



Early Childhood Risk in Louisiana

LSU/Tulane Early Childhood Policy and Data Center

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The LSU/Tulane Early Childhood Policy and Data Center is a collaboration of the LSU Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs and the Tulane Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health. Our mission is to conduct policy relevant research, collect timely and appropriate data, and provide statistical and economic analysis to inform early childhood policy decisions.

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Executive Summary

Purpose

The science is undeniable, whether in the field of economics, neuroscience or child development, that establishes early childhood as a critical period in life that can have a profound impact on future success, health, and prosperity. As children's most important brain development occurs before age five, their early experiences are crucial to learning throughout life. Children who begin school behind typically remain behind, and research demonstrates that as many as half of school failures may be due to gaps in learning and development before school entry. Therefore, it is imperative that governmental and nongovernmental leaders across Louisiana have access to indicators of early childhood well-being.

The LSU/Tulane Early Childhood Policy and Data Center developed the Early Childhood Risk in Louisiana report for BrightStart as a statewide "risk assessment" of children ages 0-5. This risk data is provided for the state and detailed at the parish level and serves as a foundation for parish and state leaders to:

- Better understand the needs of young children in their area, and
- Inform decisions regarding early childhood policy and investments.

These indicators can be tracked over time and will assist communities and the state to better understand, and respond to, the strengths and vulnerabilities of their youngest children.

Methodology

This report provides parish level data on 11 economic, health and education indicators of early childhood well-being that influence a child's ability to be ready for school and achieve positive outcomes. An average score across all 11 indicators is used to define a parish's overall risk. This risk is based on a comparison of Louisiana's parishes to each other and is not a statement of risk compared to any other county or state in the country. This report utilizes a methodology that was created and implemented in Pennsylvania.

Findings

There are approximately 310,716 children under age five in Louisiana. The findings of the risk of each parish with regard to these children are grouped at four levels — Low, Low-Moderate, Moderate-High and High. For example, a score of "Low Risk" suggests that the young children in that parish are well prepared and ready for school. By contrast, a score of "High Risk" suggests that the young children in that parish are at risk of entering school already behind, remaining behind, and failing to achieve positive outcomes in school and beyond.

- **Low Risk:** No parish in Louisiana achieved an overall score of Low Risk, that is, a score that would suggest its young children are at Low Risk for school failure or poor outcomes.
- **Low-Moderate Risk:** Of the 64 parishes, 13 (20.3%) score in the Low-Moderate Risk category, and 80,299 young children (25.8%) live in these parishes.
- **Moderate-High Risk:** At increased risk are the 38 parishes (59.4%) that score in the Moderate-High Risk category, and 187,322 young children (60.3%) live in these parishes.
- **High Risk:** Finally, 13 parishes (20.3%) are in the High Risk category, and 40,658 young children (13.9%) live in these parishes.
- **Overall:** Approximately three-quarters (74.2%) of Louisiana's young children (230,417) are growing up in Moderate-High Risk or High Risk parishes (51 of the 64 parishes).

Economic Risk

Five of the risk indicators measure a type of economic risk facing young children. Thirty-three parishes (52%) ranked in the High Risk category on at least one of these five economic risk factors. In fact, four parishes (Concordia, East Carroll, Madison, and Tensas) were in the High Risk group on all five of the economic indicators.

Health Risk

Four of the risk indicators measure a type of health risk facing young children. Thirty-nine parishes (61%) are at High Risk on at least one of the health indicators. However, no parish scored in the High Risk category on all four health indicators, and even the High Risk parishes often scored in the Low Risk category on at least one indicator.

Education Risk

Two of the risk indicators measure a type of education risk facing young children. Twenty-eight parishes (44%) scored in the High Risk category on at least one of these two indicators, and four parishes (Jefferson, Orleans, Tangipahoa and Union) scored in the High Risk category for both. Six parishes scored in the High Risk category on one of the indicators and the Low Risk category for the other (Allen, Ascension, Caldwell, Lafayette, La Salle, and St. Helena).

While certain parishes are higher risk environments for young children, it should be noted that 92% of all Louisiana parishes (59 out of 64) are rated as “High Risk” on at least one of the indicators and 100% of the parishes are rated as “Moderate-High Risk” on at least one of the indicators. Even the top five ranking lowest risk parishes, Ascension, St. Tammany, Lafayette, Livingston and Cameron, have at least one indicator in the High Risk category. Similarly, each of the five highest risk parishes, Concordia, Tensas, Richland, Madison and Catahoula, had at least two indicators in the Low and/or Low-Moderate risk category (except for Richland which had only one). Therefore, all of the parishes in the state, regardless of their current ranking, have strengths from which to build and vulnerabilities that need to be addressed.

A future addition to this report is forthcoming that examines the reach of early childhood programs and whether these services match the needs in each parish, as shown in this risk report. These two sources of information together, the risk and reach, will provide parish and state leaders with valuable tools to make more informed decisions regarding the challenges facing children 0-5 in our state, and the resources being dedicated and utilized to support these young children and their families.

Introduction

The importance and significance of the early childhood period continues to gain attention and acceptance throughout the country. The science is undeniable, whether in the field of economics, neuroscience or child development, that establishes early childhood as a critical period in life that impacts future success, health, and prosperity. As children's most important brain development occurs before age five, their early experiences are crucial to learning throughout life. Children who begin school behind typically remain behind, and research demonstrates that as many as half of school failures may be due to gaps in learning and development before school entry.

Scientific research now tells us that some of our most expensive social problems, including crime, unemployment, school failure and poverty, are rooted in early childhood. Therefore, it is no surprise that prevention and early intervention efforts targeting early childhood are less costly and more effective than later remediation. As a result, noted economists state that investments in early childhood yield high economic benefits which extend to families, communities, and the general public. James Heckman, a Nobel Laureate in Economics, asserts, "As states are under constant pressure to improve the efficient use of ever dwindling financial resources, any investment away from young children can be viewed as a diversion of resources from the most efficient use of those funds." Similarly, Art Rolnick, Senior Vice-President and Director of Research for the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis says, "Investment in early childhood development, if properly funded and managed, yields an extraordinary return, far exceeding the return on most public investments. Any proposed economic development list should have early childhood development at the top."

While there is no crystal ball that reveals the future of our state, the evidence is clear that laying a strong foundation for future prosperity and success should begin with improving the outcomes for our youngest children. Unfortunately, Louisiana has consistently scored poorly

on indicators of child well-being, ranking 49th or worse in the Kids Count Data Book¹ each year for the past twenty years. However, Kids Count tracks data for all children through age 18 and there is no emphasis on indicators specifically targeted to our youngest children. With the profound importance of the early childhood period to a child reaching their full potential, it is imperative that we begin to monitor specific indicators of early childhood well-being.

This report provides eleven indicators of early childhood well-being and summarizes the data to define the level of risk children are exposed to during early childhood across the state. This risk is based on a comparison of Louisiana's parishes to each other. Risk is defined using economic, health and education indicators that can support, or harm, a child's chances of succeeding in school and later in life. A map of each indicator is included to visually illustrate these parish to parish comparisons for each of the 11 specific indicators. An average score across all 11 indicators is used to define a parish's overall risk. These indicators can be tracked over time and will help communities and the state better understand their early childhood strengths and vulnerabilities. These indicators may be used to help inform decision making at the local and/or state level and thereby influence future policies, practices and the allocation of resources.

State Efforts to Improve Early Childhood Development

One comprehensive effort in Louisiana to support young children is BrightStart. BrightStart is Governor Jindal's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). The ECAC is charged under federal law to develop and implement a plan to improve the coordination of programs and services for children from birth to school entry. The federal stimulus package in 2009 made funding available to states for their ECAC's.

In existence since 2003, BrightStart began as a small systems building effort working to develop, maintain and strengthen systems integration and partnerships to

¹ 2010 Kids Count Data Book. The Annie E. Casey Foundation

enhance children’s ability to enter school healthy and ready to learn. The priority areas of BrightStart include:

- Access to Health Insurance and Medical Homes
- Mental Health and Social-Emotional Development
- Early Care and Education
- Parenting Education/Family Support
- Child Safety

BrightStart has developed this report as a statewide “risk assessment” of children ages 0-5² in Louisiana. It is the first half of the forthcoming Risk and Reach Assessment which will document both the risk and the services provided (the reach). The information provided is for all 64 parishes in Louisiana. This risk data can be used to help parish level leaders:

1. Better understand the needs of young children in their area, and
2. Inform decisions regarding early childhood policy and investments.

Methodology

This report examines 11 different risk indicators in order to determine the parish-level risk for young children in Louisiana. These risk indicators can be separated into three different categories: economic, health, and education. The 11 indicators are shown below in Table 1. A methodology developed and utilized in Pennsylvania is used here to estimate risk⁴. The average score of the 11 indicators is used to determine the overall risk score.

Table 1 — List of Indicators³

| ECONOMIC FACTORS | HEALTH FACTORS | EDUCATION FACTORS |
|---|--|--|
| Unemployment Rate | Percent Low Birth Weight | Pre-Literacy Skills Measured at Kindergarten Entry |
| Percent of Births to Single Mothers | Teen Birth Rate | Percent of Children (Ages 0-5) in Publicly Funded Pre-K, Head Start, Early Head Start or High Quality Child Care |
| Percent of Mothers with Less than High School Education | Infant Mortality Rate | |
| Percent Children Ages 0-5 Below Poverty | Percent of Uninsured Children Ages 0-5 | |
| Median Income as Percent of Poverty | | |

Based on the average scores, parishes are placed in one of four risk groups as follows:

| AVERAGE SCORE | RISK GROUP |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1 | Low |
| 1.01 - 2 | Low-Moderate |
| 2.01 - 3 | Moderate-High |
| 3.01 - 4 | High |

It is important to recognize that parishes are only being compared within Louisiana to other parishes. Therefore, a parish scoring in the “Low Risk” group does not mean it is a Low Risk parish compared to counties in other states. Instead, Low Risk simply means that young children in that parish are at low risk as compared to young children in other parishes in Louisiana. Comparisons to national level data are provided, when available, to help contextualize the indicators.

Each of the 11 risk indicators are a percentage or a rate and therefore are able to be compared across parishes of varying population sizes. The parish specific percentage or rate is provided in each of the tables and the maps show how each parish compares based upon being placed in one of four equal sized groups of parishes called quartiles. Therefore, for each specific indicator, there are 25% of the parishes in the Low risk group, 25% in the Low-Moderate risk group, 25% in the Moderate-High risk group, and 25% in the High risk group.

² In this report, children ages 0-5 means children under the age of 5 (or up until their 5th birthday).

³ An explanation of the sources used for the data is provided in Appendix 3.

⁴ See http://www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=EarlyLearning_Reach



Economic Factors

1. Percent Unemployed

The percent unemployed, commonly referred to as the unemployment rate, is significant as an indicator for multiple reasons. Research indicates that unemployed persons are more likely to have mental distress and experience depression, anxiety, or loss of self-esteem. The resulting increase in family stress from unemployment, especially when a child is very young, may have long term implications on academic achievement, entry into the workforce, and problematic behavior⁵, and negatively impact the quality of parenting⁶. The parish-level percent unemployed used in this analysis are from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and reflect parish-level unemployment as of December 2009. Louisiana’s unemployment rate (7.2 percent) remains below the national unemployment rate. However, twelve parishes are above the national unemployment rate with particularly high unemployment in Morehouse (15.2 percent) and West Carroll (18.6 percent).

