



Prevention

Objective:

Support the optimal growth and development of children and youth

Strategy:

Support prevention and early intervention programs for children and youth most at-risk

Why is this strategy important?

King County's children and young adults are one of our most valuable assets. And in recent years, childhood development, especially in early childhood, has been universally accepted as a key driver of success later in life and of opportunity for social mobility. King County can make a difference by providing prevention and early intervention programs for children and youth most at-risk. Without King County's efforts, some of our children and youth are at risk of not meeting their educational and employment potential and ultimately ending up in justice or social service systems.

How is our performance?

King County tracks several important indicators that gauge how well we are doing to support prevention and early intervention programs for children and youth most at-risk.

Low birth weight babies and those born to teenage mothers are at higher risk for developmental problems. The rate of low birth weight single births (aka singleton births) in King County, 4.9 percent, is on par with the average rate in Washington State and is significantly lower than the national rate of 6.4 percent. Within King County, the rate varies by race/ethnicity and by neighborhood poverty level. 8.4% of Black/African American babies are born with low birth weight, almost twice the proportion occurring in White babies.

In King County between 2006 and 2010, the average birth rate among 15 to 17 year old females was 9.6 per 1,000. This rate is lower than both the 2010 Washington State rate (13.0 per 1,000) and the 2010 national rate (17.3 per 1,000). Again, these figures vary by ethnicity and neighborhood poverty level. Young Latina women give birth at nearly four times the countywide rate, and adolescent females from high poverty neighborhoods give birth at almost three times the countywide rate.

Immunizations are a critical way to prevent diseases that can limit child development. An estimated 69 percent of children 19-35 months of age are vaccinated in King County. Breastfeeding exclusively for the first six month of a baby's life also helps boost a baby's immunity and supports optimal development.

The State of Washington has set a target of reaching 2.4 percent of all children age zero to three in each county with services that address developmental disabilities. This target is based on the state's best estimate of the prevalence of developmental disabilities among Washington children. The King County Developmental Disabilities Division has been narrowly below this target, improving incrementally in each of the last three years.

To increase the number of children age birth to three enrolled in these services among historically underrepresented ethnic groups, this division has partnered with SOAR, a community coalition of early childhood stakeholders, to increase family understanding of developmental delays and knowledge of how to access early intervention services among members of the county's Chinese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese-speaking communities. In 2011, 1,437 families received educational information regarding developmental delays and the early intervention service system through community-based meetings and events.

Each year, almost 30 percent of our young people do not graduate from high school, and an even greater number of youth of color do not graduate from high school. In order to assist youth who have dropped out of school or are in danger of dropping out, King County provides or contracts for education, training, employment, and juvenile justice intervention services. These services include but are not limited to: basic skills development, GED completion, case management, career exploration and counseling, job readiness training, work experiences/internships, credit retrieval, mentoring, leadership development, advocacy, support services. Additional services that facilitate the removal of barriers to successful engagement in education, training and employment services such as substance abuse, homelessness, and mental health services are also used. For youth enrolled in targeted programs in 2011, 87.2 percent attained a GED and/or an employability skill. An employability skill is a documentable competency that increases the probability that youth served will be able to gain and maintain employment such as job readiness training, increase in their basic skill level, GED attainment, High School Diploma attainment, etc.

For the combined three year period of 2008-2011, 92 percent of youth served attained a GED and/or an employability skill. This rate was slightly lower for 2011 alone (87.2 percent) since more young people involved in the justice system were served beginning that year.

What can you do?

Learn about options for early and consistent prenatal care in King County
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/personal.aspx>

Track your baby's needed immunizations and learn about where you can get them on time-
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/locations/immunization.aspx>

Understand your baby's development and get help early if you have concerns-
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

Breastfeed your baby for the first six months and provide breast milk for your baby in bottles when other caregivers feed your baby.

Learn More About Whether Your Child Needs Early Intervention Services:

If your child is under age three and has special needs, or you are worried about the way your baby or toddler is developing, your family may qualify for services to support his/her development.

An evaluation of your child's development will be used to determine his/her eligibility for Early Intervention services. The King County Developmental Disabilities Division contracts with the Seattle King County Public Health - CHAP program to facilitate referrals for entry into Early Intervention services. The CHAP program can be reached by phone at 206-284-0331 or Toll-Free at 1-800-756-5437.

Host a youth in an internship/work experience at your company:

King County Employment and Education Resources (EER) has resources to place young people, ages 16 to 21, in work experience opportunities/internships to help them gain valuable work skills. Internships are up to 160 hours in length, and EER pays youth minimum wage, so there is no cost to the employers. KCEER is looking for employment opportunities county-wide. For more information, please contact Jennifer Hill, Youth Programs Manager, 206-205-0717 or Jennifer.hill@kingcounty.gov

Support increased funding for the Workforce Investment Act/WIA Youth Programs (Department of Labor: Contact your Congressional representatives to educate them about the importance of funding for WIA Youth Programs.

