

Wakulla County Profile#

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September, 2011

Dear Community Member:

It is our pleasure to share with you the findings of the Community Needs Assessment and the Local Public Health System Assessment conducted by Big Bend Area Health Education Center, on behalf of the Wakulla County Health Department. This information may be useful to local organizations in planning, prioritizing, and responding to the needs of our community. Within this document, we looked at the entire community and answered the following questions: How healthy are the people of Wakulla County? And what does the community look like? This assessment includes: demographic characteristics, socioeconomic indicators, availability of health resources, quality of life, behavioral risk factors, environmental health indicators, mental health, maternal and child health, deaths, illness, and injury.

We would like to thank the community organizations who sent representatives and those who made contributions to the process. A special thank you is extended to Lynn Artz of the Wakulla County Commission and Gail Campbell of the Wakulla Youth Coalition.

Hopefully, the users of this document will find it informative and useful.

I look forward to working with the entire community to improve the health and quality of life for our citizens.

Sincerely,

Padraic Juarez
Acting Director
Wakulla County Health Department



Vision - A healthier future for the people of Wakulla County.

Values - Excellence, commitment to service, accountability, empowerment, integrity, respect, and teamwork.

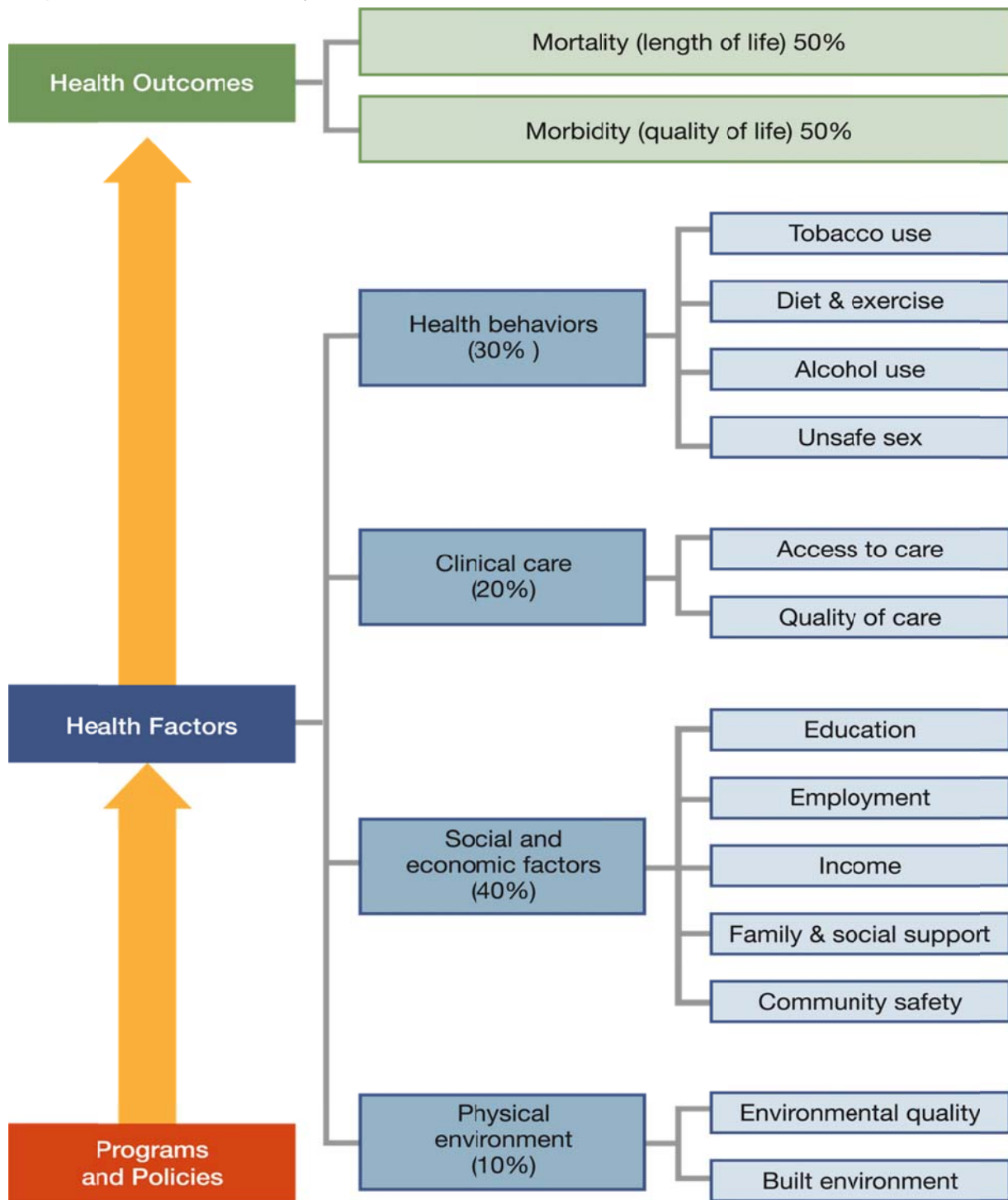
Mission- To promote, protect, and improve the health of all people in Wakulla County.

