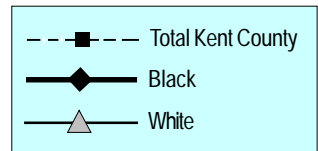
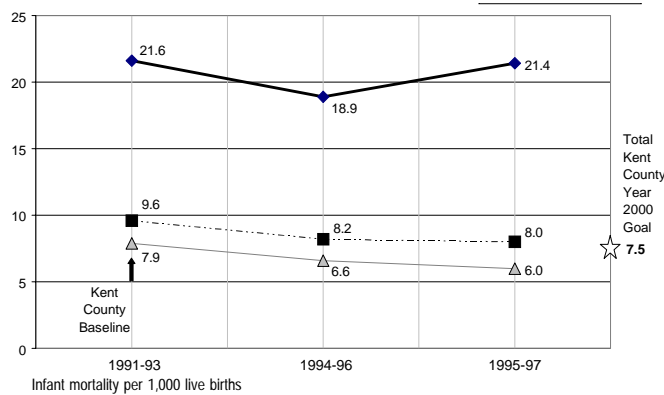


## Focus on Infant Health

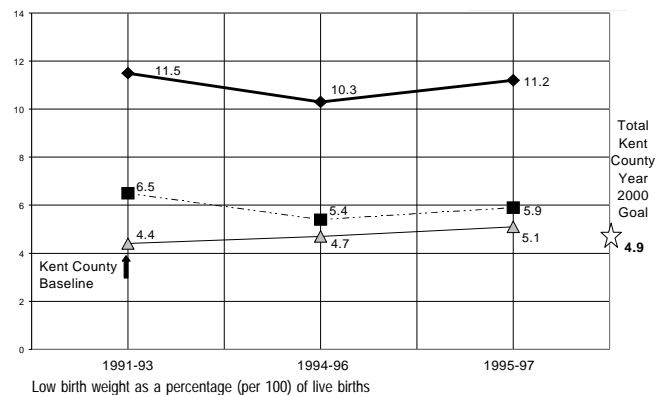
The Community HealthWatch report cards are developed by the Kent County Health Department to present health information that is being monitored by Healthy Kent 2000, a community health committee dedicated to improving our county's health. This report card focuses on Infant Health. Because multiple factors -- prenatal care, birth weight, socioeconomic status, and mothers' health behaviors -- contribute to birth outcome and infant health status, it is difficult to associate any one factor with an increase or decrease in infant mortality. Rates of infant mortality for Hispanics and other ethnic minorities are not included due to the statistical unreliability of collected data according to the Michigan Department of Community Health. The Health Department is currently working to gather data from local health providers to develop a more comprehensive picture of infant health in Kent County.

### Infant Mortality in Kent County



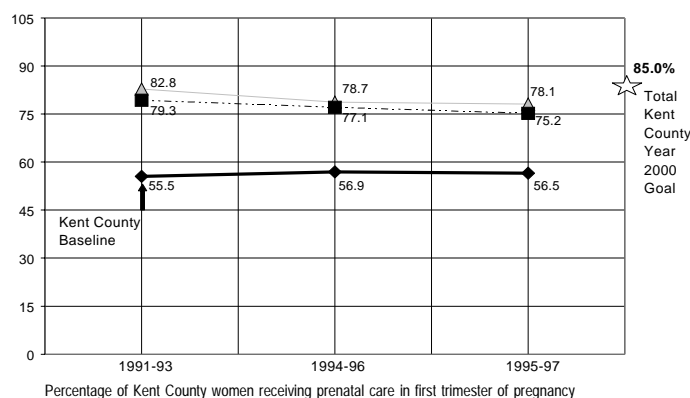
The **infant mortality rate** measures the number of deaths in infants less than one year of age. Infant mortality in Kent County has been declining since 1991, due in part to a decrease in infant mortality among white infants, as well as a decrease in the number of black live births.

### Low Birth Weight



Infants born weighing less than 2,500 grams are considered to be of **low birth weight**. Although the total percentage of infants with low birth weight in Kent County has been decreasing since 1991, the percentage of black infants with low birth weight continues to be far greater than the percentage of white infants with low birth weight.

### Timely Prenatal Care



Timely prenatal care -- **prenatal care begun in the first trimester of pregnancy** -- is associated with healthier birth outcomes. During the past six years, black women in Kent County have consistently reported that they receive less prenatal care in the first trimester than white women.