Figure 1 — Parish Level Percent Unemployed (December 2009)

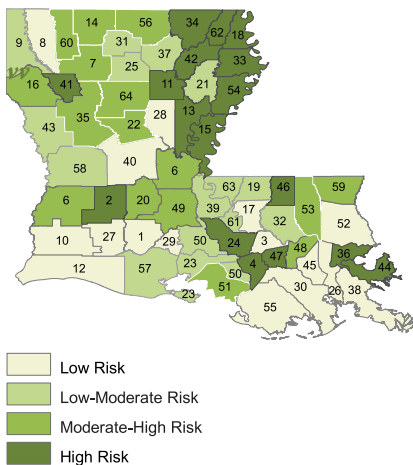


Table 2. Parish Level Percent Unemployed (December 2009)

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | 10.0 | | 32 Livingston | 7.0 | 2 |
| Louisiana | 7.2 | | 33 Madison | 9.9 | 4 |
| 1 Acadia | 6.9 | 1 | 34 Morehouse | 15.2 | 4 |
| 2 Allen | 11.9 | 4 | 35 Natchitoches | 8.4 | 3 |
| 3 Ascension | 6.8 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 9.5 | 4 |
| 4 Assumption | 9.7 | 4 | 37 Ouachita | 7.4 | 2 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 8.2 | 3 | 38 Plaquemines | 5.9 | 1 |
| 6 Beauregard | 7.9 | 3 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 7.6 | 2 |
| 7 Bienville | 9.3 | 3 | 40 Rapides | 6.6 | 1 |
| 8 Bossier | 6.0 | 1 | 41 Red River | 9.5 | 4 |
| 9 Caddo | 7.5 | 2 | 42 Richland | 10.6 | 4 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 6.9 | 1 | 43 Sabine | 7.7 | 2 |
| 11 Caldwell | 10.5 | 4 | 44 St. Bernard | 9.8 | 4 |
| 12 Cameron | 5.9 | 1 | 45 St. Charles | 6.2 | 1 |
| 13 Catahoula | 10.6 | 4 | 46 St. Helena | 12.4 | 4 |
| 14 Claiborne | 9.4 | 3 | 47 St. James | 10.5 | 4 |
| 15 Concordia | 10.9 | 4 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 8.7 | 3 |
| 16 DeSoto | 8.5 | 3 | 49 St. Landry | 8.2 | 3 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 6.5 | 1 | 50 St. Martin | 7.1 | 2 |
| 18 East Carroll | 14.2 | 4 | 51 St. Mary | 9.0 | 3 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 7.5 | 2 | 52 St. Tammany | 4.9 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 9.0 | 3 | 53 Tangipahoa | 8.2 | 3 |
| 21 Franklin | 7.8 | 2 | 54 Tensas | 13.4 | 4 |
| 22 Grant | 8.3 | 3 | 55 Terrebonne | 5.3 | 1 |
| 23 Iberia | 7.8 | 2 | 56 Union | 9.4 | 3 |
| 24 Iberville | 10.0 | 4 | 57 Vermilion | 7.4 | 2 |
| 25 Jackson | 7.8 | 2 | 58 Vernon | 7.5 | 2 |
| 26 Jefferson | 6.2 | 1 | 59 Washington | 9.4 | 3 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 6.1 | 1 | 60 Webster | 8.4 | 3 |
| 28 La Salle | 6.5 | 1 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 7.2 | 2 |
| 29 Lafayette | 5.5 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 18.6 | 4 |
| 30 Lafourche | 5.0 | 1 | 63 West Feliciana | 7.7 | 2 |
| 31 Lincoln | 7.2 | 2 | 64 Winn | 8.4 | 3 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): St. Tammany, Lafourche, Terrebonne, Lafayette, Cameron, Plaquemines, Bossier, Jefferson Davis, Jefferson, St. Charles

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Caldwell, St. James, Catahoula, Richland, Concordia, Allen, St. Helena, Tensas, East Carroll, Morehouse, West Carroll

⁵ Vlemminckx, K & Smeeding, T. M. (2001). *Child well-being, child poverty, and child policy in modern nations*. Bristol, England. The Policy Press.

⁶ Theodossiou, I. (1998). The effects of low-pay and unemployment on psychological well-being: a logistic regression approach. *Journal of Health Economics*, 17(1): 85-104.

2. Percent of Births to Single Mothers

In Louisiana, greater than 50% of births are to unmarried women, compared to approximately 39% nationally. The percent of births to single mothers are below the national average in six Louisiana parishes. Unmarried mothers generally have lower incomes, lower education levels, and greater dependence on social assistance than do married mothers⁷. Children born to single mothers are more likely to have instability in living arrangements, live in poverty, have social and/or emotional problems, and by adolescence have lower educational attainment^{8,9}.

Figure 2. Parish Level Percent of Births to Single Mothers (2007)

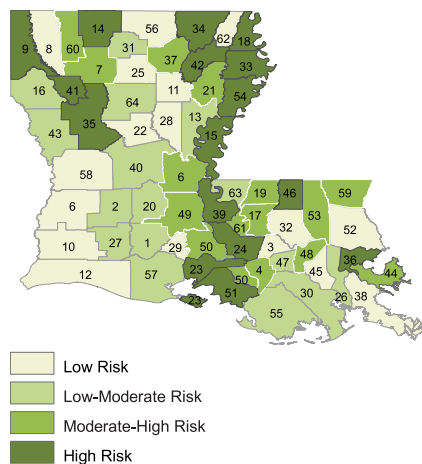


Table 3. Parish Level Percent of Births to Single Mothers (2007)

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | 38.5 | | 32 Livingston | 34.4 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 51.4 | | 33 Madison | 73.2 | 4 |
| 1 Acadia | 51.2 | 2 | 34 Morehouse | 64.2 | 4 |
| 2 Allen | 48.6 | 2 | 35 Natchitoches | 61.2 | 4 |
| 3 Ascension | 37.7 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 66.2 | 4 |
| 4 Assumption | 56.3 | 3 | 37 Ouachita | 54.9 | 3 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 55.0 | 3 | 38 Plaquemines | 45.8 | 1 |
| 6 Beauregard | 39.3 | 1 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 61.1 | 4 |
| 7 Bienville | 55.2 | 3 | 40 Rapides | 50.9 | 2 |
| 8 Bossier | 39.2 | 1 | 41 Red River | 62.8 | 4 |
| 9 Caddo | 59.5 | 4 | 42 Richland | 60.3 | 4 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 46.6 | 1 | 43 Sabine | 50.5 | 2 |
| 11 Caldwell | 47.1 | 1 | 44 St. Bernard | 56.2 | 3 |
| 12 Cameron | 30.0 | 1 | 45 St. Charles | 45.8 | 1 |
| 13 Catahoula | 51.4 | 2 | 46 St. Helena | 62.5 | 4 |
| 14 Claiborne | 59.8 | 4 | 47 St. James | 51.0 | 2 |
| 15 Concordia | 62.0 | 4 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 57.7 | 3 |
| 16 DeSoto | 53.4 | 2 | 49 St. Landry | 55.5 | 3 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 54.5 | 3 | 50 St. Martin | 56.9 | 3 |
| 18 East Carroll | 85.0 | 4 | 51 St. Mary | 62.4 | 4 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 57.2 | 3 | 52 St. Tammany | 34.2 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 49.9 | 2 | 53 Tangipahoa | 54.3 | 3 |
| 21 Franklin | 54.5 | 3 | 54 Tensas | 70.3 | 4 |
| 22 Grant | 46.5 | 1 | 55 Terrebonne | 51.9 | 2 |
| 23 Iberia | 63.1 | 4 | 56 Union | 46.1 | 1 |
| 24 Iberville | 65.7 | 4 | 57 Vermilion | 47.6 | 2 |
| 25 Jackson | 47.1 | 1 | 58 Vernon | 27.7 | 1 |
| 26 Jefferson | 51.2 | 2 | 59 Washington | 54.3 | 3 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 48.6 | 2 | 60 Webster | 54.6 | 3 |
| 28 La Salle | 33.5 | 1 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 54.2 | 3 |
| 29 Lafayette | 46.4 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 40.8 | 1 |
| 30 Lafourche | 47.8 | 2 | 63 West Feliciana | 49.6 | 2 |
| 31 Lincoln | 48.5 | 2 | 64 Winn | 47.3 | 2 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): Vernon, Cameron, La Salle, St. Tammany, Livingston, Ascension, Bossier, Beauregard, West Carroll

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Richland, Pointe Coupee, Natchitoches, Concordia, St. Mary, St. Helena, Red River, Iberia, Morehouse, Iberville, Orleans, Tensas, Madison, East Carroll

⁷ Driscoll, A. K., Hearn, G. K., Evans, V. J., Moore, K. A., Sugland, B. W., & Call, V. (1999). Nonmarital childbearing among adult women. *Journal of Marriage & the Family*, 61, 178-187.

⁸ Aquilino, W. S. (1996). The life course of children born to unmarried mothers: Childhood living arrangements and young adult outcomes. *Journal of Marriage & the Family*, 58(2), 293-310.

⁹ McLanahan, S. and G.D. Sandefur. (1994). *Growing up with a single parent: What hurts, what helps*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

3. Percent of Mothers with Less than High School Education

Maternal education is a significant factor related to child achievement, immunization, poverty and long-term outcomes. Maternal education is one of the most prominent risk factors for disparities across cognitive, health and social-emotional outcomes that appear in the first 24 months of life¹⁰. Furthermore, the financial strain resulting from poor earnings due to lack of education can affect the quality of parenting, the mother's level of stress and maternal mental health, all factors which are associated with behavior problems and poor achievement in preschoolers¹¹

Figure 3. Parish Level Percent of Mothers with Less than High School Degree (2007)

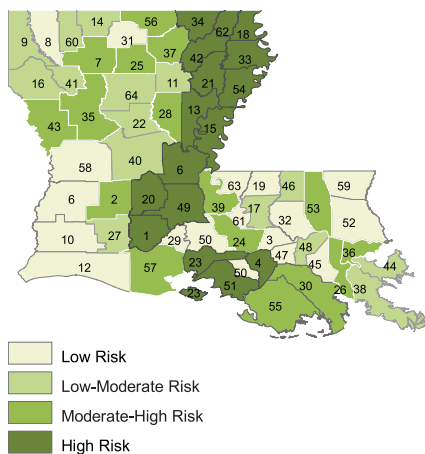


Table 4. Parish Level Percent of Mothers with Less than High School Degree (2007)