Purpose

There are several purposes for doing a community health needs assessment:

- (1) To fulfill requirements for each local health department to complete a community health assessment.
- (2) To provide updated information on the community health status. This provides the basis for identification and prioritization of local health issues.
- (3) To create a process to encourage public and community input into the health needs and the use of available resources.

The County Health Rankings Reports from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health provided the foundation for the data collection and analysis for the Wakulla County Health Department Needs Assessment. The chart below illustrates the framework for the County Health Rankings for each county in the United States. On the next page, the snapshot for Wakulla County is included.



County Health Rankings model ©2010 UWPHI

Wakulla County Health Snapshot: Adapted from report:					
Compiled by: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute					
	Wakulla County	Error Margin	National Benchmark	Florida	Rank (of 67)
HEALTH OUTCOMES					27
Mortality: Years of potential life lost (YPLL/100,000)	7,721	6,625-8,818	5,564	7,896	18
General Health Status: % of people reporting fair/poor health	13%	11-16%	10%	16%	37
HEALTH DETERMINANTS					
Health Care					40
Uninsured adults	26%	21-30%	13%	27%	
Ratio of population to primary care physicians	3,893:1		631:1	983:1	
Ratio of population to mental health providers	4,449:1			3444:1	
Health Behaviors					54
Adult smoking	28%	23-34%	15%	20%	
Adult obesity	30%	26-33%	25%	24%	
Excessive drinking	22%	17-27%	8%	16%	
Binge drinking	19%			14%	
Motor vehicle crash death rate	19%	12-25	12%	19%	
Teen birth rate	44%	39-50	22%	45%	
Inadequate fruit and vegetable intake	69%			74%	
Social & Economic Factors					8
High school graduation	60%		92%	65%	
Unemployment	7.1%	6.7-7.5%	5.3%	10.5%	
Children in poverty	18%	14-23%	11%	18%	
Inadequate social support	20%	16-25%	14%	21%	
Children in single-parent households	33%		20%	35%	
Physical Environment					32
Access to healthy foods	67%		92%	82%	
Access to recreational facilities	10%		17%	9%	

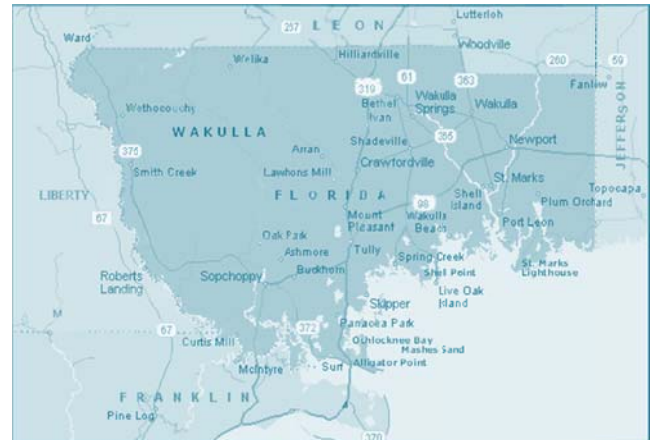
Note: Blank values reflect unreliable or missing data

Data Analysis

- Reviewed components of the Wakulla County Health Rankings and compared with other sources of data for Wakulla County.
- Reviewed minutes from meetings held by the Wakulla County Youth Coalition.
- Compared Wakulla County data to Florida and Healthy People 2020 and 2010 targets.
- Reviewed most current U.S. Census Data and Florida Charts data.
- Reviewed Wakulla County Profile, conducted August 2004.

