

YOUTH*THRIVE*

WE ALL SUCCEED WHEN YOUTH SUCCEED

wake county, nc



STATE OF OUR YOUTH | WAKE COUNTY SECONDARY DATA REPORT | 2013



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	3
Introduction	4
Basic Demographics	5
Education/Academic Success	13
Workforce Readiness	20
Health and Wellness	24
Civic Engagement	33
Summary	36

YOUTH THRIVE is a collaborative partnership working together to support all youth in becoming productive adults. We focus on strengthening the positive attributes that enable youth to be fully prepared for success in school, work, and life. We value the perspective of youth. Activities now and in the future will be aimed at helping partners be as effective as possible in achieving positive results with youth.

OUR VISION

Youth Thrive envisions a day when all young people in Wake County are safe, physically and mentally healthy, cared for, successful in school and in life, and prepared to become productive adults.

OUR MISSION

To build a sustainable infrastructure that advances positive youth development (PYD) in Wake County for school-aged young people.

OUR GOALS

1. Increase awareness and usage of community assets, resources, and opportunities important to youth and their families.
2. Strengthen the capacity of youth-serving organizations to produce improved results through access to mentoring, supportive relationships with other providers, and expert-led training opportunities.
3. Engage youth in meaningful decision-making and leadership skill-building opportunities.
4. Increase the ease of making referrals and collecting, assessing, and reporting programmatic data on a set of community indicators and outcomes.
5. Coordinate activities of Youth Thrive to achieve shared, positive youth development outcomes in the community.

Introduction

The vision of Youth Thrive is that every young person living in Wake County has the necessary supports to be successful in school, work, and life. Since January 2010, youth, community leaders, youth-serving organizations, educators, public safety and juvenile justice officers, foundations, business and workforce development professionals, elected officials, and government agencies have convened in a cooperative effort to share resources and information more effectively, build capacity to improve programs, erase gaps in services, and engage young people and their families in creating a positive future.



Extensive research demonstrates that programs and policies that focus on positive youth development successfully enhance long-term youth outcomes. Youth Thrive is guided by existing data, national best-practice information on positive youth development and collective impact, and the desire for improved outcomes. We are developing the infrastructure to facilitate systems change that will improve youth outcomes. In so doing, Wake County will ensure that our young people are prepared for the responsibilities and opportunities of successful adulthood.

There is an abundance of information detailing the complex problems and challenges facing young people and why they persist. Issues such as teenage pregnancy, high school dropout rates, juvenile delinquency, gang violence, obesity, and HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases have been well-documented. As a community, we must now begin to connect the dots between the most serious issues affecting young people and the resources available to minimize their negative impact.

To ensure that young people are prepared to meet the demands of both today and tomorrow, it is imperative that Wake County has valid, current data on how our young people are doing. It is equally important that adults from the government, nonprofit, philanthropic, and business sectors work as partners to achieve agreed upon goals and objectives. We must also collaborate when measuring outcomes in order to achieve the most significant collective impact. The purpose of this report is to begin to answer the question, “How are young people doing in Wake County?”

This report examines four key areas associated with the well-being of young people (ages 5 to 18): education/academic success, health and wellness, workforce readiness, and civic engagement. Information contained in this report comes from various secondary data sources, including but not limited to: Wake County Planning Divisions, Wake County Public School System, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the 2010 and 2013 Wake County Community Assessment documents and data summaries, and other publicly available data resources.

BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

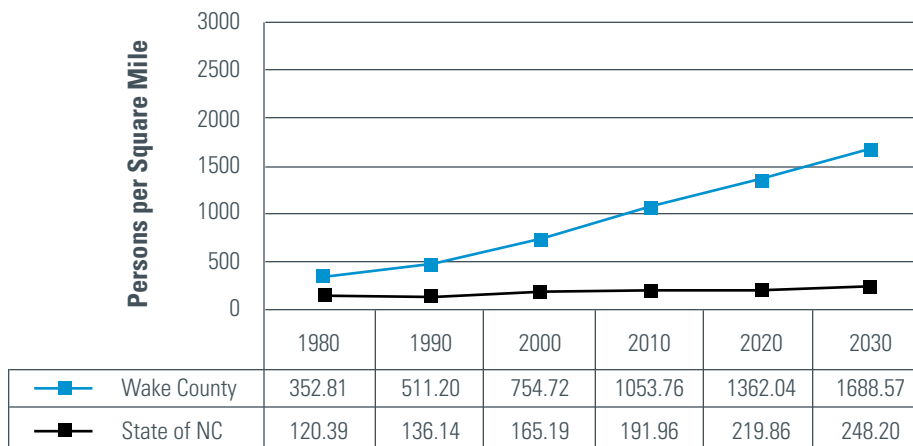
Wake County consists of 12 municipalities and includes Raleigh, the county seat and state capital. It is a unique mix of urban and rural areas as well as small towns, thereby providing something for every lifestyle. According to the U.S. Census Data (2011 estimates) there are over 920,000 people living in Wake County.

Population

Wake is one of the most populous counties in North Carolina. Wake County ranks first in population growth among North Carolina counties since 2010; it also has the largest population in the state. Wake County was the 48th most populous county in the U.S. in 2012.¹

The 2013 Community Health Assessment Data Report indicates that Wake is almost seven times as densely populated as North Carolina as a whole.

Population Density 1980–2030



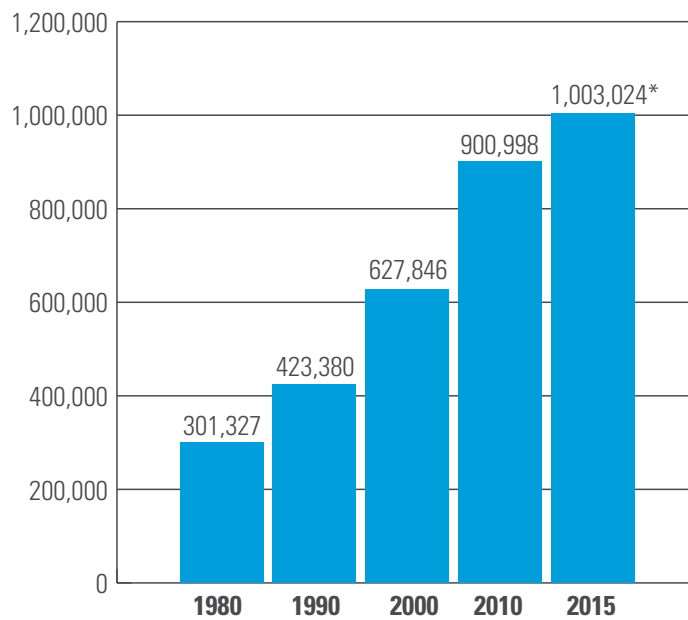
Source: North Carolina Institute for Public Health, 2013 Wake County Community Health Assessment Community Forum Presentation Data Handout, May 16, 2013.

¹ <http://www.wakegov.com/planning/demographic/Documents/trends4172013.pdf>; Report Title "Board of Commissioners Retreat report (2-15-2013) Growth Trends Report," Wake 2013 Trends and Outlook Report, retrieved May 15, 2013.

The population of Wake County has increased steadily since 1980. In 2010, the population of Wake County was 900,993, and the North Carolina State Demographer estimates it will exceed 1,000,000 in 2015. The projected trend in Wake County is continued growth.

The projected trend in Wake County is continued growth.

Wake County Population Growth Trends



* Population is projected by North Carolina State Demographer to exceed 1 million.

Composition of 2011 Wake County Total Population

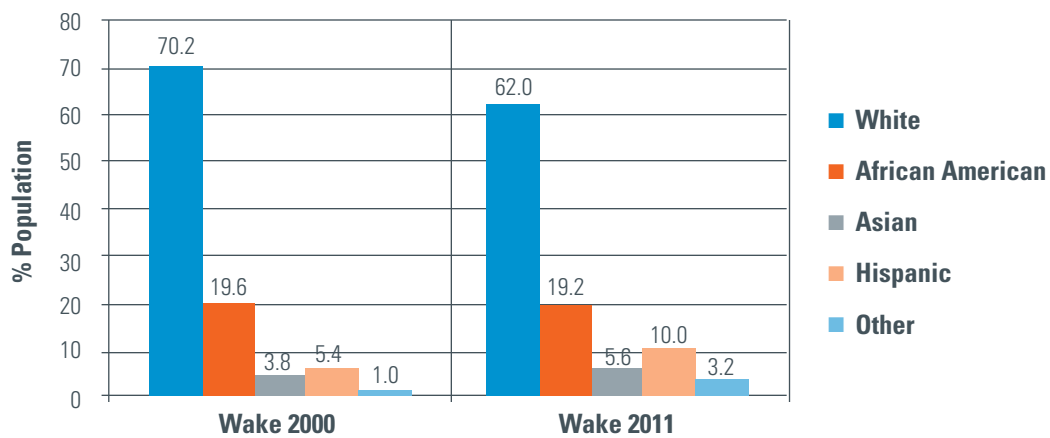
Gender	Percent of population
Female	51.3
Male	48.7
Median Age	34.5

Wake County has become more diverse as the population has grown. The trend of increased diversity is expected to continue as growth continues. Changes in the population diversity are reflected when comparing population data for 2000 with data for 2011 as shown in the chart below.

