

TARRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DATA BRIEF



PREMATURITY IN TARRANT COUNTY

- **Preterm births** include any live birth occurring before **37 weeks** gestation
- In 2021, the **Tarrant County prematurity rate** (11.2 per 100 live births) was **lower than Texas** (11.4), and **higher than the United States** (10.5), and higher than the Healthy People 2030 goal (9.4)
- Prematurity **increased significantly** among **Tarrant County, Texas, and the United States** live births from 2020 to 2021
- The **infant mortality rate** among Tarrant County **preterm births** (30.5 per 1,000 live births) was **significantly higher** than term births (1.9 per 1,000 live births) in 2019
- **Prematurity and low birth weight** was the **second leading cause of death** among Tarrant County infants, responsible for 15.1% of infant deaths from 2016-2020

Figure 1. Prematurity rate for Tarrant County, Texas, and the United States, 2021

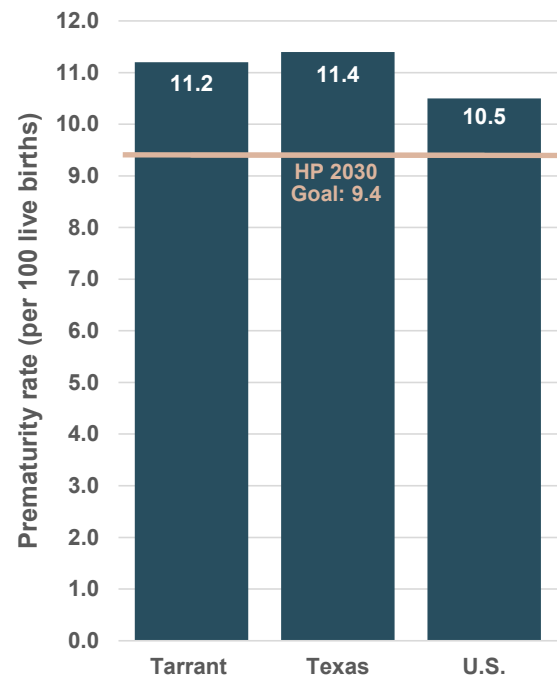
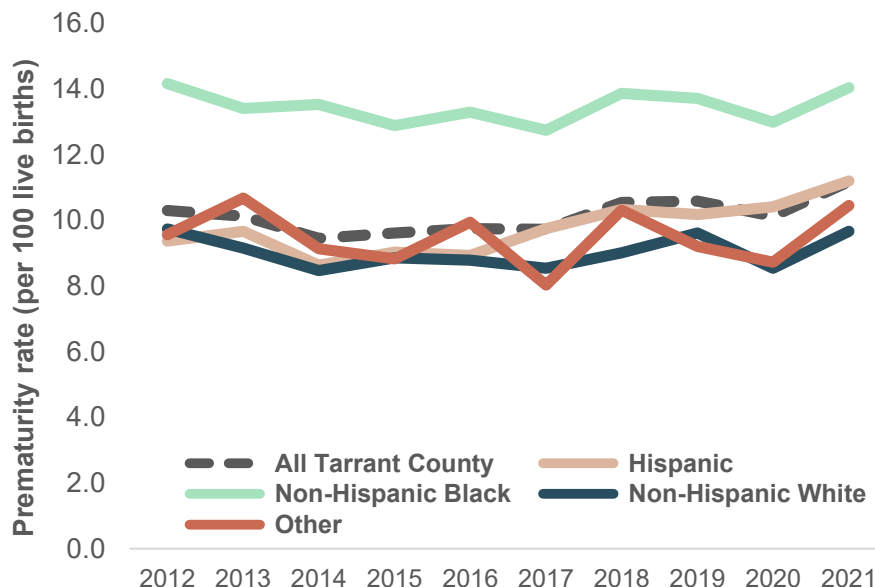


