Child Mortality in Delaware

Between 1990-1994 and 1999-2003, child mortality rates fluctuated between 32 and 34 deaths per 100,000 children 1-19 years of age; in 2000-2004 the rate rose to 36. Since that time, child mortality rates have declined steadily, dropping 22 percent, to 26.7 in 2005-2009.

Figure 1. Five-year Average Child (1-19) Deaths and Mortality Rates — Delaware, 1990-2009

Accidents, or unintentional injuries, were responsible for the greatest number of deaths of children and youth ages 1-19. Homicides, cancer, and suicides were the second, third, and fourth most common causes of child death in 2005-2009.
Child mortality rates due to unintentional injury decreased 36 percent between 1997-2001 and 2005-2009, dropping from 18.1 to 11.6 deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-19. During the same time period, child mortality rates due to cancer were stable, and child mortality rates due to suicide demonstrated a small decrease. Homicide mortality rates for children ages 1-19 rose 90 percent in the same time span. The jump in homicide mortality rates was due the increase in homicide deaths of teens aged 15-19, who accounted for 90 percent of all homicides of children in 2005-2009.

**Figure 2. Five-year Average Mortality Rates for Most Common Causes of Child Death, Delaware 1990-2009**

In 2005-2009:

- Firearms were used in 78 percent of homicides.
- Cancers of the brain and central nervous system and leukemias accounted for 65 percent of all child deaths due to cancer.
- Suffocation was the most commonly used mechanism of suicide.

**Source:** Delaware Health Statistics Center
In 2005-2009, accidents or unintentional injuries, accounted for the greatest number of child deaths. Within the category of accidental, or unintentional injury-related deaths, motor vehicle traffic accidents were the most common cause of unintentional injury death; 69 percent of all unintentional injury deaths to children ages 1-19 were due to motor vehicle traffic injuries. Poisoning was responsible for one in ten unintentional child deaths; drowning accounted for 8 percent of unintentional child injury deaths.

Figure 4. Distribution of Unintentional Injury Deaths for Ages 1-19, Delaware, 2005-2009

Source: Delaware Health Statistics Center