

# Profile of Child Well-Being in Palo Alto County



## Population Profile

The population 17 years of age or younger in Palo Alto County in 2000 was 2,440, a decrease of 14.3 percent since 1990. According to projections, the youth population will decline to 1,989 by 2020.

In Palo Alto County, youth accounted for 24.0 percent of the total population in 2000 compared to 25.1 percent statewide. Minority youth in the county numbered 81 in 2000 and are projected to decrease to 70 by 2020.

### 1. Population 17 Years or Younger

	Palo Alto County			
	1990	2000	2010*	2020*
Total population	10,669	10,147	9,405	9,114
Percent 17 or younger	26.7	24.0	20.4	21.8
Population 17 or younger	2,848	2,440	1,919	1,989
0 to 4 years	680	550	496	540
5 to 9 years	846	622	527	556
10 to 14 years	854	733	549	553
15 to 17 years	468	535	347	340
Minority^ Population 17 or younger	n/a	81	47	70
0 to 4 years	n/a	21	9	20
5 to 9 years	n/a	14	8	18
10 to 14 years	n/a	32	15	20
15 to 17 years	n/a	14	15	12
Female Population 17 or younger	1,382	1,199	989	1,069
0 to 4 years	336	266	242	264
5 to 9 years	436	304	246	266
10 to 14 years	403	361	250	268
15 to 17 years	207	268	251	271
Male Population 17 or younger	1,466	1,241	1,034	1,114
0 to 4 years	344	284	254	276
5 to 9 years	410	318	256	278
10 to 14 years	451	372	259	279
15 to 17 years	261	267	265	281

^ Minority includes all persons except white non-Hispanics.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary File 1, \*Projections by Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2005

Data and support for this profile provided by:

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## Health Profile

As the number of total births in Palo Alto County dropped from 2000 to 2004, the number of births to teens decreased by 7. In 2000, births to teens accounted for 12.7 percent of total births in the county compared to 6.7 percent in 2004.

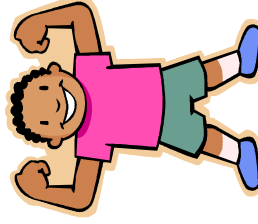
*Teen parenting is used as a predictor of future economic hardship for both parents and children. Teen parents are often less able to provide positive, safe and caring environments, or family stability.*

In Palo Alto County, 8.6 percent of total births in 2004 were low birthweight compared to 7.0 percent statewide.

*Low birthweight (less than 5.5 pounds or 2,500 grams) can be an indicator of mothers not receiving adequate prenatal care and is often a good predictor of future health and developmental complications.*

*Early and ongoing prenatal care increases the chances of delivering healthy, full-term, and normal weight babies. Rates are per 1,000 live births.*

For the period from 2002 to 2003, the rate of mothers in Palo Alto County receiving prenatal care during the first trimester of their pregnancy was 915.6 compared to 886.2 statewide.



### 2. Births to Teens, Low Birthweight Births, Pre-natal Care, and Immunizations

Year	Births to Teens		Low Birthweight Births		1st Trimester Prenatal Care		Full Immunizations*	
	Palo Alto County	State	Palo Alto County	State	Palo Alto County	State	Palo Alto County	State
	% of total births		% of total live births		rate (per 1,000 live births)		% fully immunized	
2000	14	12.7	3	6.1	---	---	94.0	86
2001	7	6.8	8	6.4	903.3	869.8	95.0	88
2002	7	6.4	8	6.6	n/a	n/a	86.0	85
2003	2	1.7	9	6.6	915.6	886.2	94.0	89
2004	7	6.7	9	7.0	n/a	n/a	89.0	90

Source: Iowa Department of Public Health

\* NOTE: Immunization data reflect only one site per county so should be interpreted with caution.

In Palo Alto County in 2004, 89 percent of children 24 months of age were reported to be fully immunized compared to 94 percent in 2000. Percentages for the state were 89 in 2004 and 84 in 2000.

*Fully immunized = 4 DTP/DTaP, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 Hep. B by 24 months of age.*

*Infant mortality is considered one of the best overall measures of health care accessibility and quality in that it measures the health of the most vulnerable in a given population. The infant mortality rate is the number of infants who die before their first birthday per 1,000 live births.*

In Palo Alto County, the infant mortality rate from 2002 to 2004 was 3.0, lower than the county rate of 1999-2001 and lower than the statewide rate of 5.3 in the 2002-2004 period.

**NOTE:** Due to the relatively low number of births, infant deaths, and child deaths per year in many of Iowa's counties, users are encouraged to use 3-5 year averages for comparative purposes. These are presented in Tables 3 and 4.



**3. Infant Mortality**

Year	Palo Alto County		State	
	n	rate	n	rate
1996-1998	3	9.2	6.6	6.6
1999-2001	1	3.1	5.9	5.9
2002-2004	1	3.0	5.3	5.3

Source: Iowa Department of Public Health

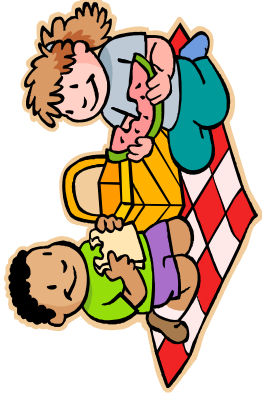
From 2002 to 2004, the child death rate in Palo Alto County was 0.0 compared to the state's rate of 0.2

*Child deaths include deaths to all children ages 1 to 14. Child death rates are the number of deaths in this population per 1,000 total population age 1 to 14.*

**4. Child Death Rates**

Year	Palo Alto County		State	
	n	rate	n	rate
2002-2004	0	0.0	0.2	0.2

Source: Iowa Department of Public Health



**Education Profile**

In Palo Alto County, 11 children were enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten during the 2004-05 school year. This was a 7 child decrease from 2001-02.

