

State of Our Children

LAKE COUNTY, CA

Fall 2019

2019 State of Our Children

Lake County, California

In January of 2019, community partners from multiple agencies (listed below) agreed to work together to compile a “data snapshot” of some of the most pressing issues affecting Lake County’s children. The goal of this document is to bring greater awareness to these issues and the ways they are impacting the next generation and to **raise prevention as a priority issue in our community**. The areas covered in this report include: early prenatal care, fetal alcohol and drug exposure, youth substance use, poverty, education, child safety and security, and delinquent activity of youth. Additional data on a wide range of issues affecting children, and our community, can be found at: HopeRisingLC.org, ChildrenNow.org, KidsData.org, Census.gov, CDE.ca.gov, and DOF.ca.gov.



EARLY PRENATAL CARE IN LAKE COUNTY



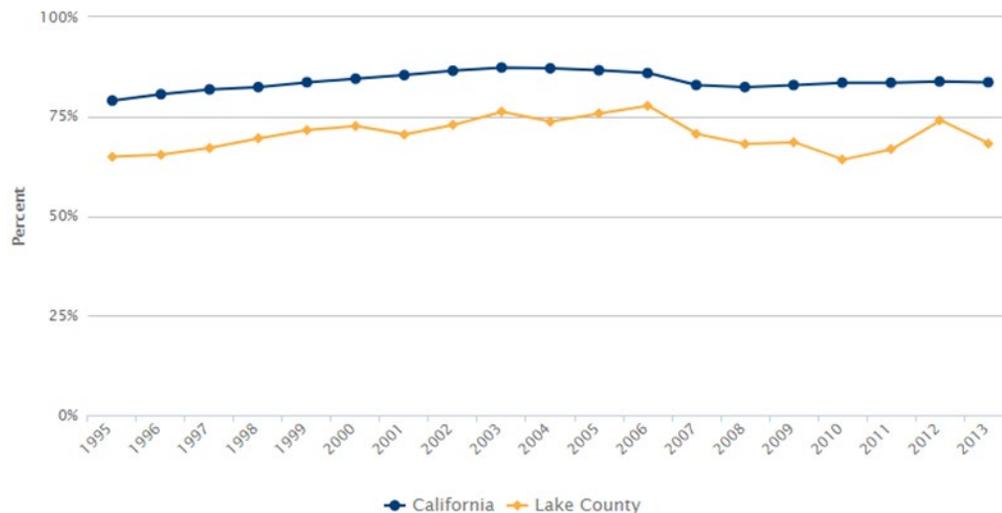
Importance: A child’s health and wellbeing begin in utero. The most dramatic changes and development occur for the baby in the first trimester of the mother’s pregnancy. It is also during this time that the baby is most susceptible to damage from alcohol, drugs, certain medications and illnesses. Because of this, early prenatal care is vital.



Recent statistics: 69% of pregnant women received prenatal care beginning in the first trimester in Lake County in 2016¹, and 31% did not. **Ranking:** This puts Lake County 45th out of 58 California counties, and significantly lower than the national average of 77.1%.



Trend over time: Percentage of Infants Whose Mothers Received Prenatal Care in the First Trimester: 1995-2013²



Possible reasons why: We know that approximately 91% of Lake County residents have health insurance³ which is comparable to the state average (92%), so a lack of insurance is not likely to be the primary cause of this issue. A combination of the lack of knowledge of the importance of early prenatal care and limited availability of appointments with an obstetrician are likely the driving factors. There is also the possibility of a number of women not identifying their pregnancies until late in the first trimester. Data sorted by race/ethnicity was not available for Lake County, but state-level data reveal that African American and American Indian mothers are less likely to receive first trimester prenatal care.

¹ Source: California Department of Public Health, Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Division (n.d.). 2015 Birth Statistical Master File.

² Source: [As cited on kidsdata.org](#), California Dept. of Public Health, Center for Health Statistics, Birth Statistical Master Files (Mar. 2015).

³ Source: U.S. Census Bureau’s Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE) program, as cited on www.countyhealthrankings.org.

