

CHILD MORTALITY

According to preliminary data in 2009, 10,076 children aged 1-14 years died of various causes, which was a decrease of 335 cases since the previous year. The overall mortality rate among children aged 1-4 years was 26.1 per 100,000 children in that age group, and the rate among children aged 5-14 years was 13.9 per 100,000.

Unintentional injury continued to be the leading cause of death among children in both age groups, accounting for 32.5 percent of all deaths among 1- to 4-year-olds and 29.6 percent of deaths among 5- to 14-year-olds. Among children aged 1-4 years, congenital anomalies (or birth defects) were the second most common cause of death (10.9 percent of deaths), while among children aged 5-14 years, cancer was the second leading cause of death (15.9 percent of deaths).

Between 1970 and 2008, the leading causes of child mortality shifted. The percentage of deaths due to homicide increased from 2 to 9 percent among 1- to 4-year-olds and from 2 to 6 percent among 5- to 14-year-olds. Conversely, the proportion of deaths due to pneumonia and influenza declined from 9 to 3 percent among 1- to 4-year-olds and from 4 to 2 percent among 5- to 14-year-olds during the same time period (data not shown).¹

In 2009, mortality rates were higher among males than females in both age groups. Among

children aged 1-4 years, the mortality rate for males was 28.8 per 100,000 compared to 23.4 per 100,000 among females of the same age; rates among 5- to 14-year-old children were 15.6 per 100,000 and 12.1 per 100,000 for males and females, respectively (data not shown). There are also racial/ethnic disparities in child mortality, with non-Hispanic Black children experiencing higher mortality rates than children of other racial/ethnic groups. Among children aged 1-4 years, the rate was 41.2 per 100,000 for non-Hispanic Blacks, compared to rates of 23.2 and 23.9 per 100,000 for Hispanics and non-His-

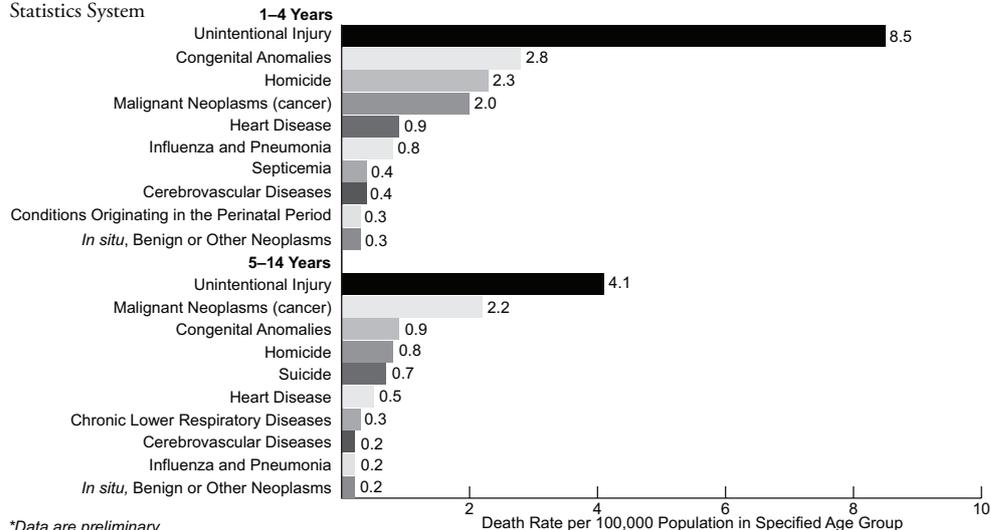
panic Whites, respectively. Among children aged 5-14 years, rates were 21.0 per 100,000 for non-Hispanic Blacks, 13.1 per 100,000 for Hispanics, 12.2 for non-Hispanic Whites, 10.9 for Asian or Pacific Islanders,² and 20.2 for American Indian/Alaskan Native children (data not shown).

1 Singh GK. Child Mortality in the United States, 1935-2007: Large Racial and Socioeconomic Disparities Have Persisted Over Time. A 75th Anniversary Publication. Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Rockville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2010.

2 Separate estimates for Asians and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders not available.

Leading Causes of Death Among Children Aged 1-14 Years, 2009*

Source (II.3): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System



*Data are preliminary.