

CHILDHOOD MORTALITY

Death claimed the lives of 271 of the 1,073,045 children (1 to 14 years old) residing in Arizona in 2000. Children in 2000 had better survival chances than children in 1990, as reflected in 23.3 percent reduction of the mortality risk. The rate of 25.3 deaths per 100,000 children was the second lowest rate of the eleven-year period from 1990 to 2000 (**Table 2C-8**). One in 3,960 children died in 2000 compared to one death for every 3,276 in 1990.

Leading causes of childhood mortality

Mortality rate for all *unintentional injuries* combined declined by 46.7 percent from a peak of 18.2/100,000 in 1995 to 9.7/100,000 in 1999, but it increased to 10.8/100,000 in 2000 (**Table 2C-8**). Forty-three of every 100 children who died in 2000 did so from an unintentional injury, compared to 40 percent in 1999. *Injuries inflicted by motor vehicles* had the largest decline in rate (37 percent). Both in 1999 and 2000, death rate for motor vehicle accidents was 5.8/100,000, 36.3 percent lower than in 1995 when it also reached its recent peak of 9.1/100,000 (**Table 2C-8**).

The death rates for *congenital malformations, assault (homicide) and intentional self-harm (suicide)* decreased in 2000. In contrast, mortality rate for *cancer* did not change between 1999 and 2000 (**Table 2C-8**).

Six children, five boys and one girl committed *suicide* in 2000. Nine children were *murdered* in Arizona in 2000 (**Table 2C-11**) compared to 11 in 1999 and 25 in 1998.

Gender differences

Females, but not males experienced a decline in their total mortality rates from 1999 to 2000 (**Figure 2C-5, Table 2C-8**). Despite the improvement in their chances of survival in since 1990, boys had a mortality rate that exceeded by 46 percent the death rate among girls (29.8 vs. 20.4).

The 2000 total mortality rate for girls was 27.1 percent lower than the year 2000 target rate of 28/100,000. The 2000 rate for boys was 6.4 percent greater than the year 2000 health objective.

Urban/rural differences

In 1998, the first and only time in two decades, the total mortality rate of rural children was lower than the rate of urban children. In 2000, the mortality rate of rural children had decreased, but it exceeded by 21 percent the rate of urban children (**Figure 2C-6, Table 2C-9**).

The 2000 unintentional injury death rate of rural children was the lowest of the past eleven years, having dropped 29.3 percent from the 1990 rate (**Table 2C-9**). In contrast, the unintentional injury death rate of urban children had increased in 2000 by 23.5 percent.

One of the national objectives set by the U.S. Public Health Service for the year 2000 was to reduce motor vehicle-related deaths among children 1-14 years old to no more than 5.5 per 100,000. The 2000 rate of urban children was 1.8 percent greater than the target rate (**Table 2C-9**). The rate for rural children was 18.2 percent greater than the objective.