Moving forward

When gang-related violence spiked, King County leadership supported a sustained, balanced response to reduce gang violence. This balanced response included suppression efforts (e.g., specialized prosecutors), intervention services (e.g., education and employment), and prevention programs (e.g., nurse home visiting).

The King County Developmental Disabilities Division will expand current outreach activities to Russian and Korean-speaking communities in order to increase their access to birth to three early intervention services.

King County Employment and Education Resources (EER) will continue to provide education, training and employment services to youth and young adults most at-risk, including those who have dropped out of school and/or are involved in the justice system. EER will continue to identify and secure federal resources and grants to support our efforts, and partner with local non-profits providing high quality services designed to keep youth in school and out of trouble. EER will continue to work with King County school districts and the State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to create and maintain basic educational services that meet the needs of youth who have been unsuccessful in traditional secondary school settings and to help them ultimately become productive members of our community.

Related Links

[**Early Intervention Services for Children with Developmental Disabilities**](#)

[**County-managed Youth Employment Programs**](#)

[**Public Health - Seattle & King County**](#)

[**Health of King County**](#)

[**King County Community Health Indicators**](#)

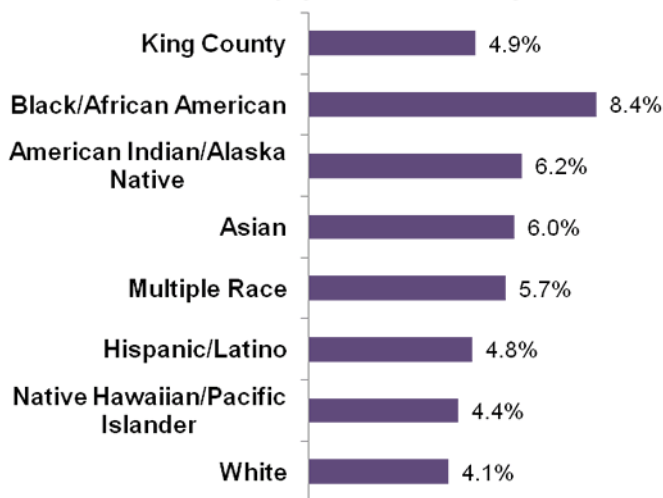
Technical Notes

Low birth weight and adolescent birth rates data from Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, Birth Certificate data, 2006-2010 combined.

Immunization rates data from Washington State Immunization Information System (formerly called the Child Profile Health Promotion & Immunization Registry System), Public Health-Seattle & King County; Assessment, Policy Development & Evaluation Unit. Four or more doses of diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (DTaP), 3 or more doses of polio vaccines, 1 measles containing vaccine, 3 or more doses of Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), and 3 or more doses of hepatitis B (Hep B) vaccine. Statewide roll-out of the Immunization Information System began in 1998. In recent years, use of the system has increased greatly. Ninety-five percent of providers who immunize children participate in the system, both at the state and county levels. Immunization data is not 100% complete. However, it is estimated that immunization coverage rates derived from Immunization Information System are about ten percentage points lower than the actual coverage in the community. The percentage of children 19-35 months who have been immunized in King County in 2012 is estimated using 2011 population estimates from the Washington State Office of Financial Management.

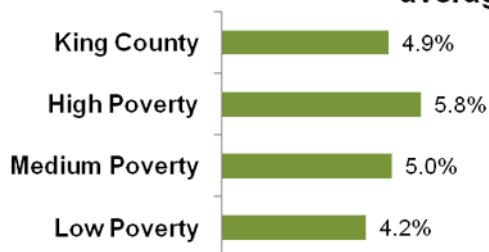
Charts and Maps

**Percent of Singleton Births that are Low Birthweight
(by race/ethnicity, 2006-2010 average)**



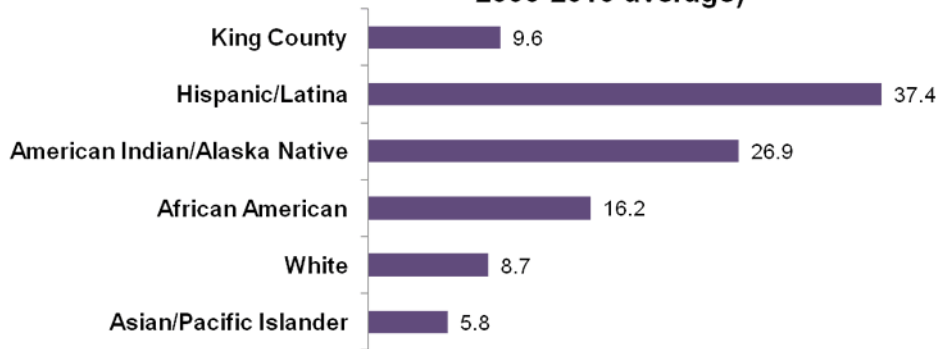
Data Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, prepared by Public Health-Seattle & King County Assessment, Policy Development & Evaluation Unit