*Pre-Kindergarten students often demonstrate stronger early reading and math skills than non PK students.*

**5. Pre-Kindergarten Enrollment**

	Palo Alto County	State
2001-2002	18	5,714
2002-2003	16	5,949
2003-2004	37	6,907
2004-2005	11	6,108

Source: Iowa Department of Education

The PAK Empowerment Area reported at least 20 percent of its kindergartners consistently displaying school-ready behaviors in the five areas. Statewide at least 33.7 percent of kindergarten students were reported as school ready.

*"School readiness" is the result of kindergarten teachers being asked to assess their students in 5 areas: communication skills, cognitive skills, self-management skills, motor skills, and social-emotional development. Teachers report the degree to which behaviors within these five areas are observable ranging from "rarely" to "consistently".*

**6. School Readiness\*, 2003-2004**

	Empowerment Area		State
	n	rate	
Motor Skills <sup>1</sup>	43.7	46.1	
Communication Skills <sup>2</sup>	32.4	33.7	
Cognitive Skills <sup>3</sup>	29.5	41.8	
Social/Emotional Dev. <sup>4</sup>	36.8	47.0	
Self-Management Skills <sup>5</sup>	20.0	41.2	

\* Percent reported "consistently observed"

Source: Iowa Department of Education

- <sup>1</sup> Include coordination and balance, using scissors, etc.
- <sup>2</sup> Include the ability to ask and answer questions, communicate needs, etc.
- <sup>3</sup> Include using a variety of words to describe a shape or color, ability to sort objects into categories, etc.
- <sup>4</sup> Includes ability to build relationships with adults and peers, express emotions and feelings, etc.
- <sup>5</sup> Includes ability to follow classroom rules and routines, take responsibility for personal belongings, etc.

**Economic Profile**

During the 2004-05 school year, 33.4 percent of K-12 students in Palo Alto County were eligible for free or reduced-price school compared to 26.8 percent in 2001-02. Statewide a total of 148,759 students (31.1%) were eligible for free or reduced price meals.

*Because eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals is an annual measure, it is a good indicator of the economic well-being of children in a community. Families with incomes 135% or less of the federal poverty threshold are eligible for free meals, those with incomes 136% to 180% of poverty are eligible for reduced-price meals.*

**7. Eligibility for Free or Reduced-Price School Meals**

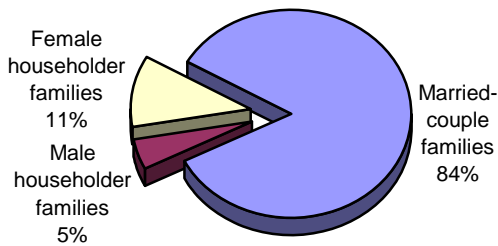
	Number Eligible for Free Meals		Number Eligible for Reduced-Price Meals		Percentage Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals	
	Palo Alto County	State	Palo Alto County	State	Palo Alto County	State
2001-02	277	93,062	197	36,492	26.8	26.7
2002-03	323	100,544	178	36,870	29.4	28.5
2003-04	336	107,324	151	36,907	29.4	30.0
2004-05	350	111,390	186	37,369	33.4	31.1

Source: Iowa Department of Education

**Family Living Profile**

While the majority of the 2,345 children under 18 years of age in Palo Alto County in 2000 resided in a two-parent family, 15.8 percent lived in a family headed by a single parent.

**Children by Family Type, 2000**



Source: Census 2000, SF1, US Bureau of the Census

In Palo Alto County, 71.1 percent of children under 6 living in a family or subfamily had all parents in the labor force compared to 71.4 percent statewide. All parents includes both parents in a married-couple family and the parent in a male- or female-headed family.

**Safety Profile**

The number of confirmed cases of child abuse or neglect in Palo Alto County in 2004 was 46, a decrease of -29 since 2000.

**9. Confirmed Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect**

	Palo Alto County	State
2000	75	10,821
2001	64	12,793
2002	59	12,292
2003	43	14,936
2004	46	14,499

Source: Iowa Department of Human Services

In 2004, Palo Alto County reported 191 Group A and 191 Group B arrests per 100,000 juveniles compared to rates of 1,687 and 1,199, respectively, for the state.

Source and further details available @ [http://www.dps.state.ia.us/documents\\_repository/DPS/2004/iacrime/iacrime.htm](http://www.dps.state.ia.us/documents_repository/DPS/2004/iacrime/iacrime.htm)

Juvenile arrests are reported in 2 groups, Group A offenses include such crimes as murder, rape, burglary and drug violations while Group B offenses include curfew, drunkenness and runaways.

**8. Employment Status of Parents with Young Children, 2000**

	Palo Alto County		State
	n	%	%
Total Own Children in Families			
Under 6 years:	700		
Living with 2 parents	519		
Both parents in labor force	373	71.9	69.2
Living with father only	32		
Father in labor force	32	100.0	88.8
Living with mother only	149		
Mother in labor force	93	62.4	75.9

Source: Census 2000, SF3, US Bureau of the Census