FETAL ALCOHOL & DRUG EXPOSURE IN LAKE COUNTY



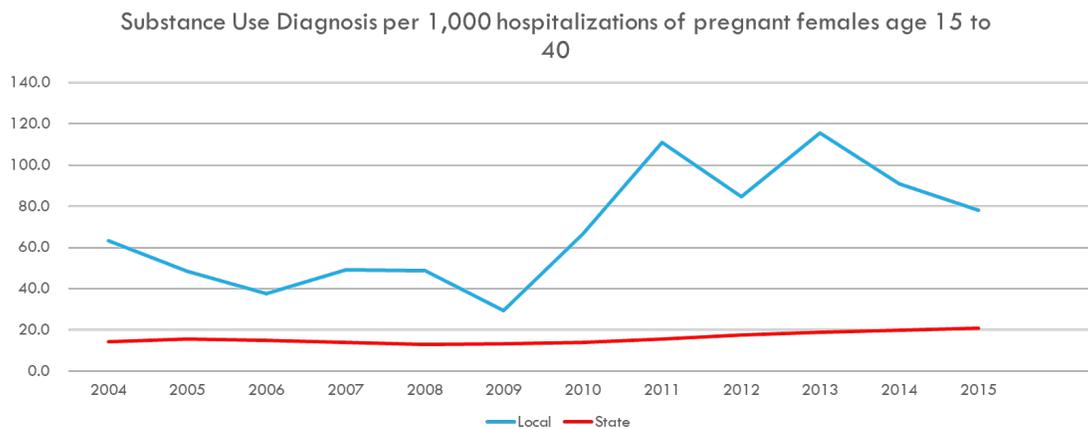
Importance: Depending on the substance, a wide range of negative birth outcomes have been associated with use during pregnancy including but not limited to: increased risks of preterm delivery, low birthweight, cognitive and behavioral challenges, adverse speech and language outcomes, and executive functioning deficits. In addition to these, substance use in pregnancy may also result in a dysfunctional maternal-infant relationship (attachment disorders) which can have lifelong negative effects.⁴



Recent statistics: Between 2013 and 2015, 9.69% of hospitalizations of pregnant females age 15-44 in Lake County included a substance use diagnosis.⁵ The Lake County rate of smoking during pregnancy was also more than 4 times the state average for the same period.



Trend over time: Substance Use Diagnosis per 1,000 Hospitalizations of Pregnant Females Age 15 to 40 (Lake County as compared to the California rate)



Possible reasons why: Women are at highest risk for developing a substance use disorder during their reproductive years, especially ages 18-29.⁶ Substance use disorders in adults are frequently associated with adverse childhood experiences, which Lake County residents likely experience at significantly higher frequency than the state average.⁷ Other risk factors for substance abuse include genetic predisposition, depression, anxiety, stress, high impulsivity, and starting alcohol, nicotine or other drug use at an early age.

⁴ Source: « Substance Use During Pregnancy,” by Ariadna Forray
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4870985/>

⁵ Source: Family Health Outcomes Project, UCSF – Community Health Status Report, Lake County Databook

⁶ Source: « Substance Use During Pregnancy,” by Ariadna Forray
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4870985/>

⁷ Source: Ferron & Associates, 2009-2010 Lake County Survey of Adverse Childhood Experiences,
www.firstfivelake.org/reports.php

SUBSTANCE USE BY YOUTH IN LAKE COUNTY



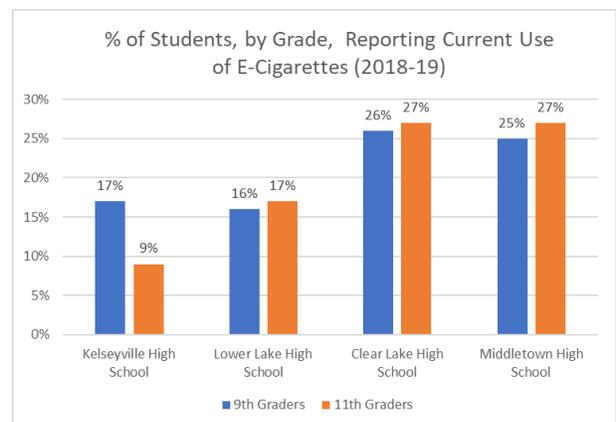
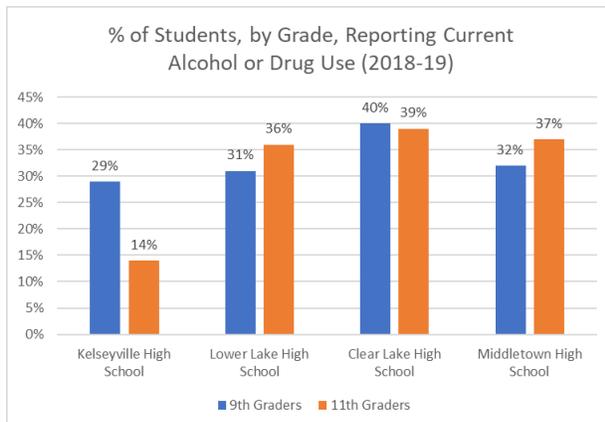
Importance: The teen brain is actively developing and will not be fully developed until a person’s mid 20’s. Marijuana use during this period may produce negative effects including difficulty thinking and problem solving, problems with memory and learning, impaired coordination, difficulty maintaining attention, increased risk of mental health issues, decline in school performance, and potential for addiction.⁸ Likewise, the use of e-cigarettes is unsafe for children, teens and young adults as nicotine is highly addictive and can also harm adolescent brain development.⁹



