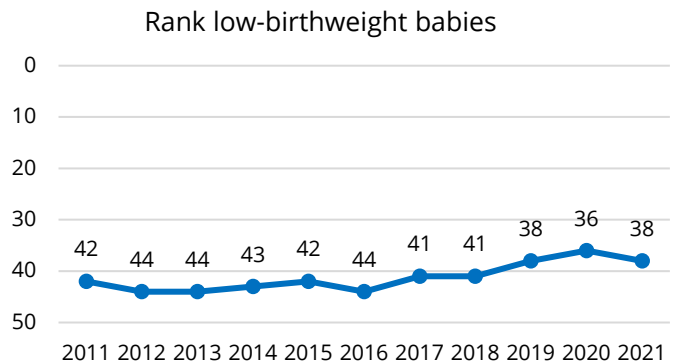
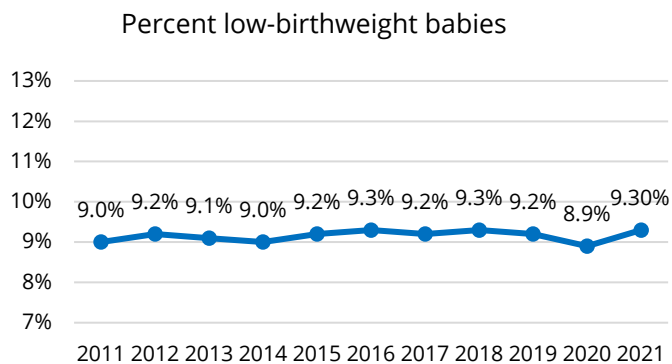


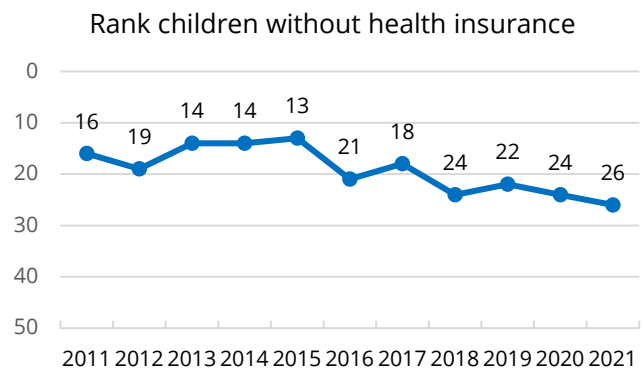
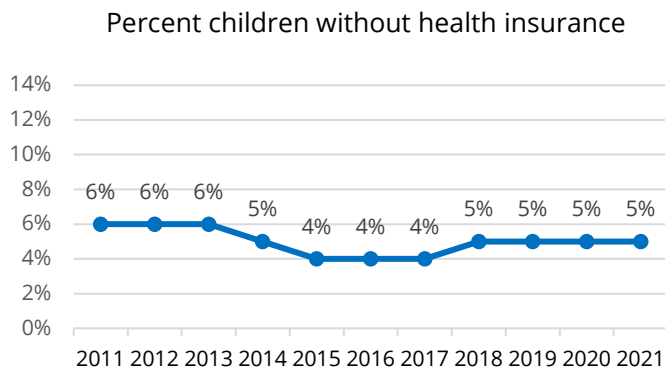
## Health

The four indicators that make up the Health domain are the percentage of babies born at low birth weight, the percentage children who lack health insurance, the child and teen death rate, and the percentage of youth age 10 to 17 who are overweight or obese.



The percent of babies born at a low birthweight in Tennessee has moved back to its ten-year high, reversing small improvements. This includes a reversal of rank improvement, suggesting Tennessee has lost what had been real, positive change.

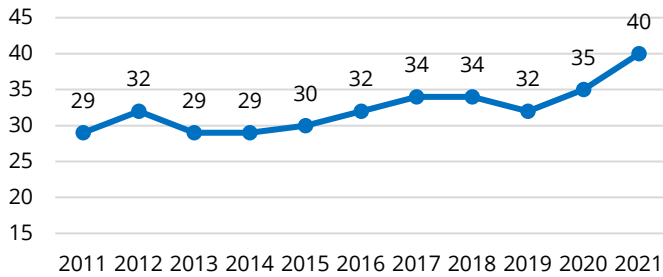
- There is some disproportionality by race in this measure, with white and Hispanic babies least likely to be born at a low birthweight at about 7.5 percent. Asian babies are closer to 9 percent born at a low birthweight, and African American babies have the highest likelihood at just over 14 percent. Improvement in disparity could bring great improvement overall.
- Babies born with a low birthweight have a high probability of experiencing developmental problems and short- and long-term disabilities and are at greater risk of dying in the first year of life. Smoking, poor nutrition, poverty, stress, infections, violence, inadequate prenatal care and mother's age during pregnancy increase risk of a baby being born at a low birthweight. Increased risk is seen in mothers under the age of 15 and over the age of 35.