**Percent of Singleton Births that are Low Birthweight
(countywide and by neighborhood poverty rate, 2006-2010 average)**



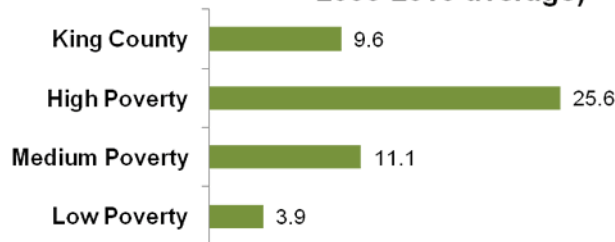
Data Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, prepared by Public Health-Seattle & King County Assessment, Policy Development & Evaluation Unit

Adolescent Birth Rates
 (per 1,000 females ages 15-17 years, by race/ethnicity,
 2006-2010 average)



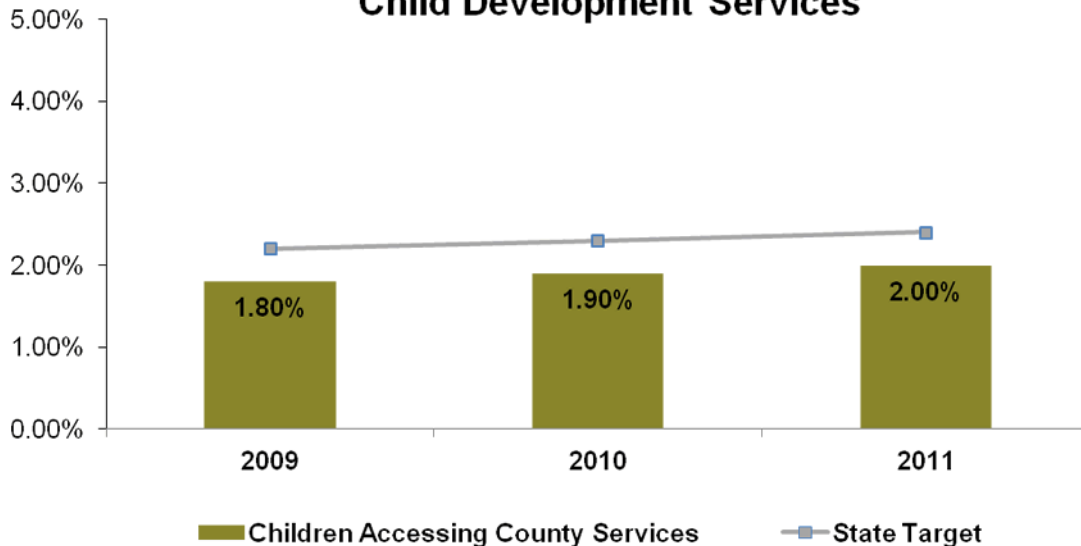
Data Sources Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, prepared by Public Health-Seattle & King County Assessment, Policy Development & Evaluation Unit

Adolescent Birth Rates
 (per 1,000 females ages 15-17 years, by neighborhood poverty level,
 2006-2010 average)



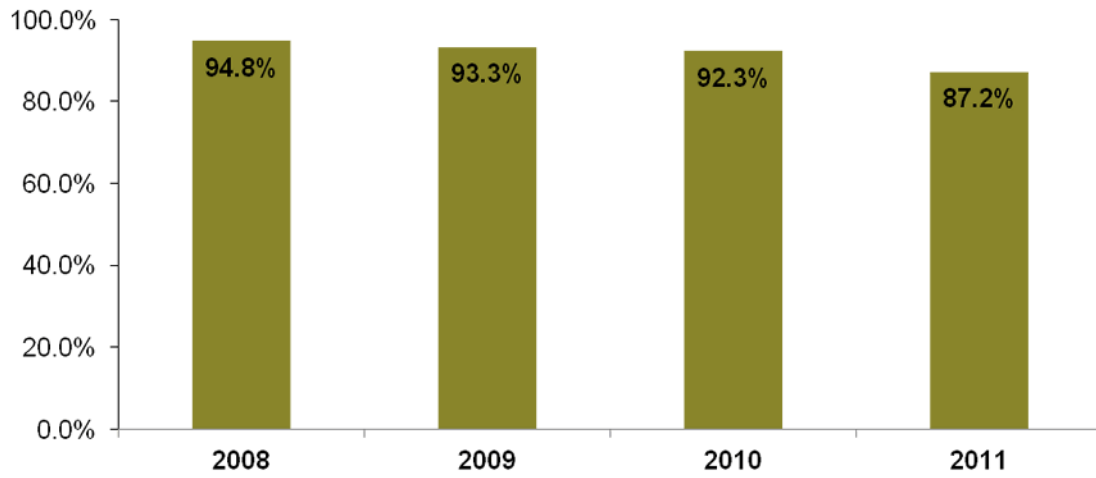
Data Source: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, prepared by Public Health-Seattle & King County Assessment, Policy Development & Evaluation Unit