Recent statistics: Lake County 9th and 11th graders report using e-cigarettes at least once in the last 30 days at higher rates than the state average. The percentage of 9th graders in most Lake County school districts who have reported using marijuana at least once in the past 30 days was double the California average.¹⁰



Comparison Between Lake County High Schools (*Upper Lake H.S. did not participate in the CA Healthy Kids Survey in 2018-19*):



Possible reasons why: Experimenting, testing boundaries, and the desire to do something new are normal parts of teen development. Teens who perceive little risk in the use of marijuana or e-cigarettes are more likely to try them during this period of life. They are also likely to try these and other substances to ease emotional pain, belong to a specific group, and show their independence. Research also shows that adolescents from single-parent households are more prone to substance use; 45% of Lake County children live in single-parent households.¹¹

⁸ Source: “[What You Need to Know About Marijuana Use in Teens](#),” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

⁹ Source: “Quick Facts on the Risks of E-Cigarettes for Kids, Teens and Young Adults,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html

¹⁰ Source: California Healthy Kids Survey, 2018-19.

¹¹ Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

ECONOMIC WELLBEING OF CHILDREN IN LAKE COUNTY



Importance: Children living in poverty are at risk for poor outcomes in health, development and lower academic achievement. For children living in need, it isn't just the obvious effects of poverty that are at play (food scarcity, poor living conditions, etc.). Other factors like toxic stress can have long-term effects as well.

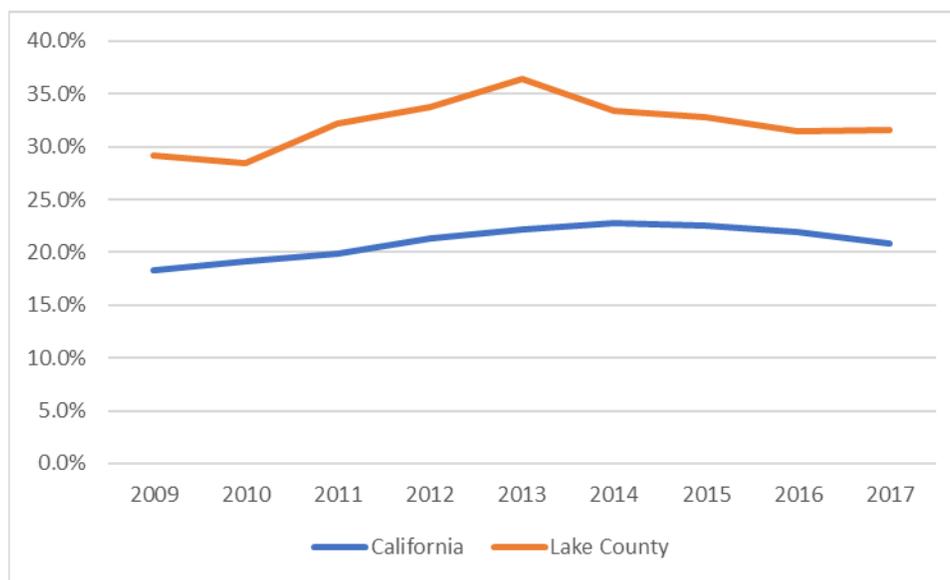
Poverty in early childhood can be particularly impactful as studies show that children living in poverty early in life have poorer outcomes than adolescents who experience poverty later in life.¹²