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | NA | | 32 Livingston | 19.8 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 21.5 | | 33 Madison | 37.8 | 4 |
| 1 Acadia | 29.0 | 4 | 34 Morehouse | 31.3 | 4 |
| 2 Allen | 25.4 | 3 | 35 Natchitoches | 24.2 | 3 |
| 3 Ascension | 15.9 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 23.8 | 3 |
| 4 Assumption | 30.1 | 4 | 37 Ouachita | 24.0 | 3 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 33.5 | 4 | 38 Plaquemines | 21.3 | 2 |
| 6 Beaufort | 19.0 | 1 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 23.3 | 3 |
| 7 Bienville | 23.4 | 3 | 40 Rapides | 21.8 | 2 |
| 8 Bossier | 15.5 | 1 | 41 Red River | 22.6 | 2 |
| 9 Caddo | 21.0 | 2 | 42 Richland | 26.9 | 4 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 15.7 | 1 | 43 Sabine | 23.6 | 3 |
| 11 Caldwell | 22.3 | 2 | 44 St. Bernard | 21.5 | 2 |
| 12 Cameron | 10.0 | 1 | 45 St. Charles | 18.4 | 1 |
| 13 Catahoula | 30.3 | 4 | 46 St. Helena | 21.7 | 2 |
| 14 Claiborne | 20.6 | 2 | 47 St. James | 15.0 | 1 |
| 15 Concordia | 30.2 | 4 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 21.8 | 2 |
| 16 DeSoto | 22.4 | 2 | 49 St. Landry | 27.8 | 4 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 19.9 | 2 | 50 St. Martin | 19.1 | 1 |
| 18 East Carroll | 35.4 | 4 | 51 St. Mary | 28.1 | 4 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 15.2 | 1 | 52 St. Tammany | 13.2 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 31.4 | 4 | 53 Tangipahoa | 22.8 | 3 |
| 21 Franklin | 33.4 | 4 | 54 Tensas | 28.1 | 4 |
| 22 Grant | 21.4 | 2 | 55 Terrebonne | 25.5 | 3 |
| 23 Iberia | 28.3 | 4 | 56 Union | 23.0 | 3 |
| 24 Iberville | 24.1 | 3 | 57 Vermilion | 24.2 | 3 |
| 25 Jackson | 24.2 | 3 | 58 Vernon | 12.3 | 1 |
| 26 Jefferson | 22.8 | 3 | 59 Washington | 19.7 | 1 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 21.6 | 2 | 60 Webster | 21.0 | 2 |
| 28 La Salle | 24.8 | 3 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 19.8 | 1 |
| 29 Lafayette | 17.6 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 33.1 | 4 |
| 30 Lafourche | 23.9 | 3 | 63 West Feliciana | 12.4 | 1 |
| 31 Lincoln | 17.1 | 1 | 64 Winn | 22.7 | 2 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): Cameron, Vernon, West Feliciana, St. Tammany, St. James, East Feliciana, Bossier, Calcasieu, Ascension, Lincoln, Lafayette

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Assumption, Concordia, Catahoula, Morehouse, Evangeline, West Carroll, Franklin, Avoyelles, East Carroll, Madison

¹⁰ Halle, T., Forry, N., Hair, E., Perper, K., Wandner, L., Wessel, J., & Vick, J. (2009). *Disparities in Early Learning and Development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

¹¹ Jackson, A. P., Brooks-Gunn, J., Huang, C. C., Glassman, M. (2000). Single mothers in low-wage jobs: financial strain, parenting, and preschoolers' outcomes. *Child Development*, 71(5): 1409-1423.

4. Percent of Children Ages 0-5 Living in Poverty

Poverty can have a profound impact on setting the life course of a child. Children living in poverty are at higher risk for grade repetition, learning disability, experiencing violent crime, lead poisoning, and emotional problems¹². Children who grow up in extreme poverty are more likely to remain in extreme poverty as adults¹³. In 2008, the federal poverty level was defined as \$21,200 for a family of four¹⁴. As detailed in Table 5, child poverty for children under age 5 in Louisiana was 43% greater than for the United States as a whole with 30% of Louisiana’s young children living in poverty compared to 21% nationally.

Figure 4. Parish Level Percent of Children Under Age 5 Living in Poverty (2008)

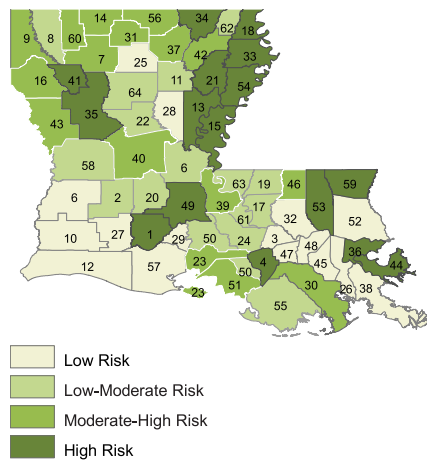


Table 5. Parish Level Percent of Children Under Age 5 Living in Poverty (2008)¹⁵

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | 21.0 | | 32 Livingston | 17.8 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 30.0 | | 33 Madison | 58.2 | 4 |
| 1 Acadia | 44.2 | 4 | 34 Morehouse | 44.9 | 4 |
| 2 Allen | 26.5 | 2 | 35 Natchitoches | 47.1 | 4 |
| 3 Ascension | 17.1 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 39.1 | 4 |
| 4 Assumption | 38.9 | 4 | 37 Ouachita | 37.5 | 3 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 33.3 | 2 | 38 Plaquemines | 21.4 | 1 |
| 6 Beauregard | 25.0 | 1 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 37.0 | 3 |
| 7 Bienville | 34.5 | 3 | 40 Rapides | 34.6 | 3 |
| 8 Bossier | 27.6 | 2 | 41 Red River | 39.1 | 4 |
| 9 Caddo | 37.7 | 3 | 42 Richland | 36.7 | 3 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 24.4 | 1 | 43 Sabine | 35.6 | 3 |
| 11 Caldwell | 28.7 | 2 | 44 St. Bernard | 39.9 | 4 |
| 12 Cameron | 11.4 | 1 | 45 St. Charles | 16.5 | 1 |
| 13 Catahoula | 46.5 | 4 | 46 St. Helena | 36.5 | 3 |
| 14 Claiborne | 34.1 | 3 | 47 St. James | 23.8 | 1 |
| 15 Concordia | 43.3 | 4 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 25.2 | 1 |
| 16 DeSoto | 36.3 | 3 | 49 St. Landry | 48.3 | 4 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 27.2 | 2 | 50 St. Martin | 27.9 | 2 |
| 18 East Carroll | 57.8 | 4 | 51 St. Mary | 36.3 | 3 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 28.7 | 2 | 52 St. Tammany | 12.1 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 30.2 | 2 | 53 Tangipahoa | 38.2 | 4 |
| 21 Franklin | 43.0 | 4 | 54 Tensas | 28.1 | 4 |
| 22 Grant | 29.3 | 2 | 55 Terrebonne | 27.9 | 2 |
| 23 Iberia | 35.3 | 3 | 56 Union | 35.6 | 3 |
| 24 Iberville | 26.8 | 2 | 57 Vermilion | 25.0 | 1 |
| 25 Jackson | 24.8 | 1 | 58 Vernon | 27.2 | 2 |
| 26 Jefferson | 25.8 | 1 | 59 Washington | 49.1 | 4 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 24.8 | 1 | 60 Webster | 35.8 | 3 |
| 28 La Salle | 21.8 | 1 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 32.2 | 2 |
| 29 Lafayette | 22.1 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 26.7 | 2 |
| 30 Lafourche | 34.7 | 3 | 63 West Feliciana | 25.9 | 2 |
| 31 Lincoln | 37.6 | 3 | 64 Winn | 27.3 | 2 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): Cameron, St. Tammany, St. Charles, Ascension, Livingston, Plaquemines, La Salle, Lafayette, St. James, Calcasieu, Jefferson Davis, Jackson, Beauregard, Vermilion
Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Tensas, Franklin, Concordia, Acadia, Morehouse, Catahoula, Natchitoches, St. Landry, Washington, East Carroll, Madison

¹² Duncan, G. J., Brooks-Gunn, J. (2000). Family poverty, welfare reform and child development. *Child Development*, 71 (1): 188-196.
¹³ Fass, S., Alden-Dinan, K., & Aratani, Y (2009). *Child Poverty and Intergenerational Mobility, A Report*. The National Center for Children in Poverty.
¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/08poverty.shtml>.
¹⁵ Estimates were found through 2006-2008, 3 Year Estimates and the 2000 Census for population areas smaller than 20,000.

5. Median Income as a Percent of the Federal Poverty Level

The median household income differs from the poverty measure because it divides income distribution into two equal groups in a given area, making this measure less sensitive to very high or very low incomes. The median income measure used here indicates the midpoint of household income compared to the federal poverty level. For example, 200% indicates a parish where median income is twice the federal poverty level. Nationally, median income is 253% of the federal poverty level while in Louisiana median income is just twice the federal poverty level (207%). Only five Louisiana parishes have median incomes higher than the U.S. median income. Income disparities are associated with many of the risks described in the poverty indicator section as well as birth outcomes such as infant mortality¹⁶, described in greater detail later in the report.

Figure 5. Parish Level Median Income as a Percent of Federal Poverty Level (2008)

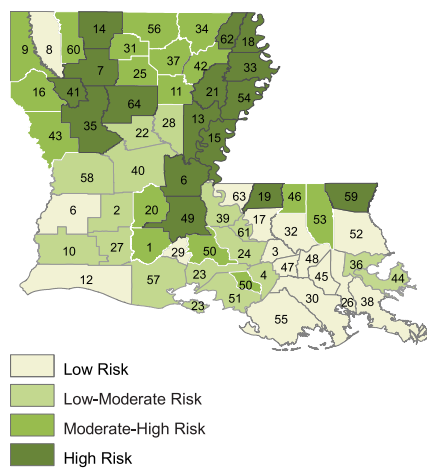


Table 6. Parish Level Median Income as a Percent of Federal Poverty Level (2008)

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | 253 | | 32 Livingston | 257 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 207 | | 33 Madison | 125 | 4 |
| 1 Acadia | 169 | 3 | 34 Morehouse | 186 | 3 |
| 2 Allen | 188 | 2 | 35 Natchitoches | 141 | 4 |
| 3 Ascension | 292 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 191 | 2 |
| 4 Assumption | 210 | 2 | 37 Ouachita | 186 | 3 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 152 | 4 | 38 Plaquemines | 247 | 1 |
| 6 Beauregard | 240 | 1 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 195 | 2 |
| 7 Bienville | 152 | 4 | 40 Rapides | 192 | 2 |
| 8 Bossier | 284 | 1 | 41 Red River | 153 | 4 |
| 9 Caddo | 172 | 3 | 42 Richland | 175 | 3 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 213 | 2 | 43 Sabine | 170 | 3 |
| 11 Caldwell | 166 | 3 | 44 St. Bernard | 196 | 2 |
| 12 Cameron | 242 | 1 | 45 St. Charles | 295 | 1 |
| 13 Catahoula | 152 | 4 | 46 St. Helena | 160 | 3 |
| 14 Claiborne | 152 | 4 | 47 St. James | 228 | 1 |
| 15 Concordia | 145 | 4 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 233 | 1 |
| 16 DeSoto | 182 | 3 | 49 St. Landry | 133 | 4 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 223 | 1 | 50 St. Martin | 185 | 3 |
| 18 East Carroll | 122 | 4 | 51 St. Mary | 196 | 2 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 156 | 4 | 52 St. Tammany | 288 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 184 | 3 | 53 Tangipahoa | 182 | 3 |
| 21 Franklin | 142 | 4 | 54 Tensas | 127 | 4 |
| 22 Grant | 189 | 2 | 55 Terrebonne | 237 | 1 |
| 23 Iberia | 196 | 2 | 56 Union | 180 | 3 |
| 24 Iberville | 192 | 2 | 57 Vermilion | 203 | 2 |
| 25 Jackson | 175 | 3 | 58 Vernon | 192 | 2 |
| 26 Jefferson | 234 | 1 | 59 Washington | 152 | 4 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 196 | 2 | 60 Webster | 173 | 3 |
| 28 La Salle | 189 | 2 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 214 | 2 |
| 29 Lafayette | 226 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 150 | 4 |
| 30 Lafourche | 215 | 1 | 63 West Feliciana | 243 | 1 |
| 31 Lincoln | 157 | 3 | 64 Winn | 151 | 4 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): St. Charles, Ascension, St. Tammany, Bossier, Livingston, Plaquemines, West Feliciana, Cameron, Beauregard, Terrebonne, Jefferson, St. John the Baptist

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Red River, Bienville, Claiborne, Washington, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Winn, West Carroll, Concordia, Franklin, Natchitoches, St. Landry, Tensas, Madison, East Carroll

¹⁶ Lynch, J.W., Kaplan, G.A., Pamuk, E. R., Cohen, R., Heck, K.E., Balfour, J.L., Yen, I.H., (1998). Income inequality and mortality in metropolitan areas in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88(7): 1074-1080.



