¹
 - smoking cessation via effective, affordable interventions.^{1,5,6}
 - increased time periods between pregnancies via easily accessible, culturally appropriate, and quality health and reproductive care.^{5,8}



Year	Clark County			Washington State		
	% LBW	95% CI*	Number	% LBW	95% CI*	Number
1995-1997	5.0	(4.6,5.4)	710	5.6	(5.5,5.7)	12,949
1996-1998	4.9	(4.5,5.2)	719	5.6	(5.5,5.7)	13,254
1997-1999	4.7	(4.4,5.1)	719	5.8	(5.7,5.8)	13,558
1998-2000	5.0	(4.7,5.4)	788	5.7	(5.6,5.8)	13,694
1999-2001	4.8	(4.5,5.2)	764	5.8	(5.7,5.9)	13,737
2000-2002	4.8	(4.4,5.1)	734	5.7	(5.6,5.8)	13,629
2001-2003	4.8	(4.4,5.1)	733	5.9	(5.8,6.0)	13,969
2002-2004	5.1	(4.8,5.5)	805	6.0	(5.9,6.1)	14,444
2003-2005	5.4	(5.0,5.7)	885	6.1	(6.0,6.2)	14,960
2004-2006	5.6	(5.2,6.0)	950	6.3	(6.2,6.4)	15,762

*If two confidence intervals overlap, there is generally no significant difference between these rates.

Please see reverse side for technical notes and sources.





Technical Notes: Low Birth Weight (LBW) infants are newborns who weigh less than 2500 grams (5 lbs., 8 oz) and include those born too early and those whose intrauterine growth is retarded. Very Low Birth Weight (VLBW) infants weigh less than 1500 grams (3 lbs., 4 oz.) most often due to prematurity. All infants recorded to be born in Clark County and Washington State weighing less than 2500 grams are included in these numbers.

Sources: (1) Washington State Department of Health. (2007, December). Singleton Low Birth Weight. In *The Health of Washington State*. Olympia, WA. p.7.4.1-7.4.7. Retrieved March 11, 2008 from <http://www.doh.wa.gov/HWS/HWS2007.htm>. (2) *Vital Registration System, Annual Statistics Files, Births 1980-2006*. [Data file]. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics. (3) Public Health: Seattle & King County, Epidemiology, Planning, & Evaluation. (1991-2008). *VistaPHw 7.2.0.0*, 2008 [Computer software for public health assessment]. Seattle, WA. (4) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (January 2000). Maternal, Infant, and Child Health, Objective 16-10a, Reduce low birth weight (LBW) to no more than 5.0% of births. In *Healthy People 2010*. (Conference Edition, in Two Volumes, p. 16-33). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. (5) Alexander, GR, & Korenbrot, CC. (1995, Spring). The Role of Prenatal Care in Preventing Low Birth Weight. In *The Future of Children: Low Birth Weight*, Vol. 5., No. 1. Retrieved January 18, 2007 from http://www.futureofchildren.org/pubs-info2825/pubs-info_show.htm?doc_id=79872. (6) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2001, March). *Women and Smoking: a report of the Surgeon General*. Retrieved March 18, 2007 from <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/womenandtobacco/>. (7) Institute of Medicine. Committee to Study the Prevention of Low Birth Weight. (1985). *Preventing Low Birth Weight*. National Academy Press, Washington, DC. (8) Zhu, BP, Rolfs, RT, Nangle, BE, & Horan, JM. (1999, February 25). Effect of the Interval between Pregnancies on Perinatal Outcomes. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 340, 589-594.