**Access Rate for King County's Early Intervention
 Child Development Services**



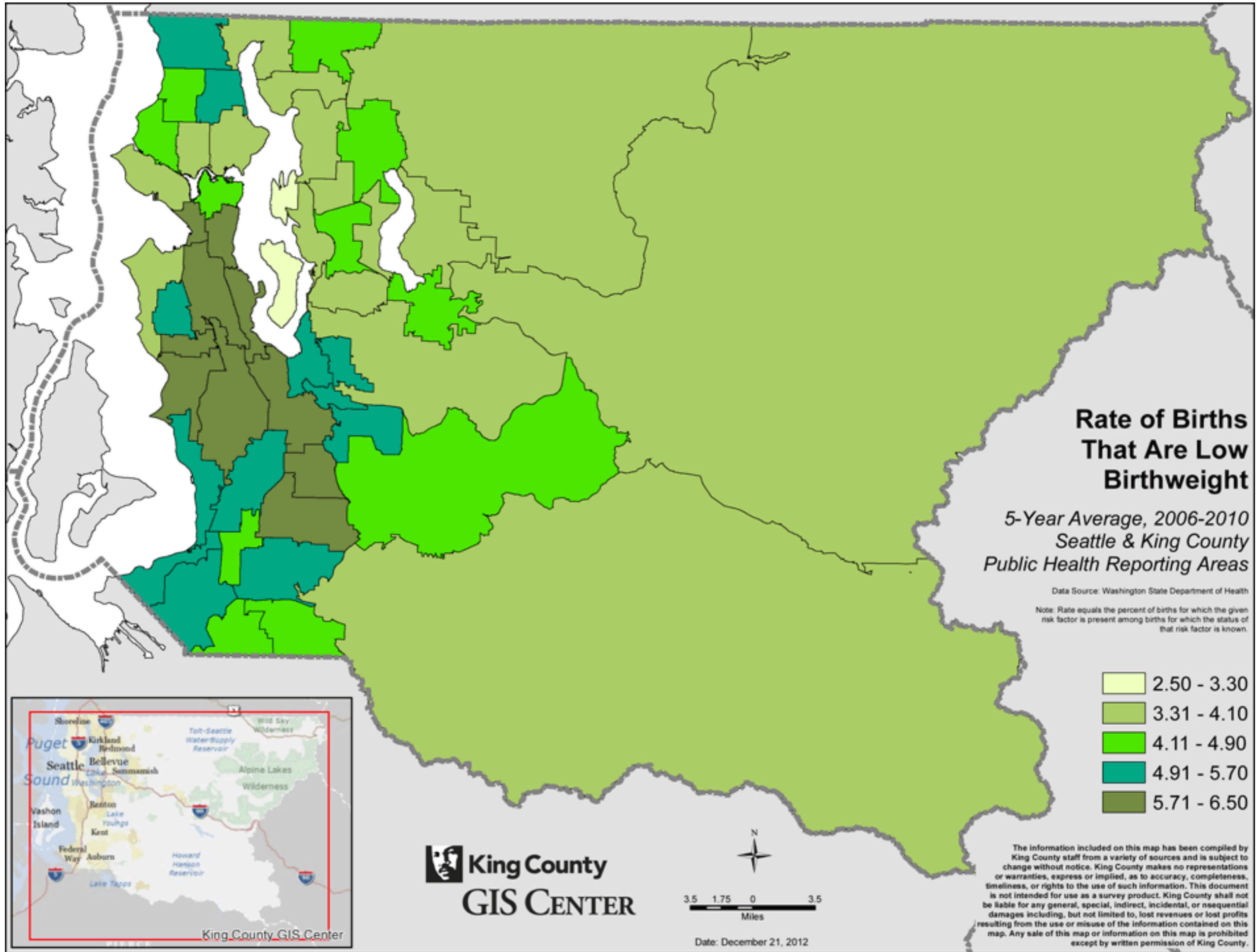
Data Source: King County Department of Community and Human Services

Percent of Students Enrolled in Youth Employment Programs that Attain a GED or Employability Skill



Data Source: King County Department of Community and Human Services

Percent of Births That are Low Birthweight



Adolescent Birth Rates