Health Factors

6. Percent Low Birth Weight Babies

Low Birth Weight (LBW) indicates babies born weighing less than 2,500 grams or approximately 5.5 pounds¹⁷. Historically, LBW babies have been at increased risk for infant mortality, neuro-developmental impairments, growth failure, behavior problems, and chronic health problems. In recent decades, these LBW babies have had increased survival, but many of the other adverse outcomes have not been completely mitigated^{18, 19}. The percent of low birth weight babies in Louisiana are 36% greater than the national average with 11.3% of babies in Louisiana born at low birth weight compared to 8.3% nationally. Since 2000, the percent of low birth weight babies in Louisiana were at their low in 2000 with 10.3% and a high of 11.5% in 2005²⁰.

Figure 6. Parish Level Percent Low Birth Weight Babies (2007)

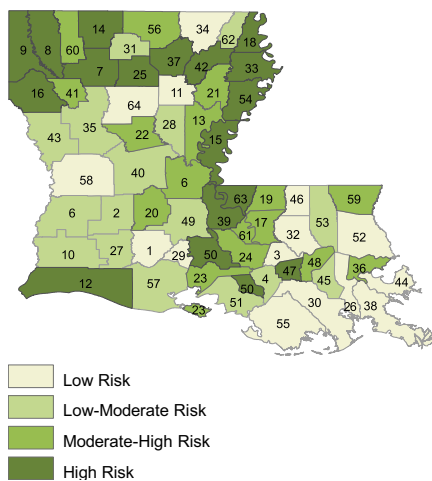


Table 7. Parish Level Percent Low Birth Weight Babies (2007)

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | 8.3 | | 32 Livingston | 8.2 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 11.3 | | 33 Madison | 16.5 | 4 |
| 1 Acadia | 9.8 | 1 | 34 Morehouse | 9.9 | 1 |
| 2 Allen | 10.5 | 2 | 35 Natchitoches | 11.5 | 2 |
| 3 Ascension | 9.0 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 13.2 | 3 |
| 4 Assumption | 10.9 | 2 | 37 Ouachita | 14.0 | 4 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 11.9 | 3 | 38 Plaquemines | 6.9 | 1 |
| 6 Beaufort | 10.1 | 2 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 13.9 | 4 |
| 7 Bienville | 13.4 | 4 | 40 Rapides | 11.1 | 2 |
| 8 Bossier | 13.4 | 4 | 41 Red River | 12.7 | 3 |
| 9 Caddo | 13.8 | 4 | 42 Richland | 14.0 | 4 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 11.1 | 2 | 43 Sabine | 10.1 | 2 |
| 11 Caldwell | 9.1 | 1 | 44 St. Bernard | 8.4 | 1 |
| 12 Cameron | 15.0 | 4 | 45 St. Charles | 10.7 | 2 |
| 13 Catahoula | 11.6 | 3 | 46 St. Helena | 9.3 | 1 |
| 14 Claiborne | 14.7 | 4 | 47 St. James | 13.9 | 4 |
| 15 Concordia | 17.4 | 4 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 13.0 | 3 |
| 16 DeSoto | 13.9 | 4 | 49 St. Landry | 10.9 | 2 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 12.5 | 3 | 50 St. Martin | 13.3 | 4 |
| 18 East Carroll | 13.4 | 4 | 51 St. Mary | 11.3 | 2 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 12.7 | 3 | 52 St. Tammany | 8.3 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 13.0 | 3 | 53 Tangipahoa | 10.8 | 2 |
| 21 Franklin | 12.7 | 3 | 54 Tensas | 15.6 | 4 |
| 22 Grant | 11.6 | 3 | 55 Terrebonne | 9.5 | 1 |
| 23 Iberia | 11.7 | 3 | 56 Union | 11.7 | 3 |
| 24 Iberville | 12.9 | 3 | 57 Vermilion | 10.2 | 2 |
| 25 Jackson | 13.5 | 4 | 58 Vernon | 9.4 | 1 |
| 26 Jefferson | 9.8 | 1 | 59 Washington | 11.7 | 3 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 10.8 | 2 | 60 Webster | 12.6 | 3 |
| 28 La Salle | 10.7 | 2 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 12.9 | 3 |
| 29 Lafayette | 9.7 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 11.2 | 2 |
| 30 Lafourche | 9.1 | 1 | 63 West Feliciana | 13.3 | 4 |
| 31 Lincoln | 10.3 | 2 | 64 Winn | 7.9 | 1 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): Plaquemines, Winn, Livingston, St. Tammany, St. Bernard, Ascension, Caldwell, Lafourche, St. Helena, Vernon, Terrebonne

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Orleans, St. Martin, West Feliciana, Bossier, East Carroll, Bienville, Jackson, Caddo, Pointe Coupee, DeSoto, St. James, Ouachita, Richland, Claiborne, Cameron, Tensas, Madison, Concordia

¹⁷LBW was used as an indicator as opposed to prematurity as the latter While prematurity is a commonly utilized indicator of birth outcomes, it may be inaccurate due to clinical errors in estimation of gestational age. Birth weight can be a marker for prematurity, with LBW corresponding to <37 weeks gestation. Use of LBW also captures those infants who experience intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR). IUGR infants are known to be at higher risk for developmental and health issues later in life.

¹⁸Aylward, G. P., Pfeffer, S.I, Wright, A., Verhulst, S. J. (1989). Outcome studies of low birth weight infants published in the last decade: A meta-analysis. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 115(4): 515-520.

¹⁹Vohr, B. R. (2007) How should we report early childhood outcomes of very low birth weight infants? *Seminars in Fetal and Neonatal Medicine*, 12(5): 355-362.

²⁰2010 Kids Count Data Book. The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

7. Teen Birth Rate (Ages 15-19)

Parenting during the teenage years impacts the development of both the child and the teen parent. Teen parents may have to compromise their education and long-term opportunities in order to care for their child. Poor child outcomes associated with teen parents includes developmental delays, intellectual deficiencies, and behavior problems²¹. The teen birth rate in Louisiana (55.9 per 1,000) is 33% greater than the national rate (42.0 per 1,000). The teen birth rate has fluctuated since 2000 from a high of 62.0 per 1,000 in 2000 to a low of 49.0 per 1,000 in 2005²².

Figure 7. Teen Birth Rate by Parish (2007)

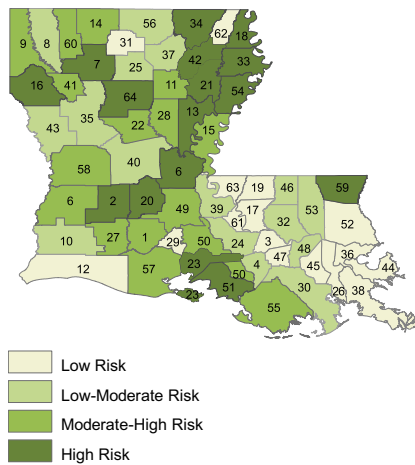


Table 8. Teen Birth Rate by Parish (2007)

| MAP | RATE | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | RATE | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|-------|---------------|-------------------------|------|---------------|
| National | 42.0 | | 32 Livingston | 60.2 | 2 |
| Louisiana | 55.9 | | 33 Madison | 83.7 | 4 |
| 1 Acadia | 70.3 | 3 | 34 Morehouse | 73.9 | 4 |
| 2 Allen | 92.9 | 4 | 35 Natchitoches | 60.4 | 2 |
| 3 Ascension | 42.7 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 48.7 | 1 |
| 4 Assumption | 55.0 | 2 | 37 Ouachita | 56.9 | 2 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 83.3 | 4 | 38 Plaquemines | 33.5 | 1 |
| 6 Beauregard | 66.5 | 3 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 64.1 | 2 |
| 7 Bienville | 78.1 | 4 | 40 Rapides | 61.2 | 2 |
| 8 Bossier | 54.8 | 2 | 41 Red River | 73.1 | 3 |
| 9 Caddo | 72.9 | 3 | 42 Richland | 81.7 | 4 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 59.5 | 2 | 43 Sabine | 54.9 | 2 |
| 11 Caldwell | 65.8 | 3 | 44 St. Bernard | 38.8 | 1 |
| 12 Cameron | 19.6 | 1 | 45 St. Charles | 40.3 | 1 |
| 13 Catahoula | 103.2 | 4 | 46 St. Helena | 54.1 | 2 |
| 14 Claiborne | 68.2 | 3 | 47 St. James | 37.1 | 1 |
| 15 Concordia | 73.6 | 3 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 55.9 | 2 |
| 16 DeSoto | 80.0 | 4 | 49 St. Landry | 71.7 | 3 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 42.1 | 1 | 50 St. Martin | 64.9 | 3 |
| 18 East Carroll | 115.1 | 4 | 51 St. Mary | 86.3 | 4 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 50.1 | 1 | 52 St. Tammany | 37.7 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 82.1 | 4 | 53 Tangipahoa | 54.7 | 2 |
| 21 Franklin | 80.2 | 4 | 54 Tensas | 84.7 | 4 |
| 22 Grant | 67.5 | 3 | 55 Terrebonne | 69.8 | 3 |
| 23 Iberia | 79.4 | 4 | 56 Union | 63.1 | 2 |
| 24 Iberville | 60.5 | 2 | 57 Vermilion | 64.9 | 3 |
| 25 Jackson | 63.1 | 2 | 58 Vernon | 68.3 | 3 |
| 26 Jefferson | 47.6 | 1 | 59 Washington | 83.4 | 4 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 65.6 | 3 | 60 Webster | 73.3 | 3 |
| 28 La Salle | 69.4 | 3 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 47.1 | 1 |
| 29 Lafayette | 43.8 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 49.6 | 1 |
| 30 Lafourche | 55.3 | 2 | 63 West Feliciana | 54.0 | 1 |
| 31 Lincoln | 28.7 | 1 | 64 Winn | 75.2 | 4 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): Cameron, Lincoln, Plaquemines, St. James, St. Tammany, St. Bernard, St. Charles, East Baton Rouge, Ascension, Lafayette

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Richland, Evangeline, Avoyelles, Washington, Madison, Tensas, St. Mary, Allen, Catahoula, East Carroll

²¹ Coren, E. & Barlow, J. (2001). *Individual and group-based parenting programmes for improving psychosocial outcomes for teenage parents and their children*. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews: Issue 3, John Wiley & Sons.

