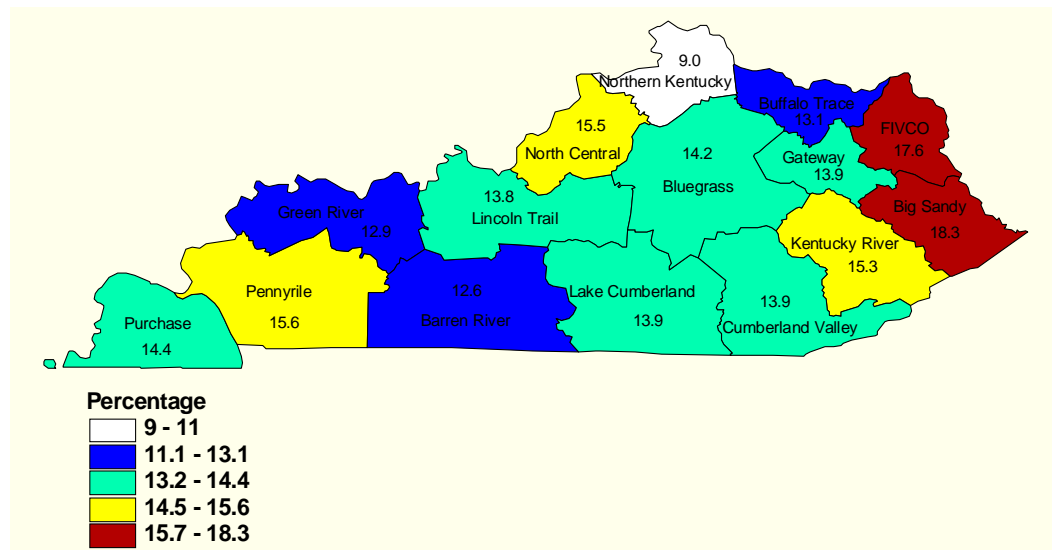


FACTS ABOUT PREMATUREITY IN KENTUCKY

On an average week in Kentucky, there are about 1072 babies are born. Of those, about 154 of them are born preterm—before 37 weeks gestation. That's 1 preterm birth in Kentucky every 65 minutes.

- On average, 1 in every 7 babies born in Kentucky is born before 37 weeks gestation; in some parts of the state 1 in every 5 babies is born preterm. Preterm birth is a problem all across the state:



- In Kentucky, the rate of preterm birth is 14.9% (2005), compared to 12.7% nationally.
- The Healthy People 2010 goal for preterm birth is 7.6% (lower is better = fewer preterm births); Kentucky's rate is almost twice that.
- The rate of preterm birth in Kentucky has increased more than 24% in the last decade, twice as fast as the national rate has increased. Kentucky now has the highest preterm birth rate of all our surrounding states (equal with Tennessee, higher than West Virginia, Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois).
- Rates of delivery by Cesarean section are also rising—now about 1/3 of deliveries in Kentucky are by c-section. This increases risks for problems for the mothers and the babies.
- Kentucky has one of the highest rates in the nation for women who smoke during pregnancy. In the United States on average only 1 in 10 pregnant women smoke. However, in Kentucky 1 in 4 pregnant women smoke during pregnancy. In some Kentucky counties, 1 in every 2 pregnant women smoke. There are also long-term detrimental effects of smoking to both the mother and the baby. Smoking may

cause problems with the pregnancy, like fetal loss, placental problems, preterm births, and low birth weight babies. In Kentucky, babies of mothers who smoke are 5 times more likely to die of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) than babies of mothers who do not smoke. Women are more likely to quit smoking during pregnancy than any other time in their lives, if they are given help, support and encouragement.

- Good prenatal care is one of the best protections against preterm birth. In Kentucky, only 75% of pregnant mothers see their doctor in the first trimester for care, or go to enough prenatal visits.
- Immediate costs of prematurity are high. In Kentucky in 2005, there were over \$200 million of hospital charges for premature births. Taxpayers and private and public insurers pay into these high costs, as do employers. Communities also pay for prematurity later, as these children often need more developmental intervention, special education, and recurring health care.
- Prematurity is a problem that is common, costly, and serious in Kentucky. Help us educate our communities about prematurity and what can be done to prevent it. The information in this toolkit should help people understand that ***Healthy Babies are Worth the WaitSM!***