Demographic Profile

Wakulla County is located on the Gulf Coast, 21 miles south of our state's capital, Tallahassee. The county is abundantly populated with rivers, coastline and federally preserved lands. Roughly sixty percent (60%) of Wakulla County's land area is covered by the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge and the Apalachicola National Forest. (Wakulla Profile, 2004).



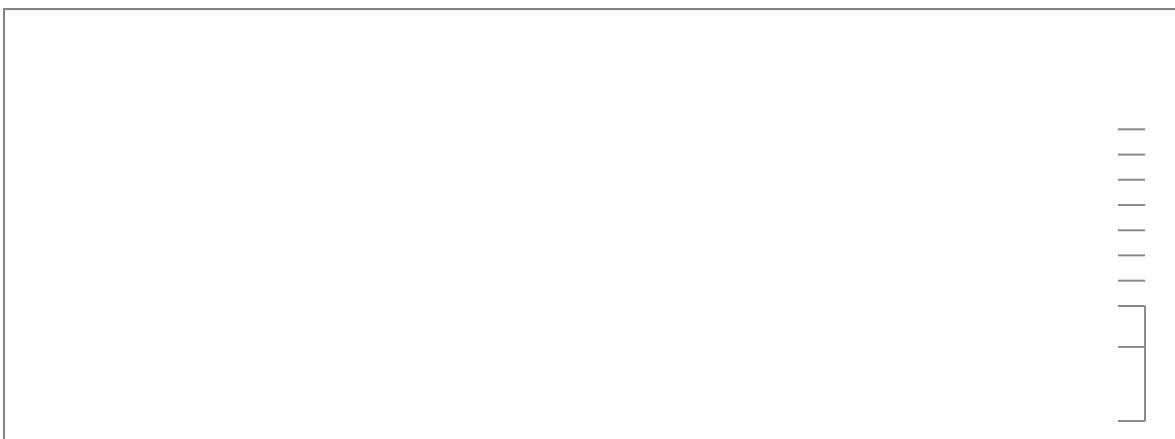
Land Area and Population Density

The county has a total area of 735.74 square miles with about 82% being land and about 18% being water. It is also ranked 49th out of Florida counties in terms of population density, with just 51 people per square mile. The population density is very low in comparison to the state's average of 347 persons per square mile. (U.S. Census Quick Facts, 2010). Crawfordville is the most populated city in the county, followed by Sopchoppy, Panacea, St. Marks and Shell Point. There are no interstate/major highways, only state roads, connecting Wakulla to Leon County.

Population Characteristics

The U.S. Census data indicates Wakulla County had a population of 14,202 in 1990, 22,863 in 2000, and 30,776 at present. (U.S. Census, 2010). Wakulla County has experienced significant growth since 1990.

The population has more than doubled, and is steadily increasing; however, on the contrary is only ranked 49th in population among the sixty-seven (67) Florida counties.



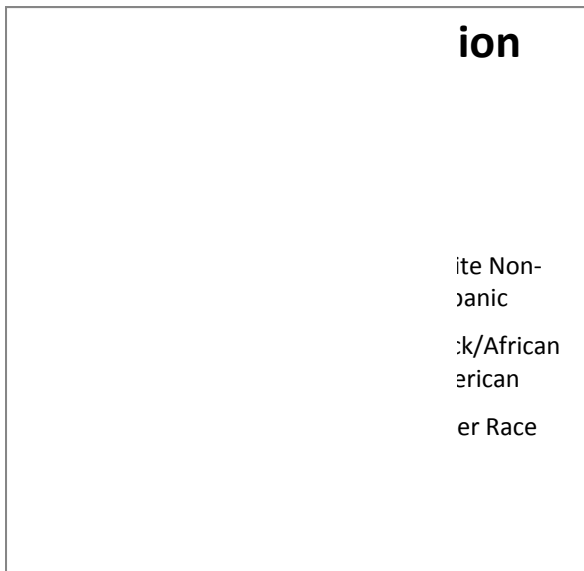
Age

Out of the estimated 32,815 people who reside in the county, the age distribution of people in Wakulla County is as follows: 23% are under the age of 18; 21% are ages 50 to 64; and 11% are age 65 and older. (2010 Census)



Race

82 percent of Wakulla County residents are White Non-Hispanic; 14.5 percent Black or African American; and 3 percent were other races. (U.S. Census 2010). When comparing the racial make-up for Wakulla County to the entire state, it can be concluded that the county's population is growing to look more like that of the entire state.