²² 2010 Kids Count Data Book. The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

8. Infant Mortality Rate

Infant mortality rate is defined as the number of deaths among children less than one year of age per 1,000 live births. Since 2000, the infant mortality rate in Louisiana has fluctuated from a low of 9.0 per 1,000 in 2000 to a high of 10.5 per 1,000 in 2004²³. The most recent data in 2007 shows an increase of 8% since the low in 2000. The infant mortality rate in Louisiana (9.7 per 1,000) is 45% greater than the national average (6.7 per 1,000)²⁴.

Figure 8. Infant Mortality Rate by Parish (2007)

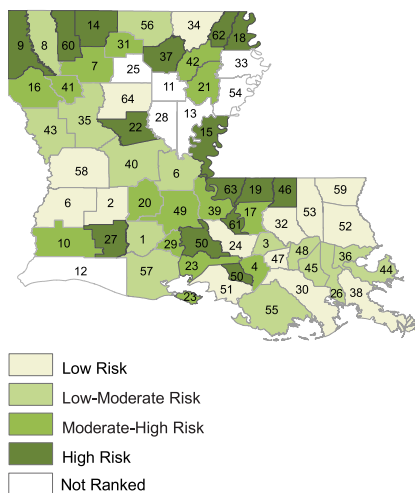


Table 9. Infant Mortality Rate by Parish²⁵ (2007²⁶)

| MAP | RATE | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | RATE | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|------|---------------|-------------------------|------|---------------|
| National | 6.7 | | 32 Livingston | 5.5 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 9.7 | | 33 Madison | -- | -- |
| 1 Acadia | 8.8 | 2 | 34 Morehouse | 7.2 | 1 |
| 2 Allen | 7.3 | 1 | 35 Natchitoches | 9.0 | 2 |
| 3 Ascension | 8.5 | 2 | 36 Orleans | 9.3 | 2 |
| 4 Assumption | 10.5 | 3 | 37 Ouachita | 13.8 | 4 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 9.5 | 2 | 38 Plaquemines | 5.3 | 1 |
| 6 Beauregard | 7.5 | 1 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 11.5 | 3 |
| 7 Bienville | 12.0 | 3 | 40 Rapides | 9.2 | 2 |
| 8 Bossier | 8.5 | 2 | 41 Red River | 10.8 | 3 |
| 9 Caddo | 12.6 | 4 | 42 Richland | 9.6 | 3 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 10.0 | 3 | 43 Sabine | 9.5 | 2 |
| 11 Caldwell | -- | -- | 44 St. Bernard | 9.3 | 2 |
| 12 Cameron | -- | -- | 45 St. Charles | 8.5 | 2 |
| 13 Catahoula | -- | -- | 46 St. Helena | 23.0 | 4 |
| 14 Claiborne | 22.9 | 4 | 47 St. James | 6.6 | 1 |
| 15 Concordia | 13.3 | 4 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 8.5 | 2 |
| 16 DeSoto | 10.8 | 3 | 49 St. Landry | 10.6 | 3 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 10.8 | 3 | 50 St. Martin | 13.0 | 4 |
| 18 East Carroll | 15.2 | 4 | 51 St. Mary | 4.9 | 1 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 10.5 | 4 | 52 St. Tammany | 6.7 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 10.5 | 3 | 53 Tangipahoa | 7.7 | 1 |
| 21 Franklin | 12.0 | 3 | 54 Tensas | -- | -- |
| 22 Grant | 17.4 | 4 | 55 Terrebonne | 9.0 | 2 |
| 23 Iberia | 9.6 | 3 | 56 Union | 9.0 | 2 |
| 24 Iberville | 6.0 | 1 | 57 Vermilion | 8.8 | 2 |
| 25 Jackson | -- | -- | 58 Vernon | 7.5 | 1 |
| 26 Jefferson | 8.5 | 2 | 59 Washington | 6.2 | 1 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 13.2 | 4 | 60 Webster | 13.0 | 4 |
| 28 La Salle | -- | -- | 61 West Baton Rouge | 21.6 | 4 |
| 29 Lafayette | 11.3 | 3 | 62 West Carroll | 12.8 | 4 |
| 30 Lafourche | 8.0 | 1 | 63 West Feliciana | 18.3 | 4 |
| 31 Lincoln | 12.2 | 3 | 64 Winn | 8.2 | 1 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): St. Mary, Plaquemines, Livingston, Iberville, Washington, St. James, St. Tammany, Morehouse, Allen, Vernon, Beauregard, Tangipahoa

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Jefferson Davis, Concordia, Ouachita, East Feliciana, Grant, West Feliciana, East Carroll, West Baton Rouge, Claiborne, St. Helena

²³ 2010 Kids Count Data Book. The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

²⁴ Note that the United States ranks 33rd in the world in infant mortality rate according to the United Nations.

²⁵ Note where "--" appears, there were less than 5 infant deaths in the parish and, therefore, too small a number to report for confidentiality reasons.

²⁶ Data reported for 2007 is based on a three year average from 2005-2007.

9. Percent of Uninsured Children Ages 0-5

The results from the most recent Louisiana Health Insurance Survey show a decline in uninsured children (under age 19) from 11% in 2003 to 5% in 2009. This decline reflects strong outreach efforts on the part of the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals to enroll children in Medicaid and LaCHIP. Children from 0-5 are more likely than other age groups to be covered by either private or public health insurance. Information provided here is specific to children under age 5. The data for this indicator is from the 2009 Louisiana Health Insurance Survey conducted by LSU’s Public Policy Research Lab and are based on survey results of 10,000 Louisiana households. Secondary calculations were necessary to estimate the percent of uninsured children under 5 at the parish level.

Figure 9. Percent of Uninsured Children Under Age 5 by Parish (2009)

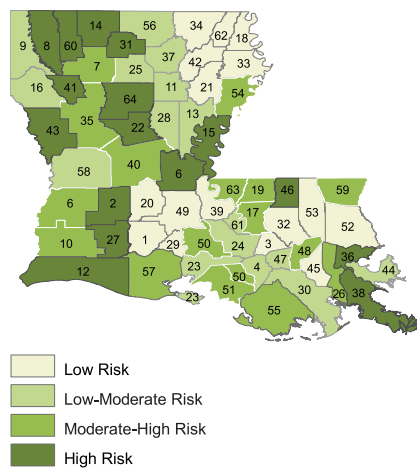


Table 10. Percent of Uninsured Children Under Age 5 by Parish (2009)

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | | | 32 Livingston | 2.6 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 3.8 | | 33 Madison | 2.1 | 1 |
| 1 Acadia | 2.8 | 1 | 34 Morehouse | 2.1 | 1 |
| 2 Allen | 5.1 | 4 | 35 Natchitoches | 4.4 | 3 |
| 3 Ascension | 2.5 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 6.0 | 4 |
| 4 Assumption | 3.0 | 2 | 37 Ouachita | 3.3 | 2 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 5.8 | 4 | 38 Plaquemines | 6.8 | 4 |
| 6 Beaufort | 4.3 | 3 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 2.3 | 1 |
| 7 Bienville | 4.7 | 3 | 40 Rapides | 3.8 | 3 |
| 8 Bossier | 7.0 | 4 | 41 Red River | 5.7 | 4 |
| 9 Caddo | 3.6 | 2 | 42 Richland | 2.1 | 1 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 3.8 | 3 | 43 Sabine | 6.8 | 4 |
| 11 Caldwell | 3.3 | 2 | 44 St. Bernard | 3.7 | 2 |
| 12 Cameron | 8.2 | 4 | 45 St. Charles | 1.5 | 1 |
| 13 Catahoula | 3.8 | 2 | 46 St. Helena | 5.2 | 4 |
| 14 Claiborne | 5.1 | 4 | 47 St. James | 3.5 | 2 |
| 15 Concordia | 6.1 | 4 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 4.6 | 3 |
| 16 DeSoto | 3.6 | 2 | 49 St. Landry | 2.8 | 1 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 3.9 | 3 | 50 St. Martin | 4.2 | 3 |
| 18 East Carroll | 2.4 | 1 | 51 St. Mary | 4.4 | 3 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 4.5 | 3 | 52 St. Tammany | 2.3 | 1 |
| 20 Evangeline | 2.7 | 1 | 53 Tangipahoa | 2.7 | 1 |
| 21 Franklin | 1.8 | 1 | 54 Tensas | 5.1 | 3 |
| 22 Grant | 7.7 | 4 | 55 Terrebonne | 4.7 | 3 |
| 23 Iberia | 3.2 | 2 | 56 Union | 3.8 | 2 |
| 24 Iberville | 3.0 | 2 | 57 Vermilion | 3.8 | 3 |
| 25 Jackson | 2.9 | 2 | 58 Vernon | 3.0 | 2 |
| 26 Jefferson | 4.1 | 3 | 59 Washington | 4.0 | 3 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 8.3 | 4 | 60 Webster | 5.3 | 4 |
| 28 La Salle | 3.2 | 2 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 3.5 | 2 |
| 29 Lafayette | 2.8 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 1.8 | 1 |
| 30 Lafourche | 3.1 | 2 | 63 West Feliciana | 4.7 | 3 |
| 31 Lincoln | 5.5 | 4 | 64 Winn | 8.9 | 4 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): St. Charles, West Carroll, Franklin, Morehouse, Madison, Richland, St. Tammany, Pointe Coupee, East Carroll, Ascension

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Orleans, Concordia, Plaquemines, Sabine, Bossier, Grant, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Winn



Education Factors

10. Pre-Literacy Skills Measured at Kindergarten Entry

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills²⁷ (DIBELS) is a rapid assessment of pre-literacy skills to determine risk for later literacy outcomes. The assessment focuses on five components that influence reading skills: Phonemic Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, Accuracy and Fluency with Text, Vocabulary, and Comprehension^{28, 29}. DIBELS was designed based on research indicating that deficits in any of these areas may lead to poor reading outcomes as the child develops^{30, 31}.

This indicator is a measure of students at kindergarten entry, and is conducted by kindergarten teachers in public school districts across the state. Fall kindergarten DIBELS have two domains: Initial Sound Fluency and Letter Naming Fluency. Student scores in these domains are compiled into a composite instructional recommendation of: benchmark, strategic intervention, and intensive intervention. This indicator shows the percentage of students who scored in need of intensive intervention after their fall kindergarten DIBELS assessment. It should be noted that the DIBELS assessments that comprise this indicator come only from the public schools and therefore do not include private or parochial schools. In addition, for the period reported here (Fall 2009), not all public schools used the DIBELS.