The trend of increased diversity is expected to continue as growth continues.



Wake County's Population Diversity: 2000 to 2011



Source: U. S. Census Bureau 2000 & 2011 American Community Survey 1 – Year Estimate. See also: <http://www.wakegov.com/planning/demographic/Documents/trends4172013.pdf>; Wake County's Population Continues to Diversify: 2000 to 2011.

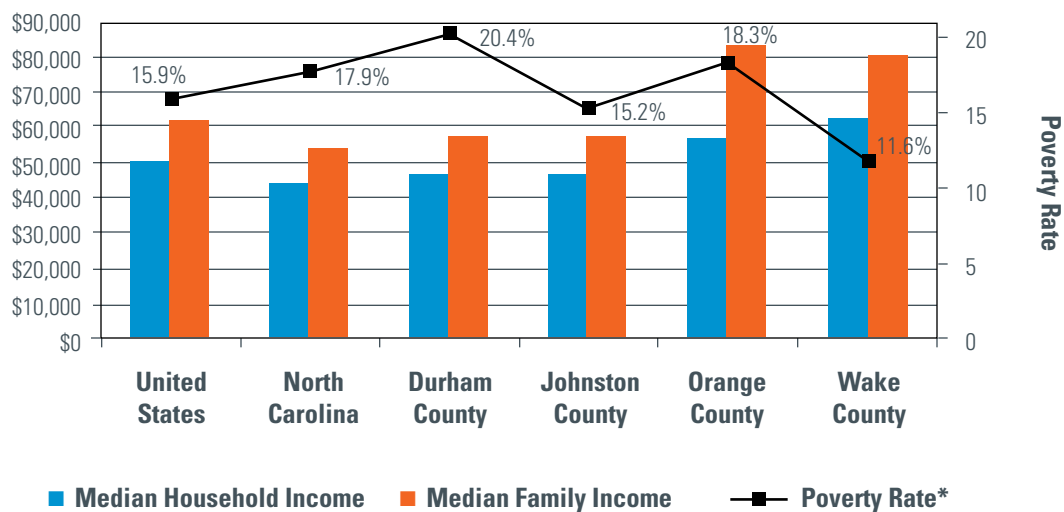
Income and Poverty

Wake County has a higher median household income and median family income than the United States, North Carolina, and most surrounding counties. Wake has a lower poverty rate than these geographies. The poverty rate for children under 18 years of age is 15%.²

A comparison chart for 2011 income and Poverty by Geography is shown below:



2011 Income and Poverty by Geography



Source: <http://www.wakegov.com/planning/demographic/Documents/trends4172013.pdf>; Report Title "Board of Commissioners Retreat report (2-15-2013) Growth Trends Report," Wake 2013 Trends and Outlook Report, retrieved May 15, 2013.

² 2013 Growth Trends Update.

The National Center for Educational Statistics cites that “Poverty poses a serious challenge to a child’s ability to succeed in school and its prevalence is markedly higher among certain racial/ethnic groups than in others. Research has suggested that living in poverty in early childhood is associated with lower than average academic performance that extends through elementary and high school and can lead to lower than average rates of school completion.”³

Poverty poses a serious challenge to a child’s ability to succeed in school and its prevalence is markedly higher among certain racial/ethnic groups than in others.



Statistics Specific to the Child Population

The total population estimate for children under age 18 for 2011, including those living in group settings is 239,994. Of that number, 239,719 children (over 99.9%), live in households. Gender composition for children under 18 (49.1% Female; 50.9% Male) is slightly different from that of the general population.

Trends

The total child population in Wake County increased from 2000 to 2011. Increases were seen in all racial/ethnic groups. The trend of increased population and more diversity is expected to continue in the child population. Data presented at the “Making it Happen” community event held on May 23, 2013 highlight changes in the diversity of the child population.⁴

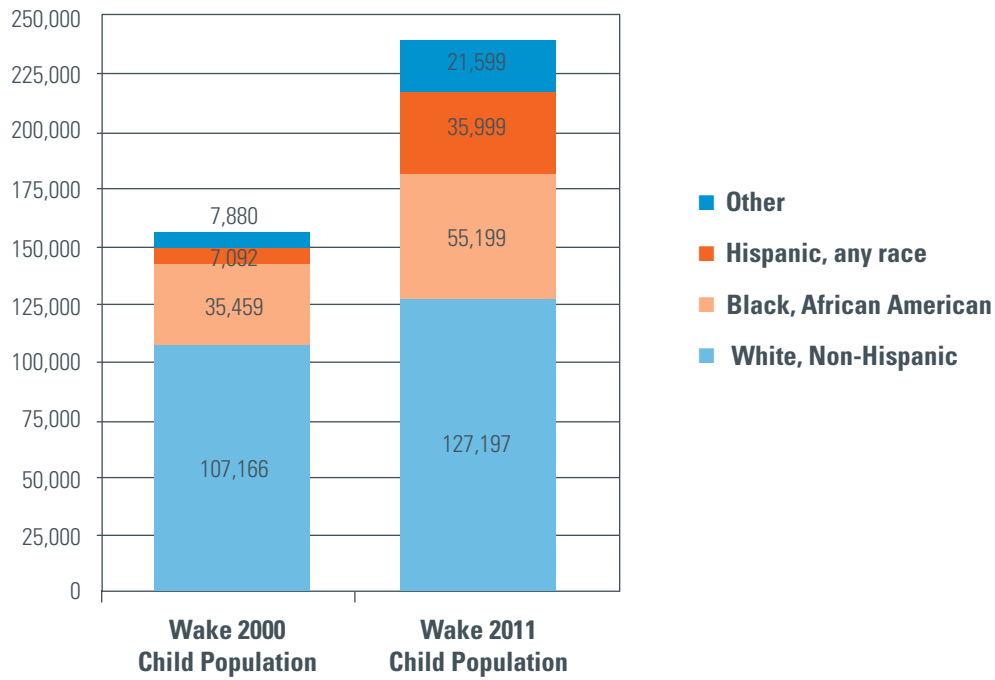
Wake County is growing and changing rapidly as shown in the graphs on the following page. The left bar indicates the population of children in Wake County in 2000. The child population was near 160,000 and was about 70% white and 20% African American or Black. The right bar demonstrates a 50% growth in the child population between 2000 and 2011 as well as increased diversity in the groups.⁵

3 Black, Hess, and Berenson-Howard 2000; Brooks-Gunn and Duncan 1997; Campbell et al. 2001; Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson 2005; Lee and Burkman 2002). <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012046/chapter1.asp>.

4 See “Making it Happen,” report by Warren Ludwig, PhD, Child Welfare Administrator, May 23, 2013.

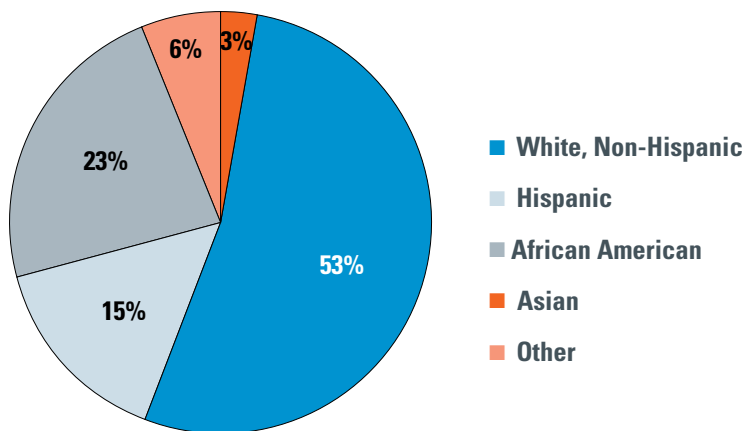
5 U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File; 2011, 1-Year Population Estimates, American Community Survey retrieved April 9, 2013. NOTE: ‘Other’ group combined to remain consistent with 2000 data presentation and includes Asian, biracial, and all other groups.

