
Children and Family Health Services

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Social Characteristics of Hamilton County Neighborhoods

Last November's newsletter "Differences Among Neighborhoods" introduced the idea of variation among neighborhood characteristics and their potential influences on maternal and child health outcomes. This issue of the Maternal and Child Health Report presents the preliminary results of our research in that area.

The following data were compiled using 1990-1995 Ohio birth certificates data for Hamilton County residents and using 1990 U.S. Census figures.

I. Social characteristics

SES

Socio-economic status (SES) is most commonly measured by using a combination of education, income, and occupation. Research on individual-level SES has shown that people with lower SES have poorer health status. However, researchers agree that the association between *neighborhood* SES and health is complicated and that more research is needed to better understand the relationship.

Education

As with the other measures of neighborhood socio-economic status, there is wide variation among communities in Hamilton County. In both Lower Price Hill and East End, over 65% of adults do not have a high school diploma. Conversely, Indian Hill and Mt. Lookout rank highest in terms of education.

Mt. Adams had the highest percentage of private school enrollment¹ (100%). Nearly 80 % of Amberley village students were

enrolled in private school. In both Linwood and Lower Price Hill, there were no students enrolled in private schools.

Income

The areas of Indian Hill, Amberley village, and Mt. Adams have the highest per capita incomes. Fay Apartments and Winton Hills residents have the lowest. No residents of California receive public assistance income and less than 1% of Terrace Park and Mariemont residents do. Over 25% of Lincoln Heights residents receive public assistance income, as do 23% of Over-the-Rhine residents.

Unemployment

While county average unemployment is quite low overall, there is a wide range of figures across Hamilton County geographic areas. Mt. Adams and Evendale have the lowest percentages of unemployment, while Winton Hills and South Cumminsville/ Millvale have the highest.

Social cohesion

Social cohesion is a broad term which can be used to describe how organized and stable a group is - a sense of "togetherness" and community. Things which can make a neighborhood more cohesive include low residential mobility (people not moving in and out of the neighborhood), home ownership, and homogeneity (sameness).

While public health research in this area is recent, lack of social cohesion has been linked to negative social conditions such as poverty and crime.² Recently, public health researchers in Britain and Sweden have begun to study the effects of neighborhood deprivation on self-

reported health and the workload of medical practitioners.³

Mobility⁴

Fairfax, Amberley Village, and Indian Hill are the most stable in terms of new residents, while University Heights and Fairview/Clifton Heights have the highest percentages of new residents.

Amberley village and Evendale have the lowest percentage of renter-occupied housing, while Winton Hills and Over-the-Rhine have among the highest percentages.

Crime⁵

Columbia-Tusculum, Mt. Washington, and Hyde Park ranked lowest in serious crimes among Cincinnati neighborhoods. CBD-Riverfront, Over-the-Rhine, and Corryville ranked the highest.

Heterogeneity

The most racially heterogeneous (mixed) neighborhood in Hamilton County is Corryville. Other heterogeneous neighborhoods include Roselawn, North Avondale/Paddock Hills, Silverton, and Forest Park. Crosby Township and Cleves are the most homogeneous neighborhoods, although a large portion of neighborhoods in the county are racially homogeneous.

II. Health Outcomes⁶

WCHOP's future research will examine the relationships between neighborhood social characteristics and health outcomes. The following summarizes findings from past newsletters which have examined neighborhood differences in maternal and child health outcomes.

Maternal smoking

Terrace Park and Mt. Lookout had the fewest births to mothers who smoked during pregnancy. Over 50% of births in Lower Price Hill, Linwood, and Camp Washington were to mothers who smoked.

Prenatal care

Glendale and Terrace Park had the fewest births with inadequate prenatal care, while South Cumminsville/Millvale and Corryville rank highest.

Teen pregnancy

Although the county average for teen births for this time period (1990-1995) was around 6 percent, there is a wide range of values among neighborhoods. Terrace Park, Mt. Lookout, and Hyde Park had the lowest percentages of births to teens, 15-17 (less than 1%). South Cumminsville/Millvale (19%) and Lincoln Heights (18%) had the highest percentages.

Birth weight

In Hamilton County from 1990-1996, the county average proportion of low birthweight was around 8 percent. Milford (0%) and Deer Park (2%) had the smallest percentage of low birth weight births. Over-the-Rhine (16%) and South Cumminsville/Millvale (18%) ranked highest.

Infant mortality

Fourteen neighborhood in Hamilton County had no infant deaths from 1990-1993. Woodlawn had an infant mortality rate of 43.8 deaths per 1,000 births. Addyston and Fay Apartments had rates well above county average as well.

¹ Both Elementary and high school

² Sampson, R. (1991) "Linking the Micro and Macrolevel Dimensions of Community Social Organization." Social Forces 70(1):43-64.

³ MacIntyre, S., MacIver, S. and A. Sooman (1993) "Area, Class, and Health: Should we be focusing on Places or People?" Journal of Social Policy 22(2): 213-234.

⁴ Mobility was measured as the percentage of residents who had moved into their housing unit in the last 6 years.

⁵ Crime data available only within City of Cincinnati. Source: Cincinnati Police Division.

⁶ Figures are from 1990-1995 unless otherwise noted.

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