Figure 10. Percent of Children Scoring “Intensive Intervention” on the DIBELS at Kindergarten Entry by Parish (Fall 2009)

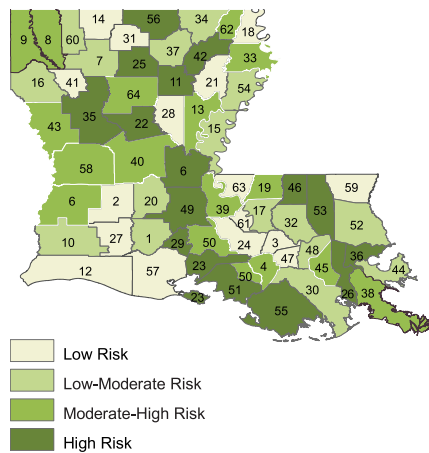


Table 11. Percent of Children Scoring “Intensive Intervention” on the DIBELS at Kindergarten Entry by Parish (Fall 2009)

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | NA | | 32 Livingston | 14.9 | 2 |
| Louisiana | 19.2 | | 33 Madison | 19.1 | 3 |
| 1 Acadia | 18.0 | 2 | 34 Morehouse | 15.3 | 2 |
| 2 Allen | 11.4 | 1 | 35 Natchitoches | 24.2 | 4 |
| 3 Ascension | 14.7 | 1 | 36 Orleans | 18.6 | 4 |
| 4 Assumption | 19.3 | 3 | 37 Ouachita | 18.1 | 2 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 24.5 | 4 | 38 Plaquemines | 19.2 | 3 |
| 6 Beaugard | 20.2 | 3 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 21.2 | 3 |
| 7 Bienville | 17.8 | 2 | 40 Rapides | 20.6 | 3 |
| 8 Bossier | 23.1 | 3 | 41 Red River | 13.0 | 1 |
| 9 Caddo | 19.8 | 3 | 42 Richland | 33.3 | 4 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 16.1 | 2 | 43 Sabine | 19.3 | 3 |
| 11 Caldwell | 23.1 | 4 | 44 St. Bernard | 15.3 | 2 |
| 12 Cameron | 11.1 | 1 | 45 St. Charles | 21.4 | 3 |
| 13 Catahoula | 23.1 | 3 | 46 St. Helena | 23.3 | 4 |
| 14 Claiborne | 11.5 | 1 | 47 St. James | 10.9 | 1 |
| 15 Concordia | 15.6 | 2 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 15.4 | 2 |
| 16 DeSoto | 16.7 | 2 | 49 St. Landry | 25.7 | 4 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 18.3 | 2 | 50 St. Martin | 20.7 | 3 |
| 18 East Carroll | 9.2 | 1 | 51 St. Mary | 27.1 | 4 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 19.5 | 3 | 52 St. Tammany | 16.0 | 2 |
| 20 Evangeline | 18.6 | 2 | 53 Tangipahoa | 23.9 | 4 |
| 21 Franklin | 14.1 | 1 | 54 Tensas | 16.7 | 2 |
| 22 Grant | 28.3 | 4 | 55 Terrebonne | 23.9 | 4 |
| 23 Iberia | 23.4 | 4 | 56 Union | 23.8 | 4 |
| 24 Iberville | 12.6 | 1 | 57 Vermilion | 12.4 | 1 |
| 25 Jackson | 23.6 | 4 | 58 Vernon | 20.6 | 3 |
| 26 Jefferson | 26.6 | 4 | 59 Washington | 15.0 | 1 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 14.1 | 1 | 60 Webster | 18.1 | 2 |
| 28 La Salle | 14.5 | 1 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 13.2 | 1 |
| 29 Lafayette | 31.8 | 4 | 62 West Carroll | 21.0 | 3 |
| 30 Lafourche | 15.6 | 2 | 63 West Feliciana | 8.6 | 1 |
| 31 Lincoln | 10.8 | 1 | 64 Winn | 20.7 | 3 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): West Feliciana, East Carroll, Lincoln, St. James, Cameron, Allen, Claiborne, Vermilion, Iberville, Red River

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Catahoula, Bossier, Caldwell, St. Helena, Iberia, Jackson, Union, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Natchitoches, Avoyelles, St. Landry, Jefferson, St. Mary, Grant, Lafayette, Richland

²⁷ Good, R. H., & Kaminiski, R. The University of Oregon Center of Teaching and Learning. Dynamic Indicators of Early Learning.
²⁸ Adams, M. J., Foorman, B. R., Lundberg, I., & Beeler, T. (1998). The elusive phoneme: Why phonemic awareness is so important and how to help children develop it. *American Educator*, 22(1-2), 18-29.
²⁹ Smith S. B., Simmons, D. C., & Kame'enui, E. J. (1998). Phonological awareness: Instructional and curricular basics and implications. In D. C. Simmons & E. J. Kame'enui (eds.), *What reading research tells us about children with diverse learning needs: Bases and basics*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
³⁰ Foorman, B. R., Francis, D. J., Shaywitz, S. E., Shaywitz, B. A., & Fletcher, J. M. (1997). *The case for early reading intervention*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
³¹ National Reading Panel (2000). Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction [on-line]. Available: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/smallbook.htm>.

Table 12. Percent of Children Attending Publicly Funded Pre-K, Head Start, Early Head Start or High Quality Child Care by Parish (2009)

| MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK | MAP | PERCENT | QUARTILE RANK |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|---------------|
| National | NA | | 32 Livingston | 12.6 | 4 |
| Louisiana | 17.1 | | 33 Madison | 27.8 | 1 |
| 1 Acadia | 19.7 | 3 | 34 Morehouse | 31.9 | 1 |
| 2 Allen | 15.4 | 4 | 35 Natchitoches | 24.2 | 2 |
| 3 Ascension | 9.2 | 4 | 36 Orleans | 7.4 | 4 |
| 4 Assumption | 28.1 | 1 | 37 Ouachita | 22.1 | 3 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 20.7 | 3 | 38 Plaquemines | 17.3 | 3 |
| 6 Beauregard | 12.7 | 4 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 24.2 | 2 |
| 7 Bienville | 23.9 | 2 | 40 Rapides | 24.2 | 2 |
| 8 Bossier | 12.4 | 4 | 41 Red River | 21.4 | 3 |
| 9 Caddo | 22.7 | 2 | 42 Richland | 20.9 | 3 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 15.6 | 3 | 43 Sabine | 21.6 | 3 |
| 11 Caldwell | 28.5 | 1 | 44 St. Bernard | 23.3 | 2 |
| 12 Cameron | 46.8 | 1 | 45 St. Charles | 15.4 | 4 |
| 13 Catahoula | 18.3 | 3 | 46 St. Helena | 37.3 | 1 |
| 14 Claiborne | 23.6 | 2 | 47 St. James | 36.0 | 1 |
| 15 Concordia | 25.7 | 2 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 9.1 | 4 |
| 16 DeSoto | 30.2 | 1 | 49 St. Landry | 20.8 | 3 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 14.6 | 4 | 50 St. Martin | 27.1 | 1 |
| 18 East Carroll | 28.2 | 1 | 51 St. Mary | 24.0 | 2 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 11.0 | 4 | 52 St. Tammany | 13.9 | 4 |
| 20 Evangeline | 21.6 | 3 | 53 Tangipahoa | 14.6 | 4 |
| 21 Franklin | 9.7 | 4 | 54 Tensas | 25.6 | 2 |
| 22 Grant | 15.8 | 3 | 55 Terrebonne | 20.6 | 3 |
| 23 Iberia | 18.3 | 3 | 56 Union | 6.2 | 4 |
| 24 Iberville | 24.3 | 2 | 57 Vermilion | 21.3 | 3 |
| 25 Jackson | 25.1 | 2 | 58 Vernon | 18.9 | 3 |
| 26 Jefferson | 12.8 | 4 | 59 Washington | 26.7 | 1 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 22.7 | 2 | 60 Webster | 22.3 | 3 |
| 28 La Salle | 6.6 | 4 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 23.5 | 2 |
| 29 Lafayette | 27.1 | 1 | 62 West Carroll | 28.5 | 1 |
| 30 Lafourche | 52.6 | 1 | 63 West Feliciana | 43.7 | 1 |
| 31 Lincoln | 22.8 | 2 | 64 Winn | 23.4 | 2 |

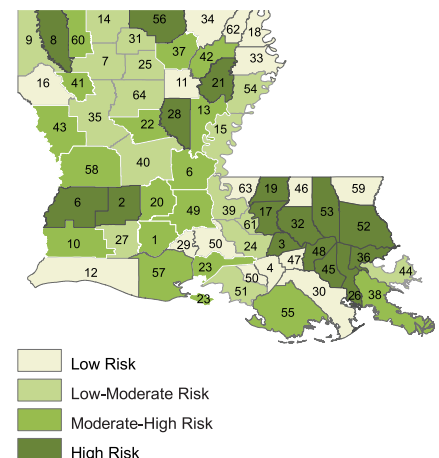
Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): Lafourche, Cameron, West Feliciana, St. Helena, St. James, Morehouse, DeSoto, West Carroll, Caldwell, East Carroll, Assumption

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): St. Tammany, Jefferson, Beauregard, Livingston, Bossier, East Feliciana, Franklin, Ascension, St. John the Baptist, Orleans, La Salle, Union

11. Percent of Children in Publicly Funded Pre-K, Head Start, Early Head Start or High Quality Child Care

There is broad research supporting high quality early care and education as an effective intervention to reduce risk for later adverse outcomes. Randomized control trials, considered the gold standard of research methodology, have been conducted on early care and education programs. When the programs are high quality, positive effects have been documented into adolescence and adulthood. The impacts of high quality early care and education as shown by the research include: increases in pro-social behavior, school readiness, entry into the workforce, earnings and academic achievement, and a decrease in crime. Studies of the economic impact of such early care and education interventions range up to a seventeen to one return on initial investment^{32, 33}.

Figure 11. Percent of Children Attending Publicly Funded Pre-K, Head Start, Early Head Start of High Quality Child Care by Parish (2009)



³² Isaacs, J. B. (2008). *Impact of Early Childhood Programs*. Brookings Institution & First Focus.

³³ Cunha, F., & Heckman, J. J. (2010). *Investing in Our Young People*. NBER Working Paper Series, Vol. w16201.