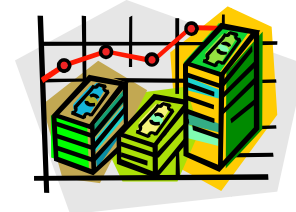


Comparison of Race Demographics		
	Wakulla County	Florida
White /Non-Hispanic	82%	75%
Black African American	14.5%	16%
Other Races	3%	9%

Socioeconomic Indicators

Income

The median household income for Wakulla County is \$48,022, as of the 2009 U.S. Census estimate. The median household income has grown to exceed the state rate of \$44,755, by nearly 10%. The personal per capita income has grown to \$22,114, still lower than the state rate of \$26,503. (U.S. Census 2010). Income for Wakulla county residents is derived from retail, food service, construction, local government, farming, and the seafood industry. (Wakulla Profile, 2004)

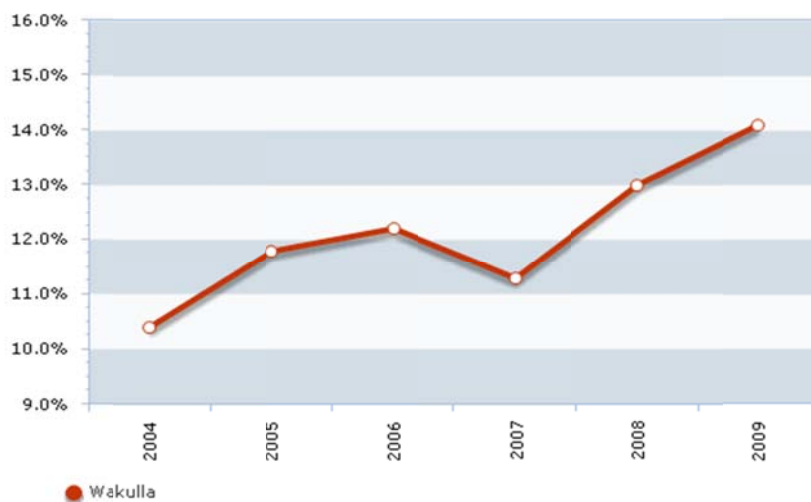


Employment/Unemployment

According to U.S. Census data more than 60% of the county's residents are of working age. According to the Wakulla Profile compiled in 2004, the unemployment rate for the county was 3.9%; however, at present the unemployment rate is 8.4%. The unemployment rate has doubled over the past ten years. The Wakulla County rate is still lower than the unemployment rate for the State of Florida and the nation. Florida's unemployment rate is 10.7%. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010)

Poverty

Poverty is of paramount concern to Wakulla County, the state of Florida, and our nation. A recent news article on the CNN Money website indicates poverty in the United States has risen to 15.1%. It is at the highest level since 1993. (CNN Money, 2011). U.S. Census data indicates Wakulla County's poverty rate is at 14.1%. This rate is very close to the state rate of 15.1%. The impoverished face many challenges in preserving their health. For example, they are more likely to live in less than adequate housing with limited or no access to healthcare resources. The chart below shows an increase in the poverty rate over the last five years.



All Persons in Poverty (Percent) – 2004 to 2009

Florida KIDS COUNT

KIDS COUNT Data Center, www.kidscount.org/datacenter

A Project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

Education

The total school enrollment in Wakulla County was 7,200 as of the 2005-2009 U.S. Census Estimates. Wakulla County Schools has consistently remained an A- rated school district since 2006. Students in Wakulla County scored higher than the state average in all areas of the FCAT. In addition, students who took the ACT test in 2008-2009 exceeded both the state and the national composite scores and also outperformed the state's and the nation's students on the SAT. Consequently, Wakulla graduation rate exceeds the state rate by 5.4% and has improved to 84%. Additionally, 84.1% of the population over 25 years of age has a high school diploma, which is slightly lower than the state rate of 84.9%.