Population of Children under 18 in Wake County by Race



Source: US. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

2011 Wake County Child Population Diversity



Source: US. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Homeless Children/Youth

Children living in homelessness struggle to maintain continuity. The disruption and family stress that accompanies this transience is often detrimental to their academic performance. In 2011–2012, there were 2,757 children in the Wake County school system who were homeless. (Homelessness is defined as living in an unstable or transitional living situation.) The majority of these children were elementary age.⁶

In 2011–2012, there were 2,757 children in the Wake County school system who were homeless. The majority of these children were elementary age.⁶

Students receiving school lunch free or at a reduced price

The percentage of students attending Wake County schools who receive school lunch free or at a reduced price is 38.6%. This figure excludes students enrolled in charter schools and is lower than the statewide percentage: 56%. This percentage is calculated by using the total number of children on free or reduced price lunch divided by average daily membership (ADM).⁷ To be eligible for free lunch under the National School Lunch Act, students must live in households earning at or below 130% of the federal poverty guidelines. To be eligible for reduced price lunch, students must live in households earning at or below 185% of the Federal poverty guidelines.⁸

Percentage of Students Receiving School Lunch Free or at a Reduced Price

	Wake	North Carolina
2011–2012	38.6%	56.0%

Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of Financial and Business Services. "Free & Reduced Meal Application Data." Available online at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/resources/data/>.

6 Michelle Mozingo, MSW, McKinney Vento Liaison for Homeless Students Federal Law 42 U.S.C. §§11431-11435, NC 34 CFR 200.6 and Board Policy 6201.3, Counseling & Student Services, WCPSS.

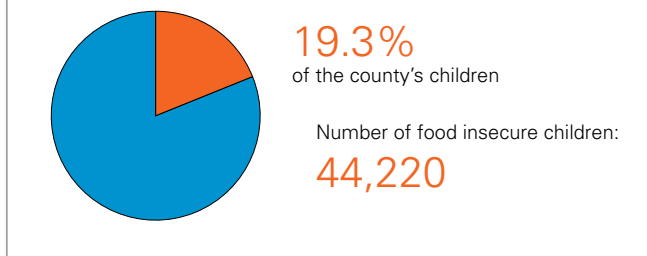
7 Average Daily Membership: The total number of school days within a given term—usually a school month or school year—that a student's name is on the current roll of a class, regardless of his/her being present or absent, is the "number of days in membership" for that student. The sum of the "number of days in membership" for all students divided by the number of school days in the term yields ADM. The final average daily membership is the total days in membership for all students over the school year divided by the number of days school was in session. Average daily membership is a more accurate count of the number of students in school than enrollment; <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/accounting/data/>.

8 http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Map.aspx?state=NC&loct=10&map_colors=Solid&dtm=4682&ind=2239&tf=1021.

Food Insecurity

According to the USDA, food security is “Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.”⁹

Wake County Child Food Insecurity Rate



Source: http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Map.aspx?state=NC&loct=10&map_colors=Solid&dtm=4682&ind=2239&tf=1021.

How young people are directly impacted by food insecurity:

- Children who are food insecure may be at higher risk for chronic health conditions,¹⁰ such as anemia^{11, 12} and asthma.
- Food insecurity among young children is associated with poorer physical quality of life,¹³ which may prevent them from fully engaging in daily activities such as school and social interaction with peers.
- Food insecure children may be at greater risk of truancy and school tardiness.¹⁴
- When they are in school, children who are food insecure may experience increases in an array of behavior problems including: fighting,¹⁵ hyperactivity, aggression,¹⁶ anxiety,¹⁷ mood swings, and bullying.¹⁸

9 <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx#>.

10 Kirkpatrick, McIntyre, and Potestio (2010) Child hunger and long-term adverse consequences for health. *Archive of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine*, 164 (8), 754–762.

11 Eicher-Miller, Mason, Weaver, McCabe, and Boushey (2009). Food Insecurity is associated with iron deficiency anemia in US adolescents. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 90, 1358–1371.

12 Skalicky, Meyers, Adams, Yang, Cook, and Frank (2006). Child Food Insecurity and Iron Deficiency Anemia in Low-Income Infants and Toddlers in the United States. *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 10 (2), 177–185.

13 Casey, P.H., Szeto, K.L., Robbins, J.M., Stuff, J.E., Connell, C., Gossett, J.M., & Simpson, P.M. (2005). Child health-related quality of life and household food security. *Archives Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 15, 51–56.

14 Murphy, Wehler, Pagano, Little, Kleinman, and Jellinek (1998). Relationship Between Hunger and Psychosocial Functioning in Low-Income American Children. *Journal of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 37 (2), 163–170.

15 Slack and Yoo (2005). Food hardship and child behavior problems among low-income children. *Social Service Review*, 75, 511–536.

16 Whitaker, Phillips, and Orzol (2006). Food insecurity and the risks of depression and anxiety in mothers and behavior problems in their pre-school-aged children. *Pediatrics*, 118, e859–e868.

17 Slopen, N., Fitzmaurice, G., Williams, D.R., & Gilman, S.E. (2010). Poverty, food insecurity, and the behavior of childhood internalizing and externalizing disorders. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 49, 444–452.

18 Huang (2010). Does food insecurity affect parental characteristics and child behavior? Testing mediation effects. *Social Science Review*, September, 381–401.

EDUCATION/ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One of the strongest predictors of a child's well-being is his or her educational success. Furthermore, the number of students who fail to graduate is a strong predictor of socio-economic outcomes for both youth as a subgroup of the population and the community as a whole. When students drop out of high school they earn less money, pay less taxes, and have less money to spend—all of which have a negative impact on the economy.

Of course students that drop out of school face yet another major hurdle. When the conditions of the economy weaken, there are fewer jobs available for people who do not have a high school diploma.¹⁹ In contrast, high school graduates earn approximately \$130,000 more over their lifetimes than those who drop out of high school.

According to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction 2012 Consolidated Report, dropout rates in grades 7–12 decreased from the 2010–11 school year to the 2011–12 school year:

Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) Dropout Rates

School Year	WCPSS Dropout Count	Rate
2010–2011	1,386	3.25%
2011–2012	1,236	2.85%

Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Consolidated Data Report, 2012.

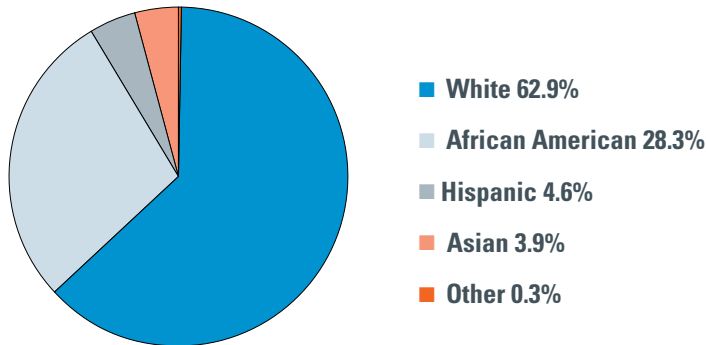
¹⁹ Layton, 2013.



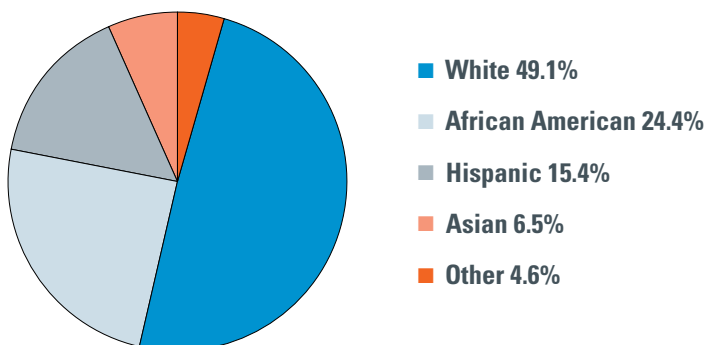
The graduation rate in the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) for students who entered ninth grade in 2008–09 and graduated in 2011–12 was 80.6%.

Wake County Public Schools System Student Enrollment

98,741 Students (2000–2001)



149,508 Students (2012–2013)



Source: 2000–2001 Data—NC Department of Instruction Education Statistic Access System—Beyond 20/20 Report. 2012–2013 Data Prepared by Wake County Public Schools.

