



Public Health
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Butler County
General Health District

November 17, 2022

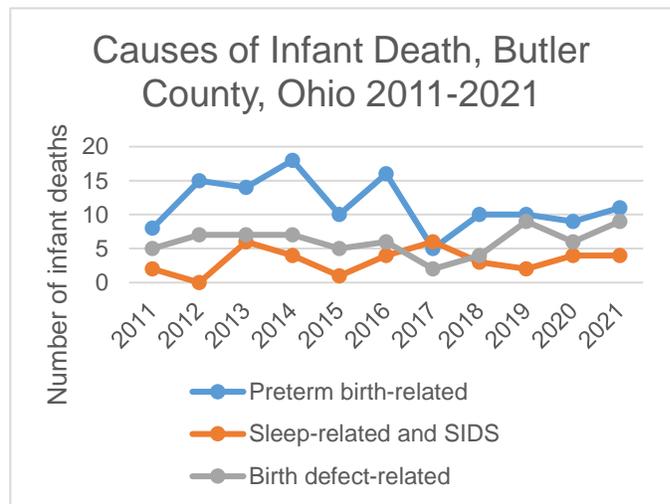
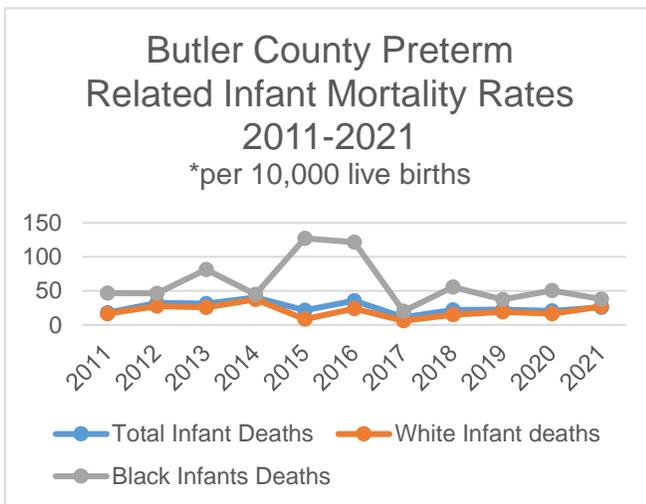
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Preterm Birth Awareness Month, November 2022

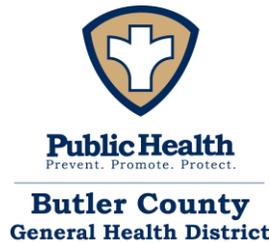
BUTLER COUNTY, OHIO – In Butler County, too many babies are born too small and too soon. Prematurity, a baby born before 37 weeks of pregnancy, has consistently been the leading cause of infant death in Butler County with little change in outcomes over the last 10 years.

The data doesn't stop there. Black infants are 3 times more likely to die from prematurity than white infants.



What causes prematurity and why does it impact Black infants more often? The answer isn't always clear. Causes of prematurity are sometimes unknown but we do know that certain risk factors are associated with preterm birth and infant death. Some risk factors include having a previous preterm birth, multiple miscarriages, short intervals between pregnancies, chronic conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure, lack of prenatal care, cigarette smoking and drug usage, drinking alcohol, toxic stresses like domestic violence and racism, etc.

In many instances, communities of color experience risk factors for poor birth outcomes more frequently due to social, structural, and historical determinants of health.



We can't tackle prematurity and infant death without including the voices of the community and listening to women and families that are experiencing disparities in health outcomes. Queen's Village, a community group for and by Black women, will provide a space for empowerment and social support.

Dominique Johnson, Health Equity Coordinator at the Butler County General Health District states, "Queens Village will drive the change in narrative, creating well overdue spaces to process trauma and setting the standard for how women should be supported through pregnancy and beyond."

Designed and led by Cradle Cincinnati, Hamilton County has seen success in reducing infant mortality since the implementation of Queen's Village in 2018.

"Now it's our turn to intentionally tackle the disparities," says Johnson.

Reducing infant mortality in Butler County will take multiple targeted strategies. Organizations and groups across Butler County are working together to save infant lives. Certified Community Health Workers and Home Visitors through programs like Help Me Grow, Moms and Babies First, Early Head Start, Nurse Family Partnerships, and the Partners to Reduce Infant Mortality (PRIM), meet one-on-one with families to provide education, support, and resources families need to thrive.

In addition, Butler County is 1 out of 10 counties in Ohio, to have a Neighborhood Navigator and a community coalition addressing racial disparities in birth outcomes. The YWCA Hamilton and Butler County General Health District co-lead the LIVE (Leading Infant Vitality Equitably).

Awareness of prematurity and the impact it has on the life of an infant and the community at large is just the first step in saving lives and ending racial disparities. Healthcare, social service agencies, community partners, lawmakers, and residents must recognize and address the risk factors and root causes of preterm birth. With proper interventions and social support more babies can reach their first birthday.

If you would like to get involved in the fight to end infant mortality visit the Butler County General Health District website at www.health.bcoho.us.

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