Transportation

There is no public transportation in Wakulla County. Wakulla Transportation Services, operated by the Wakulla Senior Citizen's Council, Inc., provides transportation for low-income, older adults, and disabled persons. They serve around 600 Medicaid clients from Monday to Friday by transporting them to doctor/medical appointments in both Crawfordville and Tallahassee. A telephone interview with Ms. Nell Rozar of the Wakulla Transportation services indicated, Medicaid only pays for medical appointments. Trips to the pharmacy or grocery store must be subsidized by grant funds. She also indicated that the service has sustained budget cuts which may limit the amount of services the organization will be available provide. It is important to know that if grant funding, which subsidizes other services like grocery or pharmacy trips, is depleted, these services may end for some citizens. If people are not able to obtain groceries or pharmaceuticals, it is difficult to manage chronic disease or maintain health. In addition, 3% of homes do not have a vehicle for transportation. Wakulla low-income and impoverished citizens for the most part are transportation disadvantaged, thus making it difficult for them to access medical and social services as needed. (Wakulla Profile, 2004)

Access to Care

Access to Care	
Uninsured *	21.5%
Medicare	
Elderly 65+	2923
Disabled	643
Medicaid Beneficiaries	3995
Physicians	28.2
Community Health Centers (FQHC)	1
Health Professional Shortage Area	Yes

[*http://geocommons.com\(U.S.Census\)](http://geocommons.com(U.S.Census))

Health Insurance Status

The U.S. Census indicates that between 25 to 26% of all Floridians are uninsured. As of the 2010 Wisconsin Health Rankings, 26% of Wakulla County respondents indicated they were uninsured. This is a definite increase since the printing of the last Wakulla Profile in 2004. The 2004 Wakulla Profile indicated 15% of the county's population was uninsured. The issue of being uninsured is growing in Wakulla County, just as it is nationally. Lack of insurance is one of the primary reasons why people fail to seek preventative healthcare services.

Access to Dental Care

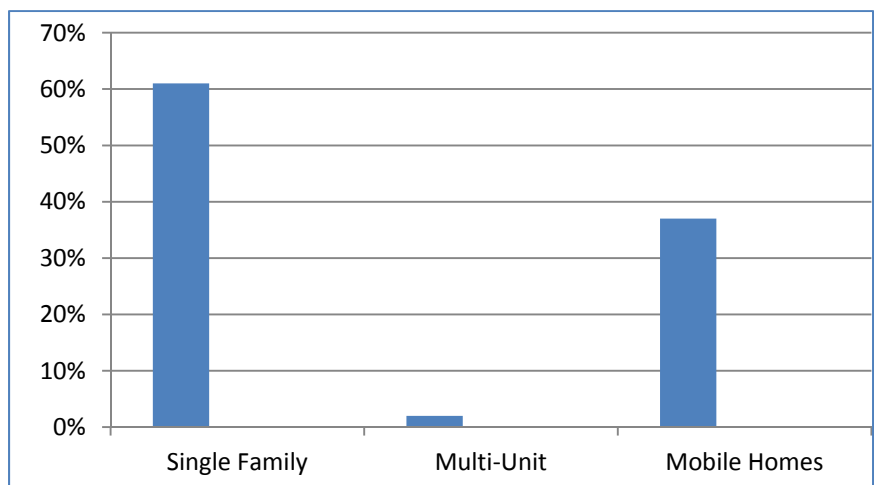
Oral health affects personal health and overall well-being. The entire state of Florida faces a statewide shortage of dental professionals. Wakulla County is a designated Dental Health Professional Shortage Area. (HRSA, 2011). Wakulla County Health Department currently provides general dental services (Exam, Prophylaxis, Fluoride, fillings, simple extractions) to Medicaid eligible children age 0 – 21 in the Health Department Dental Clinic. There is a shortage of dentists to serve those who have low income or who are participating in Medicaid. Only two, of the county's four private dentists are enrolled as Medicaid providers, and only one of the two enrolled Medicaid Dentist is actively providing services for Medicaid patients. (Oral Health of Disadvantaged Persons, 2009). According to the 2010 BRFSS Data Report, more than 50% of adults reported they had not visited the dentist or a dental clinic within the past year. More than ½ of BRFSS survey respondents reported having had a permanent tooth removed because of decay or gum disease. Oral health can affect a person's economic productivity, by affecting their ability to work and attend school. (Oral Health of Disadvantaged Persons, 2009)

Injuries/Accidents

Ten years ago, the rate for motor vehicle crashes was 33.9 and is now 28.7. There was nearly a 14% decrease over the last ten years. Florida charts footnotes indicate, the decrease in the recent drop in crash rates may be attributed to: 1) a statewide focus on teen driver safety, 2) fewer licensed teen drivers, and 3) changes to seat belt laws in Florida. On the other hand, the motor vehicle crash age-adjusted rate death rates for adults is 25.9, significantly higher than the state rate of 15.7 and nearly double the Health People 2020 goal of 12.4. In addition, Wakulla County's rate for unintentional injuries is 46.1; it exceeds the state rate of 44.0 by a small percentage.