WCPSS Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity 2011–2012

Demographic	Graduation rate
White students	90.3%
Asian students	88.1%
Students of two or more races	80.6%
American Indian students	74.5%
Black students	69.6%
Hispanic students	65.3%

Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Wake County Graduation Rates 2011–2012

Subgroup	Total Number	Number who graduated	Percent
All Students	10,854	8,748	80.6%
Male	5,611	4,309	76.9%
Female	5,243	4,309	76.8%
American Indian	51	38	74.5%
Asian	573	505	88.1%
Black	3,112	2,116	69.6%
Hispanic	1,379	900	65.3%
Two or More Races	432	348	80.6%
White	5,293	4,783	90.3%
Economically Disadvantaged	2,997	1,951	65.1%
Limited English Proficient	442	153	34.6%
Students with Disabilities	1,255	767	61.1%

Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

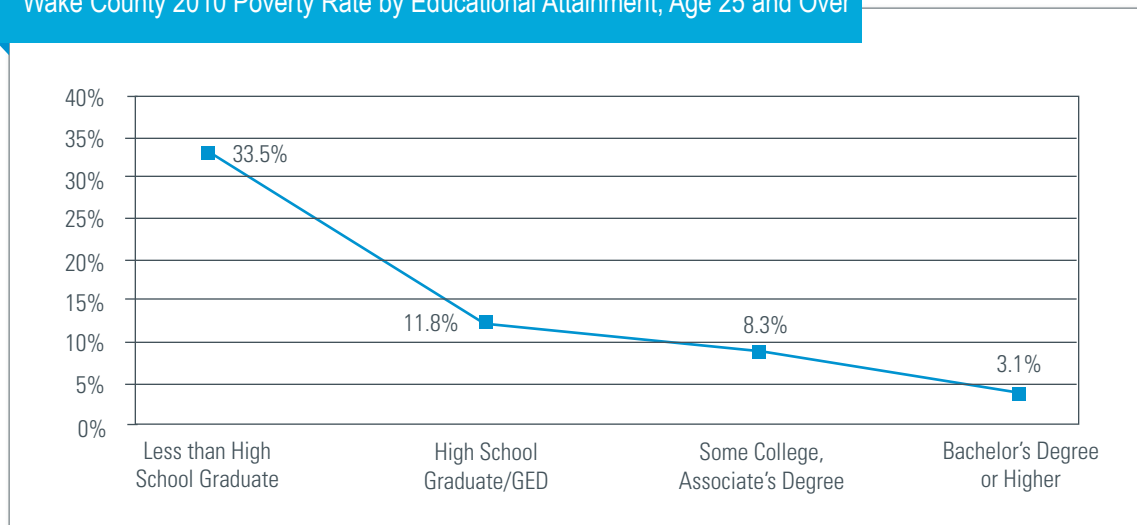
The US Census looked into educational attainment in Wake County and specifically accounted for the population between the ages of 18–24.

This age group represents approximately 88,364 individuals in Wake County:

- About 13.6% of this age group does not have a high school diploma.
- 21.6% have a high school degree only.
- 53.4% have some college or an associate's degree.
- 11.4% have a bachelor's degree or higher.

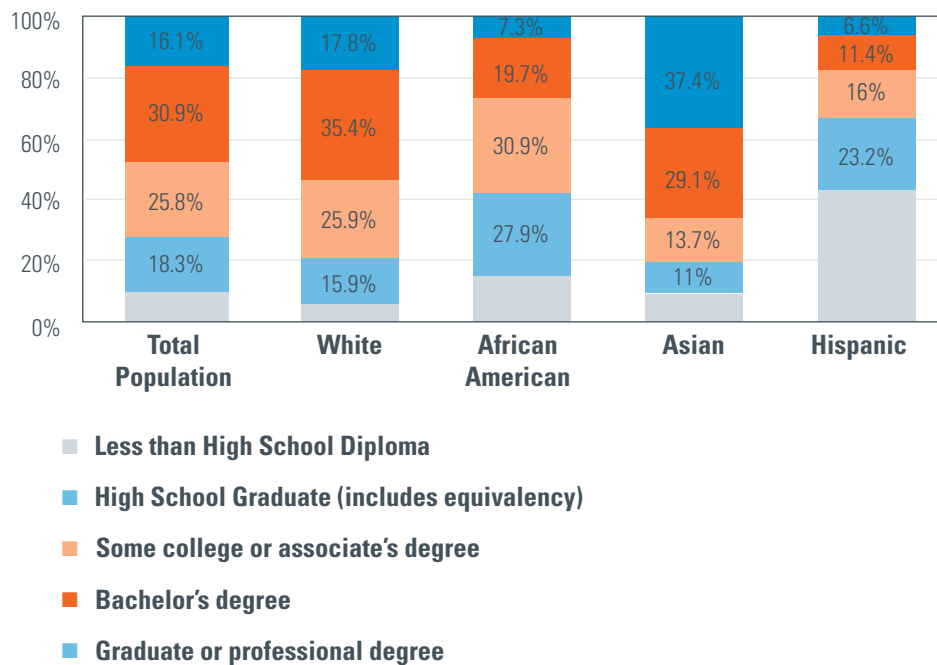


Wake County 2010 Poverty Rate by Educational Attainment, Age 25 and Over



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey, 1-YR Poverty Estimates.

Educational Attainment by Racial Group for Population 25 Years and Over in Wake County



Source: American Community Survey 2006-2008 3-Year Estimates.

Many factors contribute to a child's ability to succeed in school. The education level of the parents, particularly mothers, is one factor of significance: "Parental education levels have also been linked to child outcomes such as educational experience, attainment, and academic achievement. For example, positive associations have been found between children with highly educated mothers and their rates of participation in early childhood education programs and home literacy activities."²⁰

According to the STRIVE Network's theory on key benchmarks, there are many determining points in a child's life along the "cradle-to-career" pipeline. One is that in third grade, there are certain reading milestones that should be reached. Another is that in eighth grade, there are mathematical skills that should be measured. In Wake County Public School System, data is available for math and reading proficiencies at both the third and eighth grade levels.

²⁰ Planty et al. 2009; <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012046/chapter1.asp>.

LEA* 920 - Wake County Schools Gender and Ethnicity Subgroups

Student Subgroup	2010–2011 Percent At or Above Level III	2011–2012 Percent At or Above Level III
All Students	86.40%	87.70%
Female	86.90%	88.00%
Male	85.90%	87.40%
American Indian	80.90%	85.80%
Asian	>95%	>95%
Black	70.10%	73.40%
Hispanic	78.70%	79.80%
Two or More Races	88.20%	89.60%
Pacific Islander	80.30%	76.90%
White	>95%	>95%

Source: <http://accrpt.ncpublicschools.org/app/2012/disag/>. Select for LEA 092, 3-8 grade mathematics EOG scoring Level III or higher, test choice multiplication.

LEA* 920 - Wake County Schools Gender and Ethnicity Subgroups

Grades 3–8 Reading EOG Multiple Choice Test Results

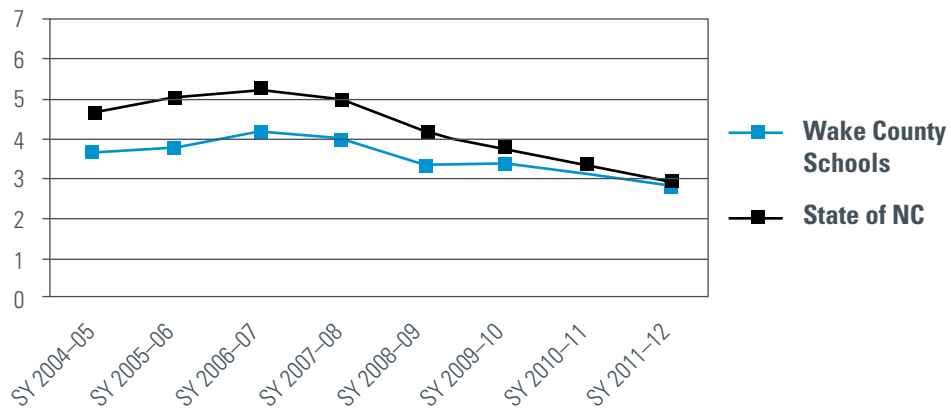
Student Subgroup	2010–2011 Percent At or Above Level III	2011–2012 Percent At or Above Level III
All Students	77.70%	79.00%
Female	79.40%	80.80%
Male	76.10%	77.10%
American Indian	66.30%	70.50%
Asian	90.20%	91.20%
Black	57.80%	60.60%
Hispanic	60.20%	61.10%
Two or More Races	81.30%	82.90%
Pacific Islander	70.40%	79.70%
White	90.70%	91.10%

Source: <http://accrpt.ncpublicschools.org/app/2012/disag/>; End of Grade (Reading) Grades 3 through 8, Number and Percent of Students At or Above Achievement Level III in Reading, by Gender and Ethnicity Subgroups; Students Taking Multiple Choice Tests, LEA 920 - Wake County Schools, retrieved June 27, 2013. See attached file: WCPSS 3-8GradeReading_Math_Multiple Choice0627.xlsx.