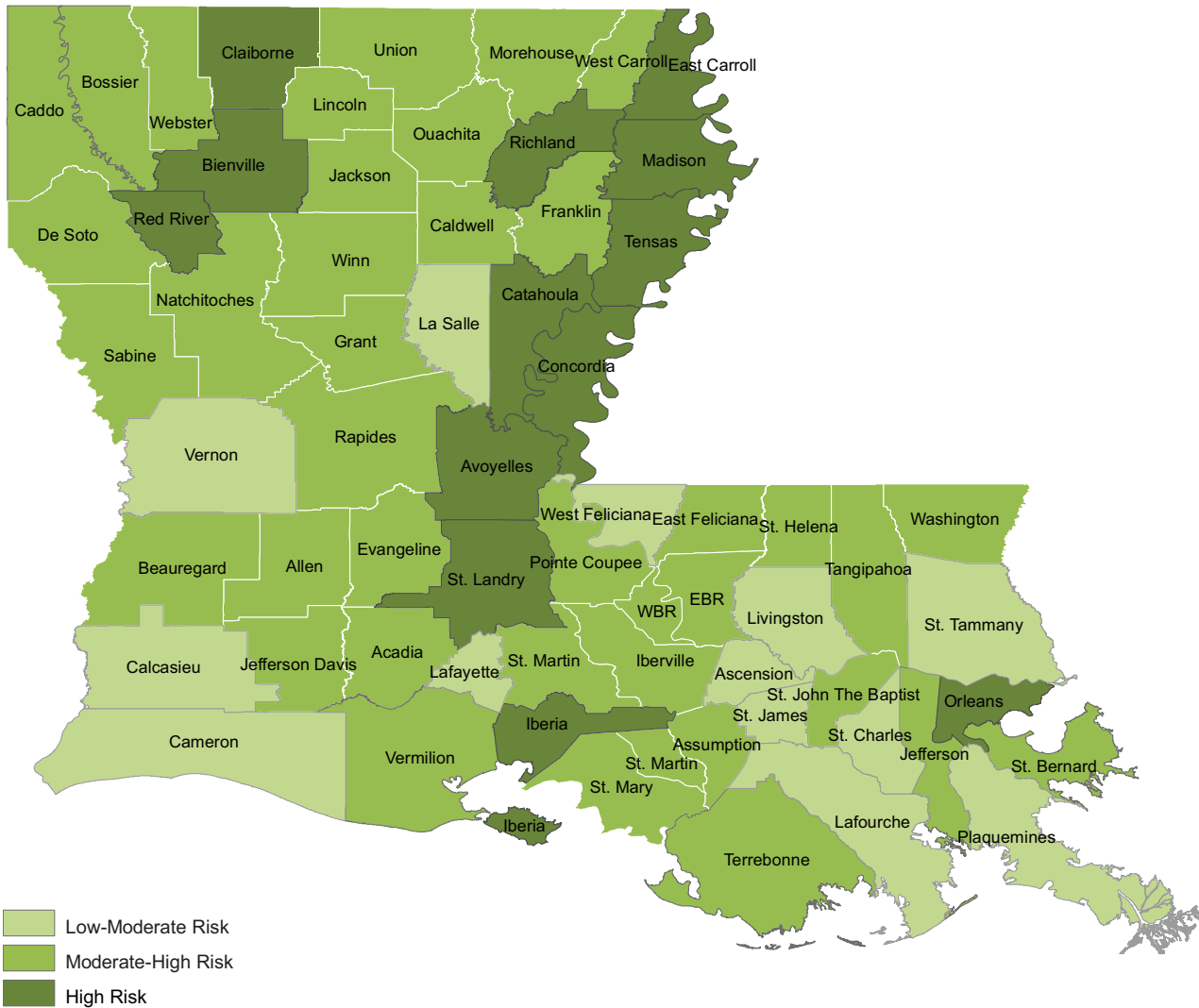
For this report, publicly funded pre-k includes LA 4, Title 1 Preschool, Starting Points, Special Education Pre-School, 8(g) Early Childhood Program, Education Excellence Fund, Even Start, Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development, or locally funded programs. Head Start, Early Head Start and child care centers with at least three stars or above in the Quality Start rating system, are also included in this indicator. The total enrolled in all of these settings is then divided by the population of children under age five in each parish.



Overall Risk

Figure 12 shows the overall rank by parish grouped into one of four levels based on the average score. Table 13 shows the actual average score for each parish.

Figure 12. December 2009 - Parish Level of Overall Risk



**Table 13. December 2009 - Parish Level Overall Risk
(Best Possible Score – 1, Worst Possible Score – 4)**

| | AVERAGE SCORE | RISK CATEGORY | | AVERAGE SCORE | RISK CATEGORY |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 Acadia | 2.36 | 3 | 33 Madison | 3.30 | 4 |
| 2 Allen | 2.64 | 3 | 34 Morehouse | 2.64 | 3 |
| 3 Ascension | 1.36 | 2 | 35 Natchitoches | 3.00 | 3 |
| 4 Assumption | 2.73 | 3 | 36 Orleans | 3.18 | 4 |
| 5 Avoyelles | 3.27 | 4 | 37 Ouachita | 2.82 | 3 |
| 6 Beauregard | 2.09 | 3 | 38 Plaquemines | 1.73 | 2 |
| 7 Bienville | 3.09 | 4 | 39 Pointe Coupee | 2.64 | 3 |
| 8 Bossier | 2.27 | 3 | 40 Rapides | 2.18 | 3 |
| 9 Caddo | 2.91 | 3 | 41 Red River | 3.18 | 4 |
| 10 Calcasieu | 1.91 | 2 | 42 Richland | 3.36 | 4 |
| 11 Caldwell | 2.30 | 3 | 43 Sabine | 2.64 | 3 |
| 12 Cameron | 1.60 | 2 | 44 St. Bernard | 2.27 | 3 |
| 13 Catahoula | 3.30 | 4 | 45 St. Charles | 1.64 | 2 |
| 14 Claiborne | 3.09 | 4 | 46 St. Helena | 2.91 | 3 |
| 15 Concordia | 3.5 | 4 | 47 St. James | 1.73 | 2 |
| 16 DeSoto | 2.64 | 3 | 48 St. John the Baptist | 2.36 | 3 |
| 17 East Baton Rouge | 2.27 | 3 | 49 St. Landry | 3.09 | 4 |
| 18 East Carroll | 3.18 | 4 | 50 St. Martin | 2.64 | 3 |
| 19 East Feliciana | 2.73 | 3 | 51 St. Mary | 2.91 | 3 |
| 20 Evangeline | 2.73 | 3 | 52 St. Tammany | 1.36 | 2 |
| 21 Franklin | 3.00 | 3 | 53 Tangipahoa | 2.73 | 3 |
| 22 Grant | 2.82 | 3 | 54 Tensas | 3.50 | 4 |
| 23 Iberia | 3.09 | 4 | 55 Terrebonne | 2.27 | 3 |
| 24 Iberville | 2.36 | 3 | 56 Union | 2.73 | 3 |
| 25 Jackson | 2.40 | 3 | 57 Vermilion | 2.18 | 3 |
| 26 Jefferson | 2.09 | 3 | 58 Vernon | 1.91 | 2 |
| 27 Jefferson Davis | 2.18 | 3 | 59 Washington | 2.55 | 3 |
| 28 La Salle | 2.00 | 2 | 60 Webster | 3.00 | 3 |
| 29 Lafayette | 1.45 | 2 | 61 West Baton Rouge | 2.09 | 3 |
| 30 Lafourche | 1.73 | 2 | 62 West Carroll | 2.45 | 3 |
| 31 Lincoln | 2.18 | 3 | 63 West Feliciana | 2.00 | 2 |
| 32 Livingston | 1.55 | 2 | 64 Winn | 2.55 | 3 |

Top Ranking Parishes (in order from the highest): Ascension, St. Tammany, Lafayette, Livingston, Cameron, St. Charles, Lafourche, Plaquemines, St. James, Calcasieu, Vernon, La Salle, West Feliciana

Bottom Ranking Parishes (in order to the lowest): Bienville, Claiborne, Iberia, St. Landry, East Carroll, Orleans, Red River, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Madison, Richland, Tensas, Concordia

Overall Risk (continued)

While certain parishes, and even regions, in the state are higher risk environments for young children, it should be noted that 92% of all Louisiana parishes (59 out of 64) are rated as “High Risk” on at least one of the indicators and 100% of the parishes are rated as “Moderate-High Risk” on at least one of the indicators. Even the top five ranking lowest risk parishes, Ascension, St. Tammany, Lafayette, Livingston and Cameron, have at least one indicator in the High Risk category. Similarly, each of the five highest risk parishes, Concordia, Tensas, Richland, Madison and Catahoula, had at least two indicators in the Low and/or Low-Moderate Risk category (except for Richland which had only one). Therefore, all of the parishes in the state, regardless of their current ranking, have strengths from which to build and vulnerabilities that need to be addressed.

Economic Risk

Five of the risk indicators measure a type of economic risk facing young children. These economic indicators are the percent unemployed, the percent of births to single mothers, the percent of mothers with less than a high school education, the percent of children under age 5 living below poverty, and the median family income as a percent of the federal poverty level. Thirty-three of Louisiana’s 64 parishes (52%) ranked in the High Risk category on at least one of these five economic risk factors. In fact, four parishes (Concordia, East Carroll, Madison, and Tensas) were in the High Risk group on all five of the indicators.

As to specific indicators, only five parishes have a median income that is at least twice the poverty level (St. Charles, Ascension, St. Tammany, Bossier, and Livingston). Only four parishes had less young children in poverty (as a percentage) than the national average (St. Tammany, St. Charles, Ascension, and Livingston). For Louisiana as a whole, the average percentage of children under age 5 in poverty (30%) is 43% greater than the average in the United States (21%). Approximately one in five Louisiana parishes have two times more children in poverty (as a percentage) than the national average. Since 1999, births to single mothers in Louisiana have increased 14.9% and

today only six parishes have a lower percent of births to single mothers than the national average (Vernon, Cameron, La Salle, St. Tammany, Livingston and Ascension).

Health Risk

Four of the risk indicators measure a type of health risk facing young children. These health indicators are the percent of low birth weight babies, the teen birth rate, the infant mortality rate, and the percent of uninsured children. Thirty-nine parishes (61%) are at High Risk on at least one of the health indicators. However, no parish scored in the High Risk category on all four health indicators, and even the High Risk parishes often scored in the Low Risk category on at least one indicator.

On specific indicators, only three parishes had a percentage of low birth weight babies that was better than the national average (Plaquemines, Winn and Livingston). For the state as a whole, Louisiana was 36% higher than the national average (11.3% vs. 8.3%). Seven parishes had a teen birth rate at or better than the national average (Cameron, Lincoln, Plaquemines, St. James, St. Tammany, St. Bernard, and St. Charles). Overall, Louisiana’s teen birth rate is 33% greater than the national average (56 per 1,000 vs. 42 per 1,000). Similarly, only seven parishes (St. Mary, Plaquemines, Livingston, Iberville, Washington, St. James and St. Tammany) were at or better than the national average for infant mortality with Louisiana’s rate 45% greater than the national average (9.7 per 1,000 vs. 6.7 per 1,000).

Education Risk

Two of the risk indicators measure a type of education risk facing young children. These education indicators are the pre-literacy skills measured at kindergarten entry and the percent of children in publicly funded pre-k, Head Start, Early Head Start or high quality child care. Overall, 28 parishes (44%) scored in the High Risk category on at least one of these two indicators and 4 parishes (Jefferson, Orleans, Tangipahoa and Union) scored in the High Risk category for both. Six parishes scored in the High Risk category on one of the indicators and the Low Risk category for the other (Allen, Ascension, Caldwell, Lafayette, La Salle, and St. Helena).

Limitations and Future Directions

Computing the Overall Risk Level as an average of each of the individual indicators assumes each of the individual indicators has the same weight in the overall well-being of children. Of course, the reality may be that some of the risk indicators serve as stronger predictors of overall risk than others. However, there is substantial research to show that the number of risk factors is more strongly associated with poor outcomes than any one specific risk factor. For this report, it is important to recognize that all risk factors are treated equally.

A future addition to this report is forthcoming that examines the reach of early childhood programs and whether these services match the needs in each parish. These two sources of information together, the risk and reach, will provide parish and state leaders with valuable tools to make more informed decisions regarding the challenges facing children 0-5 in our state, and the resources being dedicated and utilized to support these young children and their families.

Conclusion

Table 14. Young Children by Risk Level

| NUMBER OF PARISHES | AVERAGE SCORE RANGE | NUMBER OF CHILDREN (0-5) | PERCENT OF CHILDREN | RISK CATEGORY |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 0 | 1 | 0 | 0.0% | Low |
| 13 | 1.01-2 | 80,299 | 25.8% | Low-Moderate |
| 38 | 2.01-3 | 187,322 | 60.3% | Moderate-High |
| 13 | 3.01+ | 43,095 | 13.9% | High |
| 64 | | 310,716 | | |

There are approximately 310,716 children under age five in Louisiana (see Appendix 1 for population by parish). Based on the methodology to establish risk utilized in Pennsylvania, no children in Louisiana are in parishes that score in the Low Risk category (an overall score of 1). Of the 64 parishes, 13 (20.3%) score in the Low-Moderate Risk category and 80,299 young children (25.8%) live in these parishes (see Table 14). At increased risk are the 38 parishes (59.4%) that score in the Moderate-High Risk category where 187,322 young children (60.3%) live. Finally, 13 parishes (20.3%) are in the High Risk category where 40,658 young children (13.9%) live. Therefore, 230,417 of Louisiana's young children (74.2%) are growing up in Moderate-High or High Risk parishes (51 of the 64 parishes). Again, risk is in comparison to other parishes in the state and is not a statement of risk compared to any other county or state in the country.