Housing

The 2005-2009 estimates indicate there are a total of 13,000 housing units in Wakulla County. 61% are single family dwellings, 2% are multi-unit structures, and 37% mobile homes. One-half of them were built since 1990. Of the total number, 84% are occupied by owners and 16% by renters. 3% of homes did not have telephone service.



Vulnerable Populations

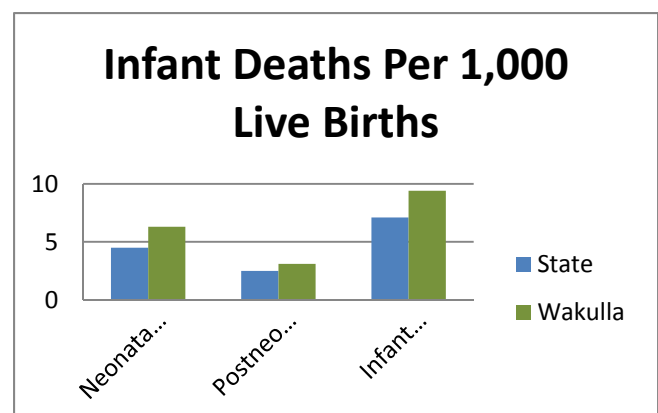
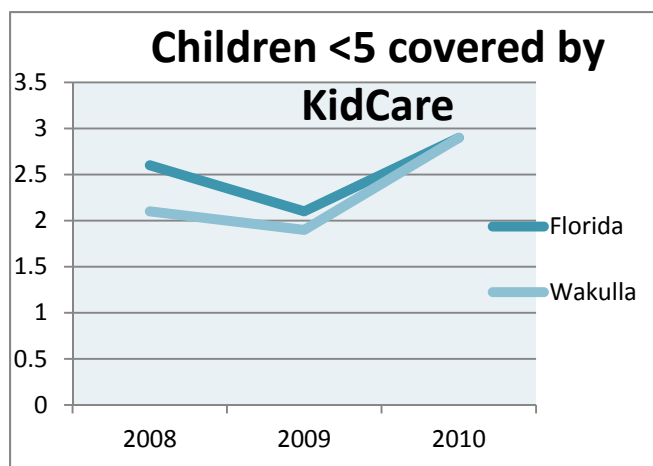
When examining the demographics of an area for the purposes of public health, it is prudent to look at the data and statistics for vulnerable populations. Vulnerable populations are defined as "those individuals or groups who have a greater probability than the rest of the population as a whole of being harmed and experience an impaired quality of life because of social, environmental, health, or economic conditions or policies."

By most definitions, this group would include:

- Children
- Older Adults
- Those with disabilities
- New Immigrants
- Minorities
- Those who live in poverty
- Women

Children

22.5% of the population in Wakulla County is comprised of children and youth under the age of 18. (U.S. Census, 2010) 31% of all school age children are eligible for free lunch. (Florida Department of Education, 2010) 18% of all children live in poverty. A review of the Wakulla County Pregnancy and Young Child Profile revealed many disparities among women and children of Wakulla County versus the rest of the state of Florida. For example, Wakulla County ranks in the least favorable quartile for Neonatal Deaths (>28 days), Infant Deaths, and Deaths from Sudden Unexplained Infant Death. 30.2% of WIC children 2 years and older are overweight or at risk of being overweight. The Wakulla County rate slightly exceeds the state rate for this measure. The chart below depicts a steady growth in the number of children < 5 covered by Kid Care (Medikids + Medicaid).



Older Adults

11% of Wakulla residents are age 65 and older. (U.S. Census, 2010)

Disabilities

According to the recently released Florida BRFSS Data report 28.6% of respondents reported limitations in activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems.