*“LEA” stands for “Local Education Agency” and is defined as follows: Synonymous with a local school system or a local school district, indicating that a public board of education or other public authority maintains administrative control of the public schools in a city or county.



High School Dropout Rate



Source: NC Dept. of Public Instruction, Research and Evaluation, Dropout Data and Collection Process, Annual Dropouts Reports.

WORKFORCE READINESS

Wake County is fortunate to have various programs and initiatives across sectors working with youth to prepare them for the workforce. These individual programs located across the county are tracking positive results for their participants.

Wake Youth Employment Estimates

2011 Wake Estimate 16 to 19 Year Labor Status	Total Wake Estimate	White, Not Hispanic	Black, African American	Hispanic or Latino of any race
Not in Work or School	2.5%	1.4%	2.9%	7.6%
In Labor Force	36%	37%	30.3%	45.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009–2011 American Community Survey, 3-Year Estimates, Characteristics of Teenagers 15–19 Years Old, retrieved May 7, 2013.

Capital Area Workforce Development Board serves youth ages 14–21 through contracts with local agencies to provide:

- Guidance and Counseling
- Tutoring
- Work Experience Opportunities
- Occupational Training
- Supportive Services
- Leadership Development
- Follow-Up Services

In 2011, the Capital Area Workforce Development Board reached 572 youth who were low-income or had at least one barrier to education or employment (e.g. they were a high school dropout, former offender, teen parent, etc.). Of those youth who exited the programs, 61% of youth served obtained a high school diploma, GED, or industry recognized certificate, and 75% entered employment or post-secondary education.²¹

Dropouts are a drain on the local economy due to the consequences of lower tax revenues and lower wages for those employed without a degree.

These are impressive results, but these numbers tell us about the experience of only a small percentage of the youth in our county who may be accessing support. This data does not capture the full scope of youth who need services but are not finding the resources they need to secure a place in the workforce.

The lack of community level data is a challenge to understanding the preparedness of our youth and the larger picture of their workforce needs. Barriers to collecting this data include:

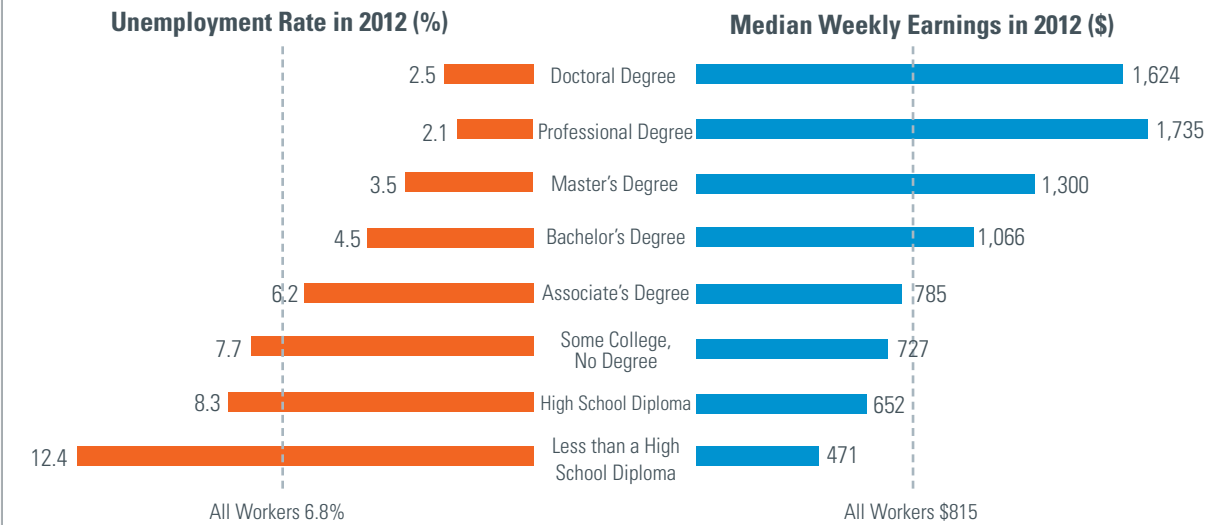
- Lack of a system to capture data from all the workforce readiness programs and compile it in one database.
- Lack of individual program capacity to track data regarding the youth they serve.
- Separate programs measuring and tracking different information, making it hard to aggregate and draw conclusions.

The only way we can more accurately understand the state of career readiness for Wake County youth is to find common ground with city, county, nonprofit, and for-profit providers and create a system for shared information. This collective data will support our efforts to advocate for additional funding for expanded, effective programming. It will also inform collective, cross-sector development of community-wide strategies to address the gaps in services and increase the job development and career development efforts that lead to successful employment for our youth.

We can also make a strong case for greater support of workforce readiness programs for youth with the argument of economic cost. Dropouts are a drain on the local economy due to the consequences of lower tax revenues and lower wages for those employed without a degree.

21 2011–2012 Annual Report, <http://www.capitalareawdb.com/news-events/reports/>.

Education Pays



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

More educated citizens attract new business investment, which strengthens the health of the local economy. Future education and workforce development strategies need to address the reasons why students do not graduate. One of the complaints of high school dropouts is that school does not reflect real-life challenges. More relevant curricula and opportunities are needed to prepare youth for college, career, and productivity.

These programs also need to match skills and interest to the workforce trends. According to the 2012 Skills Survey of North Carolina Employers, there are skill shortages in customer service/sales and skilled trades, followed by office skills and general maintenance. Employers noted primary gaps in the following areas: communication and other soft skills (such as attitude, adaptability, and confidence); problem solving; critical thinking; and analytical thinking. Furthermore, in addition to occupational skills training, North Carolina employers felt that soft skills/personal effectiveness training would be most valuable in the future.²² As Youth Thrive works to improve workforce readiness among our youth, these areas need to be incorporated for greater placement success.

The Capital Area Workforce Development Board report predicts the growth of various occupations for the region. The top growth industries will be in the areas of scientific and technical services, indicating the need for greater capacity in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs that prepare our youth for jobs in these fields.

²² North Carolina Association of Workforce Development Boards, 2012.

Region at a Glance

Highlights by 2018, All Occupations

- Total projected employment: 632,242
- Total openings*: 209,860
- Most-employed occupation: retail salespersons, 21,966
- Fastest growing occupation: biomedical engineers, 83.5% more positions
- Occupation with most total openings*: retail salespersons, 8,500
- Occupation with highest median annual wage: pediatricians, general, \$155,183

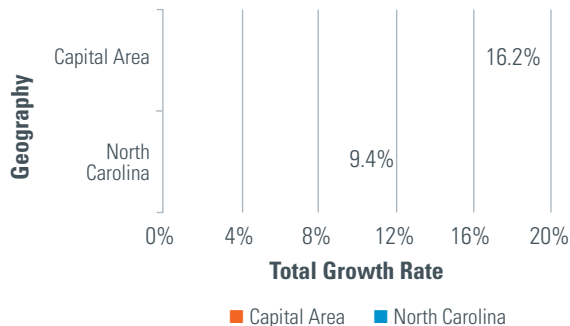
*Openings are growth and replacement.

Top Industries

Industry	Total Employment
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54,030
Administrative and Support Services	45,870
Food Services and Drinking Places	46,270
Total Local Government	18,430
Ambulatory Health Care Services	23,740

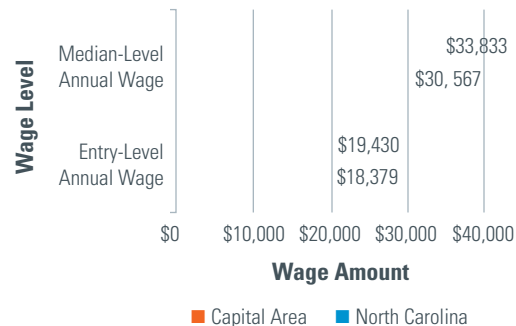
Comparison of Projected Growth 2008–2018

Capital Area vs. North Carolina



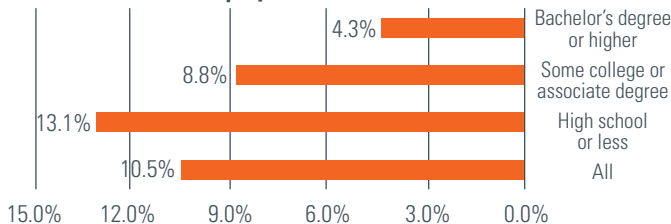
Comparison of Wages

Capital Area vs. North Carolina

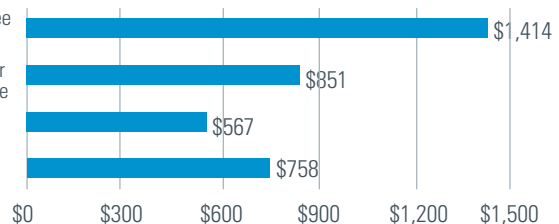


Unemployment and Wages by Education Level in North Carolina

Unemployment Rate in 2010 (%)



Average Weekly Earnings in 2010 (\$)



Sources: Unemployment rate estimates are the 12-month moving averages from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, North Carolina Data, August 2010–July 2011. Weekly earnings data is from the Occupational Employment Survey, May 2010.

