

Madison County, KY - County Health Rankings 2010-2012
Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health

Kentucky's and Madison County's approach to County Health Rankings follows a model of population health that emphasizes on many factors that, if improved, can help make communities healthier places to live, learn, work and play. The rankings consider program and policies, health factors, and health outcomes. The rankings show number 1 as the highest or "the best county" in each factor or indicator measured.

From 2010-2012, Madison County showed improvement in overall rankings within the state in all areas, except Clinic Care and Social and Economic Factors. Social and Economic Factors showed the most dramatic changes, with the county being the 5th highest county in the state in 2010 to 19th highest county in 2012. Changes in factors such as reduced high school graduation, increased unemployment, children in poverty, inadequate social support and single-parent households contributed to the dramatic change in county ranking.

The areas of greatest improvements were shown in Morbidity and Physical Environment. This contributed to Madison County moving from 34th to 20th (2012) in the state for Health Outcomes and from 7th to 6th in the state for Health Factors (2012.)

Health Outcomes

Mortality

Mortality data, such as premature death, is measured to determine the lifespan of residents in a county; premature death is defined as deaths before age 75. Most of these deaths are considered to be preventable and are collected state wide.

Morbidity

Morbidity data refers to how well people feel while they are alive. Measure of health is related to quality of life, such as physical and mental health, as well as birth outcomes, such as low birth weight. For example, low birth weight can tell us several things about health, the maternal exposure to health risks and the infants current and future suspected health problems.

Health Factors

Health Behaviors

Health behaviors such as unsafe sex, tobacco use, diet, exercise, and alcohol use are all measured from surveys given to various groups around the county as well as statistics collected from various sources. For instance, unsafe sex can give us more categories such as teen birth rates, sexually transmitted disease rates and so on.

Clinical Care

This category introduces access to health care as well as quality of that care and health disparities across the county such as number of physicians and health insurance. This can be collected by various sources such as employers that provide insurance, number of physicians, number of patients using emergency rooms as their primary source of care, etc.

Social and Economic Factors

Unemployment rates, crimes statistics, average income levels, education levels, and family support are all things that influence social and economic crisis in a county. This can be measured by the bureau of labor statistics, violent death rates and other various sources.

Physical Environment

This category includes the environmental quality and built environment in the county and can be measured by taking pollution levels, ozone levels, in accordance with the Clean Air Act of 1990. Samples must be taken to determine levels of carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide. All of these compounds in excess can cause severe health problems.

Programs and Policies

Various programs and policies exist in counties to address various health outcomes which can range from immunizations in children or diet and exercise all the way through promotion of college education or stimulating the economy. These county rankings are just one way to show each county where it can find the best benefit for programs and what needs the most improvement.