

## 2005 WisKids Count FACT SHEET

### *Access to health insurance*

According to the annual Family Health Survey, 93 percent of Wisconsin's children had health insurance coverage in 2004 for the full year.

Also according to the annual Family Health Survey, the number of children uninsured all or part of the year grew from 85,000 in 2003 to 91,000 in 2004.

In 2004, about one of every four children received their health insurance primarily through Medicaid or BadgerCare.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly three-fifths of uninsured children in Wisconsin in 2004 were in families that met the income eligibility standards for Medicaid or BadgerCare.<sup>2</sup>

### *Racial disparities in health care remain:*

- Black children are about three times more likely to be without health insurance (9 percent) than are white, non-Hispanic children (3 percent).
- In 2004, 24 percent of black mothers in Wisconsin, 28 percent of Native American and 28 percent of Hispanic women did not get first trimester prenatal care, compared to just 12 percent for non-Hispanic whites.
- The black infant mortality rate in 2004 was 19.2 – more than four times as high as the rate for whites – and the problem has gotten worse over the last decade.
- African-American children are six times *more* likely and Hispanic children are twice *as* likely to suffer from lead poisoning as non-Hispanic white children.

### *Other health care problem areas:*

**Access to dentists for low-income families is extremely problematic.** In a 2001 study released by the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association, while 93 percent of state dentists are taking new patients, only one in five dentists reported taking any new Medicaid patients. Only 43 percent of dentists reported treating patients with Medicaid.

**In the last two years (2003 and 2004), almost 7,000 children have been poisoned by exposure to lead.** DHFS estimates that one of six, or 120,000, homes with significant lead hazards in Wisconsin have children under age six living in them.<sup>3</sup>

**About 16 percent of Wisconsin children are obese** - four times the rate in the 1960s; and about 24 percent of Wisconsin high school students are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.

**Wisconsin's youth suicide rate continues to be higher than the national average:** From 2000 to 2002, the suicide rate for young people under age 25 averaged 5.7 per 100,000, 36 percent higher than the national average, while the state's homicide rate for young people was lower than the national average at 4.6.

**Births to single mothers continue to increase in Wisconsin:** Children born to single mothers do not generally have access to the same level of economic and emotional support as do children born to married mothers. The percentage of births to unmarried women rose from 28 percent in 2000 to 31 percent in 2003.

**Teen births are falling:** The number of births to teenagers and their percentage of all births in Wisconsin have fallen very substantially in recent years. Teen births accounted for 2.6 percent of all Wisconsin births in 2004, compared to 4.1 percent in 1997

### *Family Economic Security*

**Number of children in Wisconsin living below poverty continues to rise:** The most global indicator of child well-being – poverty – is linked to a number of undesirable outcomes for children, including negative health outcomes. From 2000 to 2004 the number of Wisconsin children living below the federal poverty level (\$19,350 for a family of four in 2005) increased from roughly 154,000 to over 187,000.

**Housing affordability still a problem:** The percentage of renters unable to afford the Fair Market Rent of a two-bedroom house or apartment rose from 26 percent in 2000 to 40 percent in 2003. Rent is considered unaffordable if the renter is spending over 30 percent of his or her income on housing.

**Food Share and Free and Reduced School Lunch participation increasing:** Both programs that provide essential food security for families and children have increased over the early part of this decade. Food Share usage has increased from 37 per 1,000 in 2000 to 56. Participation in Free and Reduced Lunch has increased from 26 to 29 percent of children enrolled in school.

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<sup>1</sup> This is based on Medicaid and BadgerCare enrollment figures for children ages 0-17 from DHFS.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the Family Health Survey for 2004 and also on the average of U.S. Census Bureau data for 2002-2004, it appears that about 60 percent of the uninsured children in Wisconsin were in families below 200 percent of the poverty level. The vast majority of those would meet the income eligibility standards for Medicaid or BadgerCare; however, some would be ineligible because their family is eligible for a qualified employer-sponsored plan or because they are recent or undocumented immigrants.

<sup>3</sup> Report to the Legislature on Act 113, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, 2005.