Note: The occupational projections presented here were produced by the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Labor and Economic Analysis Division, under guidelines and procedures defined by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. The accuracy of projections for individual occupations can be affected by unforeseen events occurring in the economy over the 10-year projection period; therefore, these projections should not be used as a sole source of decision-making information. For questions or more information, go to <http://www.ncesc1.com1mi/> or email esc.lmi.inquiries@ncesc.gov.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Another important indicator of child well-being is health. There are many issues that affect the physical, mental, social, and behavioral health of our young people.

Obesity and overweight:

A significant indicator of child well-being in Wake County is obesity, which has been labeled the #1 priority area by the North Carolina State of the County's Health Report (2012). According to the North Carolina Center for Health Statistics in Wake County, 59.9% of adults are either overweight or obese. At least 36.5% of children and youth in Wake County are overweight or obese. Nutrition, physical activity, and obesity prevention was identified as one of the top nine community topics during the 2013 Wake County Community Health Needs Assessment.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, body mass index (BMI) is a measure used to determine childhood overweight and obesity. It is calculated using a child's weight and height. BMI does not measure body fat directly, but it is a reasonable indicator of body fat for most children and teens. A child's weight status is determined using an age- and sex-specific percentile for BMI rather than the BMI categories used for adults, because children's body compositions vary both as they age and between boys and girls.

Overweight is defined as a BMI at or above the 85th percentile and lower than the 95th percentile for children of the same age and sex.

Obesity is defined as a BMI at or above the 95th percentile for children of the same age and sex.

According to 2010 North Carolina Nutrition and Physical Activity Surveillance System (NCNPASS) data, Wake County's youngest children are among the most overweight and obese in the state. This data is measured in health department clinics and reflects children of lower socioeconomic status. Please see below for 2009 NCNPASS data, the latest Wake County data, which is also measured in Wake County Human Services (WCHS) clinics:

Obesity/Overweight Statistics Measured in WCHS Health Department Clinics

Overweight 2–4-year-olds	
Wake County	17.1%
North Carolina	16.1%
Obese 2–4-year-olds	
Wake County	16.7%
North Carolina	15.6%
Overweight and Obese 5- to 11-year-olds:	
Wake County:	43.2%
Overweight and Obese 12- to 18-year-olds:	
Wake County:	49.5%

Source: <http://www.advocatesforhealthinaction.org/find-data/obesity-statistics/>.

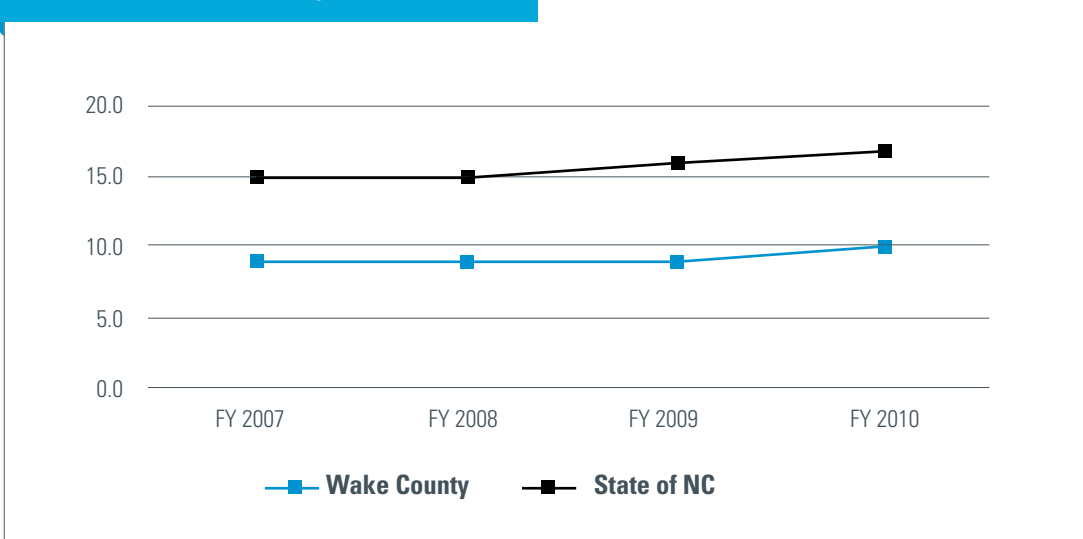
Mental Health

The overall status of the mental health of young people in Wake County is another important indicator of child well-being. According to Wake County Child Trafficking Assessment and the 2010 Wake County Community Assessment, there were 14,645 children who were either on Medicaid or uninsured who were in need of mental health services in 2009. This number is expected to decrease to 11,159 in 2013.

Wake County has seen an increase in the number of children enrolled in Medicaid and the North Carolina Health Choice program in recent years.²³ According to the North Carolina Department for Health and Human Services, the North Carolina Health Choice program is a free or reduced-cost way for children to obtain comprehensive health care if their families do not qualify for Medicaid.



Percent of the Population Eligible for Medicaid

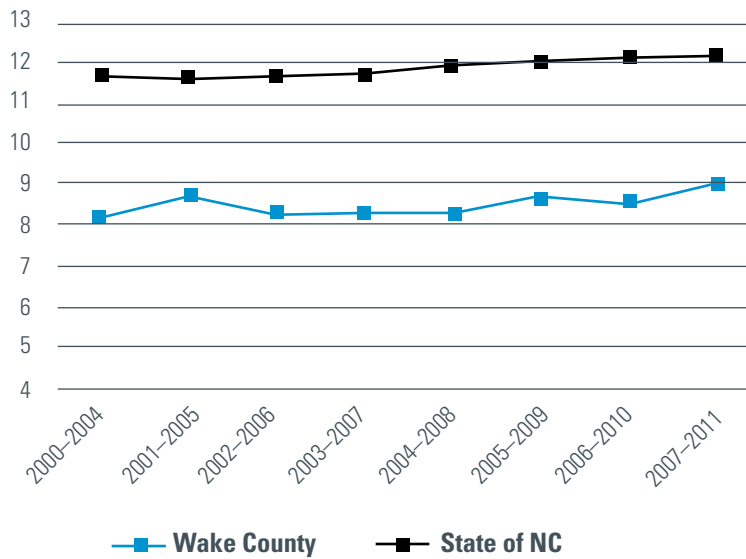


Source: NC Division of Medical Assistance, Statistics and Reports, Medicaid Data, County-Specific Snapshots for NC Medicaid Services, 2006-2010. See also: North Carolina Institute for Public Health, 2013 Wake County Community Health Assessment Community Forum Presentation Data Handout, May 16, 2013.

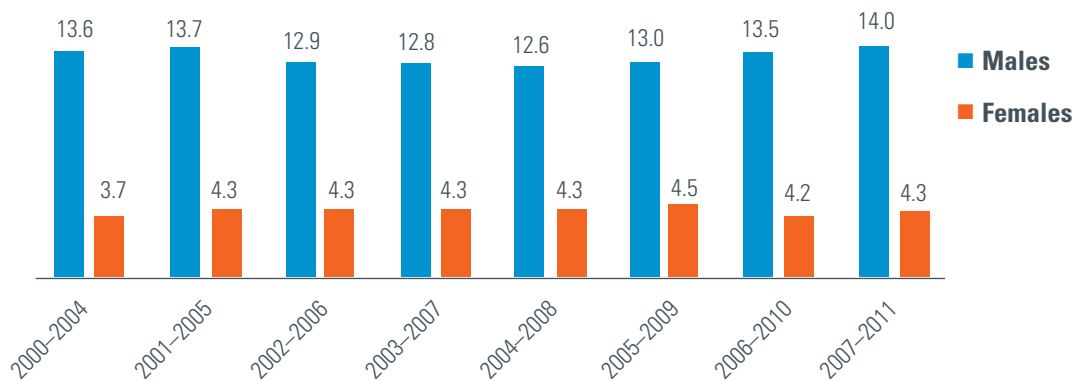
²³ Kids Count.