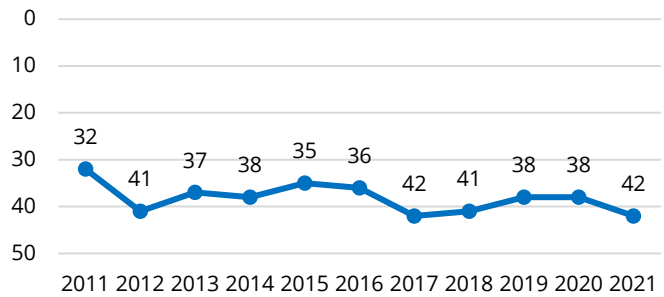
- Tennessee was an early leader in insuring children, maintaining TennCare expansion for children after pulling it back for adults. Medicaid expansion in other states has chipped away at that advantage. In 2018 Tennessee went backward on this measure for the first time in a decade but has remained stable since. The state's rank continues downward, however, falling below the median for the first time since KIDS COUNT began tracking this measure.
- With heavy federal investment aimed at at-risk children, this is one of few measures where black, white and Asian children have parity. Tennessee's Hispanic children lag far behind, however, with fully 16 percent lacking health insurance.

- Children without health insurance are less likely to have a regular health care provider or to receive care when they need it and more likely to delay treatment, putting them at greater risk of hospitalization. Lack of health insurance can be financially devastating if a child experiences a serious or chronic illness.

Child and teen death rate

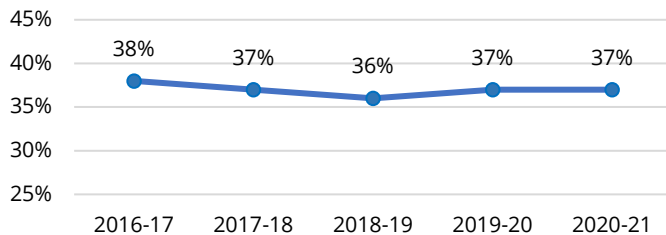


Rank of child and teen death rate

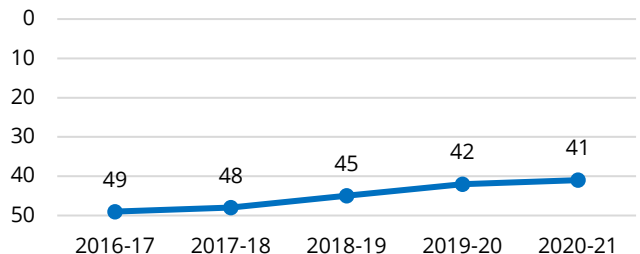


- Tennessee’s child and teen deaths have increased sharply—by 38%—over the last decade. The state’s rank is at its worst, though change in rate over the decade is much flatter than the death rate itself. Rank changes suggest other states’ rates are also increasing, though perhaps not as quickly as Tennessee’s. This measure does not include infant (under 1 year) deaths.
- In Tennessee, the rate of child and teen deaths among black children is more than twice that of white children. Hispanic children fall between the two. Rates for black and Hispanic children are rapidly increasing, while rates for white children are flat.
- The child and teen death rate reflects a broad array of factors: physical and mental health; access to health care; community factors; use of safety practices and levels of adult supervision. In 2020, firearms surpassed automobiles as the leading cause of death for children and youth over one year of age for the first time and continue to rise as a factor in child safety.

Percent of children and teens who are overweight or obese



Rank children and teens who are overweight or obese



- This measure was only added to the KIDS COUNT index of child well-being a few years ago. For this indicator, children between the 85th and 95th percentile BMI-for-age are categorized as overweight, and children at or above the 95th percentile BMI-for-age are characterized as obese. Tennessee children do not rank particularly well on this indicator. The few years of available data show a pretty flat rate, though rank improvement suggests other states are closing the gap.
- This measure is not available by race, but a related measure—children who are not in good or excellent health—shows 8 percent of white children have significant health issues while 22 percent of black children do. Sample sizes were too small for Asian and Hispanic children.
- Childhood obesity is associated with increased premature death and disability in adulthood. Overweight and obese children are more likely to stay obese into adulthood and to develop noncommunicable diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular diseases at a younger age.