Foreign Born/Non English Speakers

U.S. Census data indicates less than 2% of Wakulla County residents were foreign born, a fairly low rate in comparison to the state rate of 18.7% and the U.S. rate of 12.4%. Nearly 4% of residents speak a language other than English. Of these, 4% are Non-English speakers, 60% spoke Spanish, and 40% spoke some other language.

Poverty

14.1 percent of Wakulla residents lived in poverty. (U.S. Census, 2010) 18% percent of related children under 18 lived below the poverty level and 11% of people 65 years and over. 9% of all families and 17% of families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.

Women

45.9% of Wakulla County residents are female. (U.S. Census, 2010) Women in Wakulla County rank in the 4th least favorable quartile in the number of births to obese mothers at the time of pregnancy, births to mothers who report smoking during pregnancy, births to unwed mothers ages 15-19. The chart below depicts the comparison with the entire state.

Measure	Wakulla County	Florida
Births to obese mothers	26.6%	19.1%
Mothers who smoke	18.8%	6.9%
Births to unwed mothers ages 15-19	91.4%	89.1%

Minorities

Population by Race			Population by Race		
White	14,109,162	75%	White	25,224	82%
African American	2,999,862	16%	African American	4,464	15%
Asian	454,821	2%	Asian	172	1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	71,458	0%	American Indian and Alaska Native	191	1%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	12,286	0%	Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	18	0%
Other	681,144	4%	Other	148	0%
Identified by two or more	472,577	3%	Identified by two or more	559	2%
Florida	18,801,310		Wakulla	30,776	



Key Findings:

- 1) Wakulla County's population has more than doubled over the past twenty (20) years, thus increasing demand for some services, goods, and healthcare.
- 2) More than 50% of residents are of working age.
- 3) A review of the county population indicates needs for services for youth, working adults, and older adults.
- 4) There are a high number of persons who could be considered vulnerable.
- 5) The closest metropolitan area to Wakulla County is Tallahassee, in neighboring Leon County.
- 6) Lack of transportation may inhibit some residents' ability to participate in programs or seek services.



Health Outcomes

YPLL accounts for the age at which a person dies. The younger a person dies, the more potential years of life are lost. This measure is age-adjusted and calculated as a rate per 100,000 populations. The YPLL in Wakulla (2011) was 7,721 years per 100,000 people. This is nearly consistent with the state rate of 7,896 year per 100,000 of population.

	Wakulla	Florida
Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) prior to age 75	7721	7896

Age-adjusted death rates: The age-adjusted death rates for heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer exceed the state rate. The chart below compares these rates for Wakulla County and the State of Florida.



Age-adjusted Death Rates			
	Rate Type	Wakulla	Florida
Heart disease	Per 100,000	112.0	108.5
Stroke	Per 100,000	40.2	31.6
Lung	Per 100,000	66.4	46.9

General Health Status

Health Determinants

The health determinants in the Wakulla County Profiles are based on four major components:

1. **Health Care** is a measure of access and whether people are receiving recommended services.
2. **Health Behaviors** refer to healthy lifestyles and personal health decisions such as tobacco use, smoking during pregnancy, physical inactivity, obesity, nutrition, alcohol use, motor-vehicle crashes, intentional and unintentional injuries, teen-birth rates, and violent crime.
3. **Socioeconomic Factors** impact health and health behaviors. These factors include unemployment, household income, self-sufficiency wages, labor force participation, education, divorce, and poverty. Socioeconomic status is a strong indicator of health and impacts health behavior risk factors such as smoking, drinking alcohol, physical inactivity, and obesity.
4. **Physical Environment** measures air and water quality and other environmental factors.

Health Care

According to the Wisconsin Health Ranking and Florida Charts, Wakulla County lacks adequate health care services. Most rural counties in the state of Florida have a similar plight. Wakulla County is identified as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) by HRSA for mental health, dental health, and health professionals. This can be realized when examining the ratio of the population to primary care physicians for Wakulla County at 3893:1 and at 983:1 in the State of Florida. The county does not have a hospital; patients must seek emergency and specialty services in neighboring counties. There is 1 mental health provider for every 4,449 residents. 26% of Wakulla County residents over age 18 reported not having any type of health insurance.