Good data is a critical tool that can help to inform programmatic and investment decisions regarding the distribution of resources that support Louisiana's young children. This report provides parish level data on 11 indicators of early childhood well-being that influence a child's ability to be ready for school. This analysis reveals that the majority of Louisiana's children are being raised in Moderate-High Risk or High Risk parishes and that almost all of the state's parishes have at least one High Risk indicator.

Appendix 1

Population of Children under Age 5 by Parish

| POPULATION UNDER AGE 5 | | | |
|------------------------|------------|----------------------|--------|
| National | 20,672,826 | Livingston | 9,208 |
| Louisiana | 310,716 | Madison | 949 |
| Acadia | 4,688 | Morehouse | 1,881 |
| Allen | 1,692 | Natchitoches | 2,933 |
| Ascension | 8,522 | Orleans | 19,461 |
| Assumption | 1,318 | Ouachita | 11,382 |
| Avoyelles | 3,112 | Plaquemines | 1,357 |
| Beauregard | 2,380 | Pointe Coupee | 1,487 |
| Bienville | 918 | Rapides | 9,707 |
| Bossier | 8,645 | Red River | 682 |
| Caddo | 18,227 | Richland | 1,470 |
| Calcasieu | 13,630 | Sabine | 1,669 |
| Caldwell | 630 | St. Bernard | 2,576 |
| Cameron | 284 | St. Charles | 3,455 |
| Catahoula | 736 | St. Helena | 541 |
| Claiborne | 837 | St. James | 1,523 |
| Concordia | 1,329 | St. John the Baptist | 3,586 |
| DeSoto | 1,870 | St. Landry | 6,970 |
| East Baton Rouge | 29,539 | St. Martin | 3,727 |
| East Carroll | 647 | St. Mary | 3,762 |
| East Feliciana | 1,291 | St. Tammany | 15,436 |
| Evangeline | 2,638 | Tangipahoa | 9,102 |
| Franklin | 1,419 | Tensas | 374 |
| Grant | 1,293 | Terrebonne | 8,442 |
| Iberia | 5,610 | Union | 1,587 |
| Iberville | 2,230 | Vermilion | 3,980 |
| Jackson | 973 | Vernon | 4,170 |
| Jefferson | 28,144 | Washington | 3,249 |
| Jefferson Davis | 2,234 | Webster | 2,549 |
| La Salle | 884 | West Baton Rouge | 1,634 |
| Lafayette | 15,353 | West Carroll | 665 |
| Lafourche | 5,919 | West Feliciana | 558 |
| Lincoln | 2,705 | Winn | 947 |

Appendix 2

Summary Quartile Rank of Individual Risk Indicators

| | PARISH IN OVERALL RANK ORDER (LOWEST RISK TO HIGHEST RISK) | UNEMPLOYMENT | BIRTHS TO SINGLE MOTHERS | MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION | AGES 0-5 IN POVERTY | MEDIAN INCOME | LOW BIRTH WEIGHT | TEEN BIRTH | INFANT MORTALITY | AGES 0-5 UNINSURED | PRE-LITERACY SKILLS | ATTENDING PRE-K, HS/EHS OR HQ CHILD CARE |
|--------------------|--|--------------|--------------------------|--|---------------------|---------------|------------------|------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| LOW-MODERATE RISK | Ascension | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| | St. Tammany | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| | Lafayette | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| | Livingston | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| | Cameron | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | -- | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| | St. Charles | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | Lafourche | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| | Plaquemines | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| | St. James | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | Calcasieu | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| | Vernon | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | La Salle | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | -- | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| West Feliciana | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 | |
| MODERATE-HIGH RISK | Beauregard | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| | Jefferson | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| | West Baton Rouge | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| | Jefferson Davis | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| | Lincoln | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| | Rapides | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| | Vermilion | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| | Bossier | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| | East Baton Rouge | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| | St. Bernard | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Terrebonne | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| | Caldwell | 4 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | -- | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| | Acadia | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | Iberville | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| | St. John the Baptist | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| | Jackson | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | -- | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| | West Carroll | 4 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Washington | 3 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | |
| Winn | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | |

| | PARISH IN OVERALL RANK ORDER (LOWEST RISK TO HIGHEST RISK) | UNEMPLOYMENT | BIRTHS TO SINGLE MOTHERS | MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION | AGES 0-5 IN POVERTY | MEDIAN INCOME | LOW BIRTH WEIGHT | TEEN BIRTH | INFANT MORTALITY | AGES 0-5 UNINSURED | PRE-LITERACY SKILLS | ATTENDING PRE-K, HS/EHS OR HQ CHILD CARE |
|--------------------|--|--------------|--------------------------|--|---------------------|---------------|------------------|------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| MODERATE-HIGH RISK | Allen | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| | De Soto | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| | Morehouse | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| | Pointe Coupee | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| | Sabine | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| | St. Martin | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| | Assumption | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| | East Feliciana | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| | Evangeline | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | Tangipahoa | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| | Union | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| | Grant | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| | Ouachita | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| | Caddo | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| | St. Helena | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | St. Mary | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | Franklin | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Natchitoches | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| Webster | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | |
| HIGH RISK | Bienville | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| | Claiborne | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| | Iberia | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| | St. Landry | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| | East Carroll | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Orleans | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | Red River | 4 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| | Avoyelles | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| | Catahoula | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | -- | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| | Madison | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | -- | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| | Richland | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| | Tensas | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | -- | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| | Concordia | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 |

Appendix 3

| INDICATOR | DATA SOURCE | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|--|
| Unemployment Rate (December 2009) | National Unemployment: DLS Web site Parish level unemployment data are from December 2009 and are available from the Louisiana Workforce Commission (www.laworks.net) | National unemployment data can be found at the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the U.S. Department of Labor. Parish level unemployment data are from the Louisiana Workforce Commission, a full report can be found at http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/LMI/Data_for_December_2009.pdf |
| Percent of Births to Single Mothers (2007) | LA Department of Health and Hospitals – Office of Public Health, Vital Statistics | Marriage Status: derived from the birth certificate data – Number of live births to unmarried women of all live births. (State and National data available on the Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center, most recent and complete data available through OPH-MCH Epidemiology program.) The State Center for Health Statistics data for 1999 births to unmarried women for the state can be found at: http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/miscdocs/docs-275/recordsstatistics/statistics/1999datatables.htm |
| Percent Mothers with less than High School Degree (2007) | LA Department of Health and Hospitals – Office of Public Health, Vital Statistics | Maternal education – derived from birth certificate data – Number of live births to women who had not completed high school of all live births. (National data not available, most recent and complete data available through OPH-MCH Epidemiology program.) |
| Percent of Children Under 5 Years Who are at Poverty Level (2006-2008 ACS & 2000 Census) | National Data, State and Parish Level Data is available at the Census Web site | Percentage of families with related children under 5 years whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level. Note: estimates were found through 2006-2008, 3 Year Estimates and the 2000 Census for population areas smaller than 20,000. |
| Median Income as a Percent of FPL (\$20,617 - 3 Year Average) (2006-2008 ACS & 2000 Census) | State and National Data: Median Family Income State and Parish at the Census Web site Poverty Limit Data – U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation Web site | The median household income is the midpoint in the range of household income for those surveyed for years 2006-2008 divided by the three year average of Federal Poverty Limits for families of three. This measure shows the median income relative to poverty limit. Note: Estimates were found through the 2006-2008, 3 Year Estimates and the 2000 Census for population areas smaller than 20,000 |
| Percent Low Birth Weight (2007) | LA Department of Health and Hospitals – Office of Public Health, Vital Statistics | Percent of all babies who were born weighing under 2,500 grams (about 5.5 pounds) are considered low birth weight. (Data Available on the Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center, most recent and complete data available through OPH-MCH Epidemiology program.) |

| INDICATOR | DATA SOURCE | DESCRIPTION |
|--|---|---|
| Teen Birth Rate 2007 (Births to Ages 15-19 per 1,000 15-19 Year Olds) | LA Department of Health and Hospitals – Office of Public Health, Vital Statistics | Teen birth rate is the number of live births to women ages 15-19, per 1,000 females ages 15-19 years. (Data Available on the Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center, most recent and complete data available through OPH-MCH Epidemiology program.) |
| Infant Mortality Rate: per 1,000 Children 0-1 (2005-2007) | LA Department of Health and Hospitals – Office of Public Health, Vital Statistics | Number of deaths among children under one year of age per 1,000 live births. (Data Available on the Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center, most recent and complete data available through OPH-MCH Epidemiology program.) An infant mortality rate may not be possible to determine in some parishes if they have too few births, or deaths, per year. |
| Estimated % of 0-5 Population Uninsured 2009 Estimate | National Data is available at the Annie E. Casey Foundation Data Center Web site. State and Parish Level Data are based on the 2009 Louisiana Health Insurance Survey conducted by LSU's Public Policy Research Lab on behalf of the LA Department of Health and Hospitals. Full report can be found at http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/reports.asp?Detail=732 | The data for this indicator is from the 2009 Louisiana Health Insurance Survey conducted by LSU's Public Policy Research Lab and are based on survey results of 10,000 Louisiana households. Secondary calculations were computed to arrive at estimates for uninsured children under 5 at the parish level. |
| Pre-Literacy Skills Measured at Kindergarten Entry - Based on DIBELS Scores in Fall 2009 –At High Risk for Poor Reading Outcomes | Department of Education: Literacy and Numeracy Reports: DOE Web site. Parish level reports are not published online but available upon request. | DIBELS: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy – is a rapid assessment of pre-literacy skills to determine risk for later literacy outcomes. The assessment was developed and normed for K-3rd grade. Fall Kindergarten DIBELS has two domains (Initial Sound Fluency and Letter Naming Fluency) that are compiled in an instruction recommendation (intensive, strategic, and benchmark). In this indicator the percent of children considered at high risk for poor reading outcomes were those who were scored in need of intensive reading instruction/intervention. DIBELS is utilized here because it is a measure that is used almost universally statewide in the public schools. |
| Percent of Children (Ages 0-5) in Publicly Funded Pre-K, Head Start, Early Head Start or High Quality Child Care | Head Start/Early Head Start: ACF Data Center (2006) – current data provides number of HS/EHS slots. Also the State Head Start Collaboration Office has some enrollment data. LA Department of Education, Early Childhood Program. 3-5 Star Rated Centers from the Department of Children and Family Services and Quality Start Web site then phone survey of 3-5 star rated centers. | Publicly funded pre-k programs include LA 4, Title 1 Preschool, Starting Points, Special Education Pre-School, 8(g) Early Childhood Program, Education Excellence Fund, Even Start, Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development, or locally funded pre-k programs. Head Start and Early Head Start slots, and enrollment in 3-5 star rated centers are also included. The percentage is the number of children under five years old enrolled in these settings of the total children under five years old in the parish. |

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