

MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS *about* INFANT MORTALITY



What is the infant mortality rate in Kansas?

The infant mortality rate in Kansas is 7.1. The rate is the number of deaths of Kansas children under age one per 1,000 live births.

How do we compare with other states?

In comparison to the 7.1 rate in Kansas, Iowa has an infant mortality rate of 5.1, Colorado has a rate of 5.7 and Nebraska's rate is 5.6.

Kansas has made consistent progress over the years to improve the well-being of our state's children. One of the reasons Kansas children have fared so well is because policymakers have used data to drive their decisions on children's health issues, such as implementing a comprehensive newborn screening program and requiring booster seats for small children.

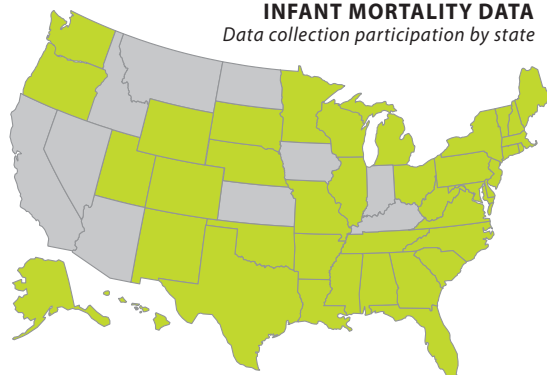
Kansas lacks data that other states are able to access

Right now, Kansas lacks the data that policymakers need to make informed decisions about the infant mortality problem facing our state. In fact, Kansas ranks 29th in the nation when it comes to infant mortality and we fall far behind the progress made by neighboring states like Iowa, Nebraska and Colorado. Unlike these other states, officials in Kansas do not have the ability to gather the data needed to implement community-level programs that will effectively combat our high infant mortality rate.

Kansas is missing out on federal funding related to infant mortality

Without access to appropriate data regarding infant mortality, Kansas lacks access to federal funding that other states are utilizing to lower their infant mortality rates. By putting a process in place to collect the data needed on infant deaths, Kansas will have an opportunity to draw down additional federal dollars and to save the lives of more Kansas children.

INFANT MORTALITY DATA *Data collection participation by state*



Thirty-seven states have utilized Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funding to collect and analyze data surrounding infant mortality. Kansas would not be eligible to apply for this federal funding until statutory authority is granted by the Legislature to collect the necessary data.

Now is the time to take the first step

Solutions to health problems often become evident when comprehensive data is available. However, when it comes to infant mortality, our state simply does not have enough data to make informed policy decisions. The first step toward improving the infant mortality rate in Kansas is to find out what factors are contributing to the high rate. To achieve this, Kansas needs to provide statutory authority to the Kansas Department of Health & Environment that will allow the agency to collect and analyze information from Kansas families about infant deaths that are factored in the state's infant mortality rate. Having access to more comprehensive data will provide community leaders and policymakers in Kansas with the information they need to make informed decisions to reduce the rate of infant mortality in Kansas.



720 SW Jackson, Suite 201
Topeka, Kansas 66603
785.232.0550
www.kac.org