Suicide

Suicide Death Rate Trend per 100,000 Population



Gender Disparities Trend, Suicide Mortality Rates, Wake County



Sources: NC Institute of Medicine. Healthy North Carolina 2020: A Better State of Health. Morrisville, NC. NC Institute of Medicine 2011. NC State Center for Health Statistics, County Health Data Book (2013), Mortality, 2007-2011 Race/Ethnicity Specific and Sex-Specific Age-Adjusted Death Rates by County.

Wake County Child Welfare Activities in 2012

- Child Protective Services (CPS) accepted 4,442 reports involving 9,850 children for assessment.
- Abuse or neglect was confirmed in 1,072 families and involved 2,416 children.
- 669 families (involving about 1,500 children) were referred for ongoing CPS In-Home Services.
- 318 children entered foster care in 2012.

Source: Wake County Making It Happen report by Warren Ludwig, PhD, Child Welfare Administrator, May 23, 2013 (Wake County Child Welfare Services—Wake County Child Welfare Service dynamics for 2012).

Foster Care

318 children entered foster care in 2012. There were 612 children in Wake County Foster Care as of February 2013.

Children in Foster Care, Wake County, as of February 2013

Gender	Number of Children
Male	312
Female	300
Age	
0–5 years	264
6–12 years	177
13 years and over	171
Race/ Ethnicity	
African-American/Black	363
Caucasian/White	154
Hispanic	54
Other	41

Source: Fact Sheet About Foster Care Handout; snapshot of children in WCHS Custody as of February 2013, Wake Foster Family Recruitment Unit, Wake County Foster Care, retrieved May 17, 2013.

Risky Youth Behavior

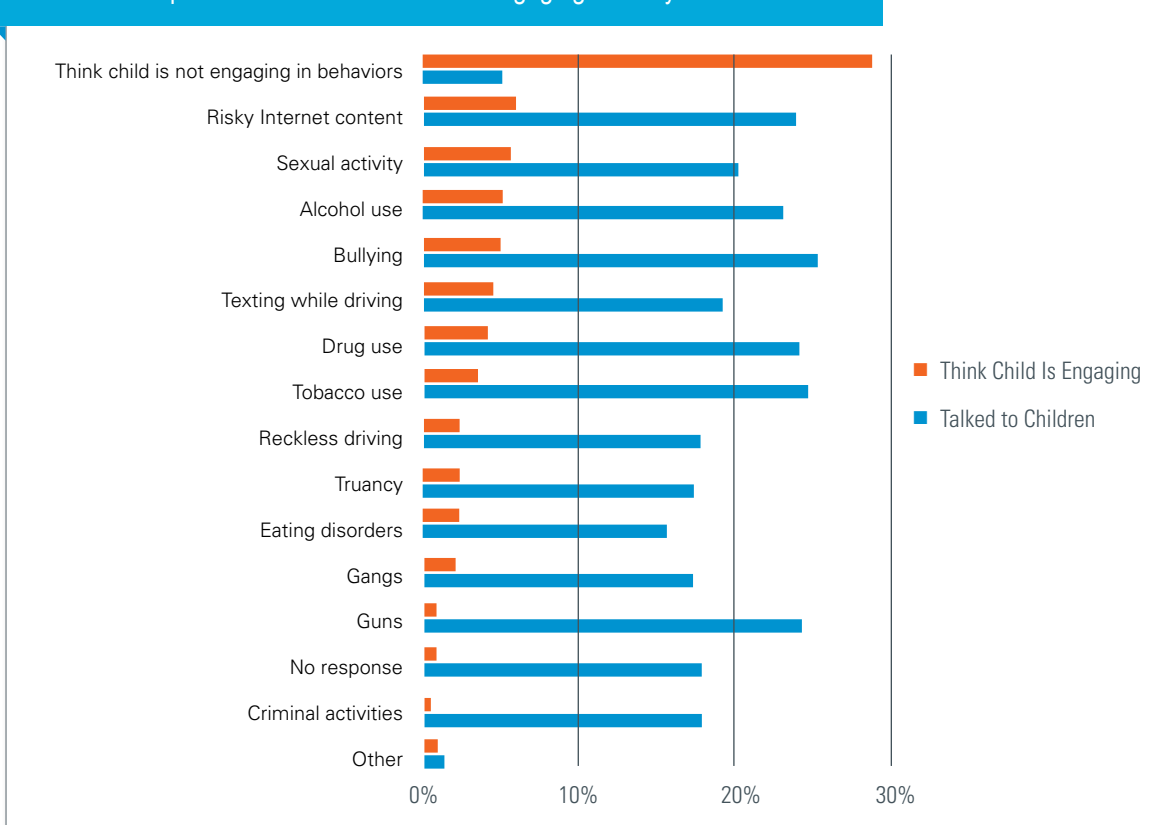
Positive development during the early years is a predictor of a child's health and education outcomes over the long-term. When our young people have the resources and support they need, they are able to achieve their potential in school, work, and life and grow into contributing members of our community. All youth rely on the support and guidance of caring, knowledgeable adults to successfully navigate the challenges of growing up in the 21st century and avoid the risky behaviors outlined below.

Almost 1 out of 3 (29%) of parents said they do not think their child or child's friends are engaging in any risky behavior (2013 Wake County Community Health Opinion Survey).

Top risky behaviors parents do think their child or friend is engaging in include: risky Internet content (6%), sexual activity (5%), alcohol use (5%), bullying (5%), and texting while driving (4%).

Top behaviors parents are talking to their children about: bullying (25%), risky Internet content (24%), drug use (24%), guns (24%), and tobacco use (24%).²⁴

Percent of Respondents Who Think Child Is Engaging in Risky Behaviors



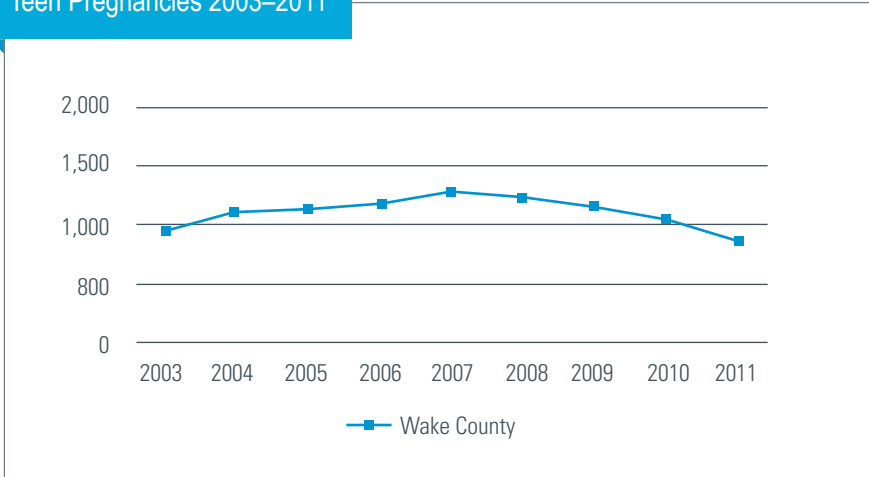
Source: 2013 Wake County Community Health Opinion Survey; <http://www.wakegov.com/humanservices/data/Documents/2013%20Wake%20CHNA%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>. See also: North Carolina Institute for Public Health, 2013 Wake County Community Health Assessment Community Forum Presentation Data Handout, May 16, 2013.

²⁴ 2013 Wake County Community Health Needs Assessment. <http://www.wakegov.com/humanservices/data/Documents/2013%20Wake%20CHNA%20Full%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

Teen Pregnancy

Another trending factor in Wake County, according to Kids Count, are teen pregnancy rates. The rate per 1,000 was 13.9 in 2011.²⁵

Teen Pregnancies 2003–2011



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina Health Data Query System. Pregnancy Data. North Carolina Reported Pregnancy Data. See also: North Carolina Institute for Public Health, 2013 Wake County Community Health Assessment Community Forum Presentation Data Handout, May 16, 2013. abd the Executive Summary for The 2013 Community Health Assessment, page 13: <http://www.wakegov.com/humanservices/data/Documents/2013%20Wake%20CHNA%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>.

An additional component of child well-being is participation and engagement in “pro-social” activities. Examples of these include organized sports, organized non-sport activities, volunteer activities, and religious activities. To date, youth participation in these kinds of activities has not been comprehensively monitored in Wake County. According to Scales and Benson engagement in pro-social activities is connected to young people’s sense of belonging and connectedness to their communities.²⁶

An additional component of child well-being is participation and engagement in “pro-social” activities.