Health Care		
	Wakulla	Florida
Uninsured adults	26%	27%
Ratio of population to primary care physicians	3,893:1	983:1
Ratio of population to mental health providers	4,449:1	3444:1

**The five leading causes of death
in Wakulla County directly
related to health behaviors are:**

- 1. Heart Disease**
- 2. Cancer**
- 3. Respiratory Diseases**
- 4. Complications due to Chronic Disease**
- 5. Unintentional Injury**

Health Behaviors

Wakulla ranks 54 of the 67 counties when looking at health behaviors, according to the Wakulla Health snapshot. Of the health behaviors surveyed, Wakulla County counties percentage is higher than the state.

Health Behaviors		
	Wakulla	Florida
Adult smoking	28%	20%
Adult obesity	30%	24%
Excessive drinking	22%	16%
Binge drinking	19%	14%
Motor vehicle crash death rate	19%	19%
Teen birth rate	44%	45%
Inadequate fruit and vegetable intake	69%	74%

Other Key Findings

- A review of the Florida Charts Maternal and Young Child Profile indicated 18.9% of mothers smoked during pregnancy which is more than three (3) times the state rate of 6.9%.
- The prevalence for diabetes is 11.1%, a slightly higher rate than the state rate of 8.7%.
- 28% of adults report smoking \geq 100 cigarettes and are currently smoking. This rate is considerably higher than the state rate and more than double the Healthy People 2020 Goal of 12%.

- High percentages of middle and high school students report smoking cigarettes, marijuana, and using alcohol in the last 30 days. (School Age Child and Adolescent Profile Wakulla County, 2011) These rates exceeded state rates in all instances.
- For the years 2007-2009, the age-adjusted death rates for unintentional injuries and motor vehicle crashes exceeded the state rate and the Healthy People 2020 Goals.
- The infant, neonatal and postnatal death rates exceed the State and the Healthy People 2020 goals.
- The Wakulla County Health Status Summary indicates the numbers of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea cases reported are trending to get worse.

Socioeconomic Trends

18 percent of children are living in poverty. A very high percentage of youth in Wakulla County schools is eligible to receive free lunch. This eligibility is associated with low-income families. Nearly 14% of all residents in Wakulla County reported incomes below the poverty level. If the unemployment rate continues at its present pace, the rate of poverty in Wakulla County will likely increase.

Social and Economic Factors		
	Wakulla	Florida
High school graduation	60%	65%
Unemployment	7.1%	10.5%
Children in poverty	18%	18%
Inadequate social support	20%	21%
Children in single-parent households	33%	35%

Physical Environment

Wakulla County's environment is a significant strength as indicated by the County Health Rankings. There are bike trails, parks, and many other recreational opportunities. Residents are not exposed to high levels of air or water pollution. However, one major weakness is that the county is not located along a major interstate. State roads are the only way to access the county. It should be noted that a large number of adults report having asthma. Wakulla County is rated in the least than favorable quartile of adults who report having asthma. The county rate is 11.2% versus 6.2% for the entire state of Florida.

Summary Key Findings

Like most rural counties in the south, Wakulla County has its own unique challenges. The county is growing; the population has doubled over the past twenty years. However, health behaviors may affect some residents' ability to fully participate in the workforce.

It should be noted that tobacco and alcohol use is rampant among adults. Almost 20% of women reported smoking while they were pregnant, which contributes to low-birth weight, birth defects, premature babies, asthma, and other complications. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends pregnant women completely abstain from smoking during pregnancy. Smoking is one of the most modifiable factors when encouraging better birth outcomes.

The Wakulla Youth Coalition identified a high level of drug use among both middle and high school students. When youth use both legal and illicit substances, instances of violence and risky behaviors increase; and educational success is jeopardized.

Overall, the unemployment rate in Wakulla County is 7.1%, lower than the state rate of 10.2%. However, there are numerous indicators of poverty and not having enough resources. For example, nearly 1/3 of all children enrolled in public school are eligible for free lunch. 28% of residents use 30% or more of their income for housing costs. 18% of children under age 18 live in poverty. 33% of children live in single parent households.

Other health-related issues impacting Wakulla County came to light during the community health needs assessment data analysis, they include: nutrition, physical inactivity, chronic illness, obesity, lack of availability and access to mental health providers, dental, and primary care.

A highlight and great strength of this community health needs assessment data analysis is the notable physical environment, which provides opportunities that can support a healthy lifestyle and provide an economic stimulus through local tourism, and the county's highly rated school system.



Resources

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