Figure 2. Prematurity rate in Tarrant County by race/ethnicity, 2012-2021



Non-Hispanic black residents consistently had the highest prematurity rates compared to all other racial/ethnic groups

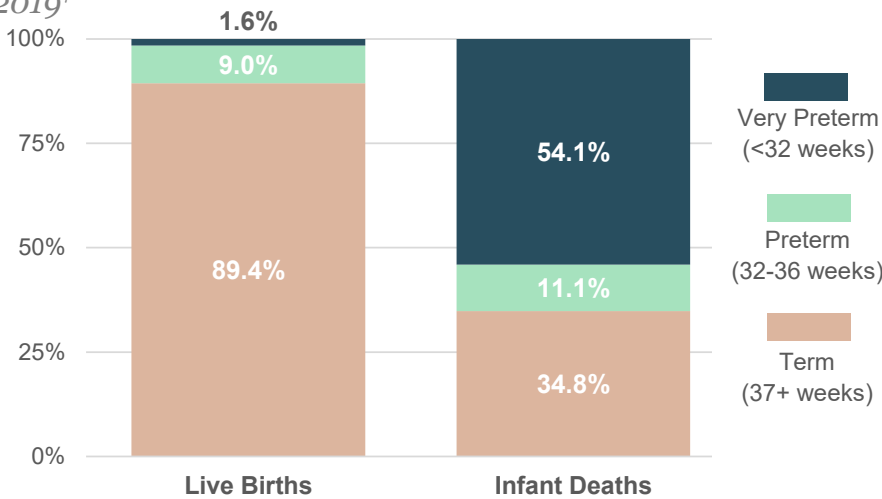
All significant differences detected with a p-value <0.05

HP 2030 Goal= Healthy People 2030 Objective: lower the percent of live births born preterm to 9.4%

Data sources: Texas Department of State Health Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Data Brief provided by: Office of Data and Informatics

Figure 3. Live births and infant deaths by gestational age among Tarrant County infants, 2019[†]



Infants born preterm (<37 weeks) account for around 10% of live births and 65% of infant deaths

Figure 4. Characteristics among Tarrant County infants born term and preterm, 2021

Birth characteristics	Term (37+ weeks)	Preterm (<37 weeks)	Difference
1st born child	39.6%	38.0%	—
Multiples birth (twin, triplet...)	1.4%	17.2%	↑
Cesarean delivery	31.4%	53.3%	↑
Maternal characteristics			
Started prenatal care on time	61.8%	56.8%	↓
Less than high school education	11.8%	14.7%	↑
Age 40 years and older	3.0%	4.4%	↑
Smoked during pregnancy	1.5%	2.0%	—
Hypertension (chronic or pregnancy related)	8.4%	21.2%	↑
Diabetes (chronic or pregnancy related)	6.6%	9.8%	↑

Note: Any up or down arrows denote statistically significant difference between infants born term and preterm (p<0.05)

<p>Steps to reduce the risk of preterm birth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quit smoking • Avoid alcohol and drugs • Get prenatal care as soon as you think you may be pregnant and throughout pregnancy • Seek medical attention for any warning signs or symptoms of preterm labor • Wait at least 18 months between pregnancies • If you had a previous preterm birth, talk to your healthcare provider about the use of progesterone <p>A woman can still have a premature birth even if she has no known risk factors</p>	<p>Resources available at Tarrant County Public Health [health.tarrantcounty.com]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prematurity Risk Reduction: Connection to community resources, health & wellness education, and stress management classes for any pregnant person who is at risk of having a preterm birth • Live Tobacco Free: Free tobacco cessation classes • Nurse Family Partnership: This program partners eligible young mothers with experienced nurses to improve health outcomes for their children • WIC: Helps families eat well, learn about nutrition, and stay healthy • Health For Me: Self-management class for persons with diabetes, obesity, hypertension, and other chronic conditions <p>For other community resources: Call 2-1-1</p>
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[†]2020 and 2021 infant deaths by gestational age data not available at the time of publication
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