²⁵ <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/7777-teen-pregnancy-by-race?loc=35&loct=5#detailed/5/5001/false/867/13,107,436,4,3/15005,15011>.

²⁶ Scales and Benson (2003) Indicators of Positive Youth Development: Prosocial Orientation and Community Service.

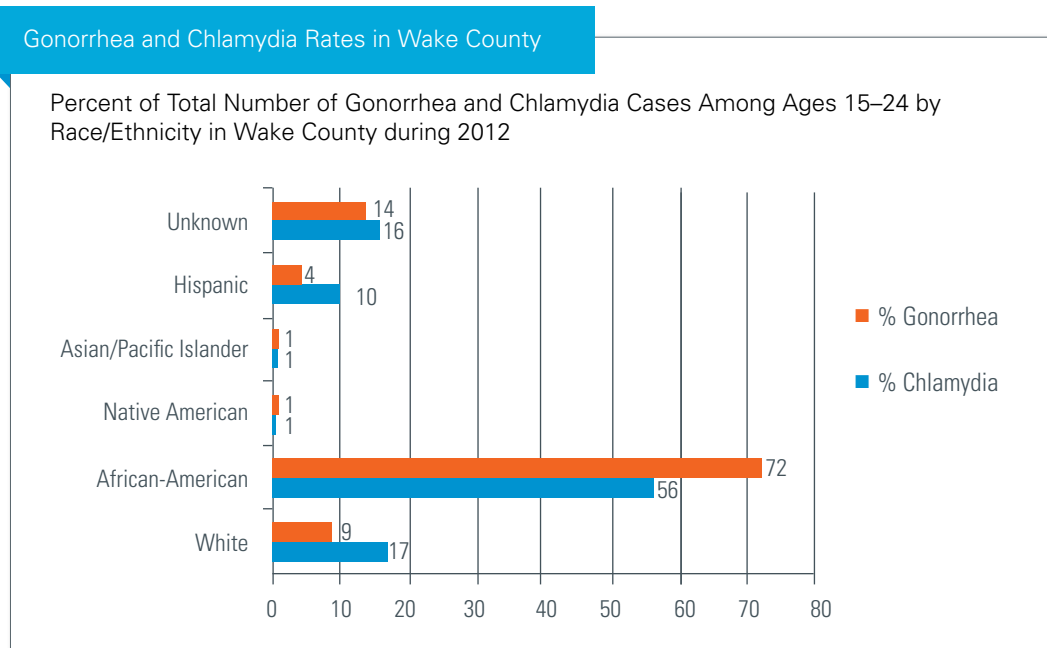
Juvenile Crime

The Wake County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) is a legislatively mandated effort that focuses on youth who have encountered or are at risk of encountering the court system. Data is captured on this segment of the youth population; please see below:²⁷

- 34.5% of youth in the court system were identified as being in need of assessment or treatment for substance use in 2011–2012.
- 64% of offenders have moderate to serious school behavior problems as defined by unexcused absences and short and long-term suspensions. Serious problems are notable regarding behaviors in the school setting for students involved with juvenile court.
- 29% of youth involved in court were also assessed as needing additional mental health assessment.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Infections

More than half of all reported cases of chlamydia (66%) and gonorrhea (51%) occur among 15–24-year-olds.²⁸ The highest percent of chlamydia and gonorrhea cases are among African-American or Black youth.



Source: NC Division of Public Health Communicable Disease Branch.

²⁷ Wake County Risk Factors and Elevated Needs Assessment, The Wake County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Annual Plan 2013–2014, pages 5–7, <http://www.wakecojpc.org/announcements/Wake%20JCPC%202013-14%20Annual%20Plan%20Final%20pdf.pdf>.

²⁸ NC DHHS, Division of Public Health, Epidemiology Section, Communicable Disease Branch



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2011 the southern states had the highest rates nationally for both chlamydia (505.3/100,000) and gonorrhea (135.5/100,000). The rates for chlamydia and gonorrhea in Wake County increased steadily from 2008 through 2011 but declined slightly from 2011 to 2012. Both the chlamydia and gonorrhea rates in Wake County are generally lower than the overall rates in North Carolina. Both North Carolina and Wake County rates, however, are higher than national rates for both these diseases.²⁹

²⁹ <http://www.wakegov.com/humanservices/data/Pages/publichealth.aspx>.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

What does it mean for youth to be civically engaged? It means that they are connected to their communities through responsible involvement and contributions of their time and gifts in efforts to advance the greater good. Participation in community service, volunteering, or service-learning projects is associated with maintained or increased personal and social responsibility among adolescents, such as concern for others' welfare.³⁰

In Wake County, there are multiple organizations and non-profits that incorporate civic engagement activities in their programs in order to foster these impactful connections for youth. Youth Thrive would like to be able to gather these data points on a larger scale with input from youth through the school system and local youth serving organizations.

In the research of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the community level data about youth volunteerism and civic engagement available for Wake County is insufficient, and we were unable to locate an additional source. At the state level, North Carolina ranks 33rd out of the 50 states in terms of the number of volunteer hours per resident, with an average of 31.4 hours per resident.³¹

In Wake County, there are multiple organizations and nonprofits that incorporate civic engagement activities in their programs in order to foster these impactful connections for youth.

30 (Kielsmeier, J.C., Scales, P., Blyth, D., & Berkas, T. (2000, August). The Effects of Service-Learning on Middle School Students' Social Responsibility and Academic Success. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 20(3), 332-358.), increased social skills (National Crime Prevention Council (1995). *350 Tested Strategies to Prevent Crime: A Resource for Municipal Agencies and Community Groups*. Washington, D.C.), and higher levels of social achievement (Melchior, 1997.)

31 <http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/NC>.



Civic Engagement Rates by Gender for U.S. and North Carolina

Age 16–29	North Carolina		National	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Volunteered	24%	18%	25%	19%
Fixed something in the neighborhood	6%	1%	4%	4%
Attending public meeting	6%	5%	4%	5%
Donated \$25 or more	34%	26%	33%	26%
Contacted or visited public official	11%	10%	12%	13%
Bought or boycotted products	10%	11%	12%	12%
Used Internet to express opinions (frequently, two times a week or more)	6%	8%	7%	9%
Voted in local elections (all or most of the time)	61%	51%	60%	56%
Talked politics frequently (at least a few times a week)	26%	31%	27%	32%
Did favors for or received favors from neighbors (frequently, at least a few times a week)	14%	12%	15%	13%
Held group membership	42%	36%	41%	37%

Source: CIRCLE Analysis of Census Current Population Survey (CPS) 2011 September Volunteering Supplement and November Civic Engagement Supplement.



Capturing the level of civic engagement among our youth can mean many different things and encompass a range of activities. Going forward, we will want to identify methods of surveying our youth regarding meaningful indicators, including hours of volunteer service. The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement identifies and tracks 11 distinct behaviors. The chart on the preceding page provides a picture of what civic engagement looks like in North Carolina, when compared to national rates.

The civic participation of North Carolina's teens and young adults closely matches the level of participation nationally.

As indicated in the chart, there is a slight difference in male and female civic engagement behaviors among North Carolina youth. The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement finds that the civic participation of North Carolina's teens and young adults closely matches the level of participation nationally, including the different participation rates between males and females for the majority of civic engagement indicators. In North Carolina, females participate in civic engagement behaviors at a significant rate. For example, at least one-quarter of the state's females regularly talk about politics, vote, are members of civic groups, and have donated \$25 or more—and in some areas like voting, the rate is much higher.³²

³² Meredith College called The Status of Girls 2013. http://meredith.edu/status-ncgirls/_downloads/13-016-status-of-girls-report.pdf (Page 23).

SUMMARY

The data presented in this report demonstrates that in some areas our youth are doing well. In order to help all youth reach their fullest potential in all areas, more work is needed. This is especially true in areas such as healthy weight, sexual health, and workforce readiness. By collaborating across all sectors of the community, we can accomplish more and help larger numbers of young people. This work is critical to the future of our community. In order for Wake County to be a great place for all citizens, we must work to ensure that all of our youth thrive.





To learn more about
Youth Thrive and
to join us, please visit
www.Youth-Thrive.org
or call 919.463.5039.

You can also follow us on
Facebook and Twitter.

The Youth Thrive office is housed at
the United Way of the Greater Triangle, which is
located at 2400 Perimeter Park Dr., Suite 150,
Morrisville, NC, 27560.