Recent statistics: The federal poverty level in 2017 for a family of 4 was \$24,600 and \$20,420 for a family of 3. At that time, 31.6% of all Lake County children were estimated to be living below poverty level and 60% of Lake County children were estimated to be living at or below two times the poverty level. 51.5% of Lake County children living in single-mother households and 63.6% of Native American children were living below poverty level.¹³



Trend over time: Percent of Children Under 18 Years of Age Living in Household with Income Below the Poverty Level (2009-2017)



Possible reasons why: Poverty in Lake County has been attributed to a variety of factors including a shortage of higher-paying jobs, low educational achievement, a high number of people with disabilities and those on fixed incomes, and a rural, isolated geography that can deter business development.¹⁴

¹² Source: "The Effects of Poverty on Children," by Sheri Marino, www.focusforhealth.org

¹³ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

¹⁴ Source: "[Poverty Pervasive in Lake County](#)," The Press Democrat, February 24, 2015.

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN LAKE COUNTY



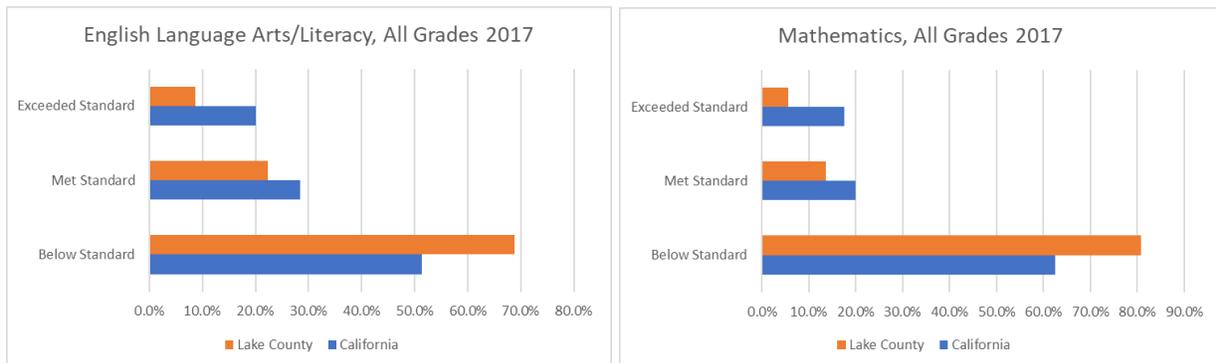
Importance: Quality education throughout childhood contributes to the ability to read and write, communicate well, use technology, build healthy relationships, develop thoughtful opinions, negotiate disagreements, learn from the past, exercise self-control, and see situations from a variety of perspectives, just to name a few of the benefits.



Recent statistics: 46% of Lake County students who entered kindergarten in 2018 did not have the skills to be rated as “school ready” by their teachers¹⁵. In the 2017/18 school year, 71.5% of Lake County third grade students did not meet grade level standards in English Language Arts/Literacy and 88.8% of Lake County fifth grade students did not meet grade level standards in mathematics.¹⁶



Comparison to California state average: Percentage of all students (grades 3-8 and 11) scoring below standards, meeting standards and exceeding standards in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics.



Possible reasons why: Poverty plays a key role in how students score on standardized tests. Lake County students’ scores on the state’s standardized assessment are comparable to, but still slightly lower than, other California counties with similar rates of poverty (Merced, Tulare, Del Norte). Also, research¹⁷ indicates that children who enter school with low ratings on kindergarten readiness are nine to ten times more likely to have low reading scores at the end of first grade. Key influences on school readiness include preschool attendance, parenting behaviors, parents’ education, maternal depression, prenatal exposure to tobacco and low birth-weight.¹⁸

¹⁵ 2018 Kindergarten Entry Data Profile Report, www.firstfivelake.org/reports.php

¹⁶ Source: California Dept. of Education, CA Assessment of Student Performance and Progress

¹⁷ University of Missouri-Columbia. "Screening kindergarten readiness: Children with poor academic readiness are 9 to 10 times more likely to have low reading scores 18 months later." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 8 October 2019. <<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/10/191008155708.htm>>

¹⁸ Brookings, “Starting School at a Disadvantage,” March 2012, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0319_school_disadvantage_isaacs.pdf.

SAFETY & SECURITY OF CHILDREN IN LAKE COUNTY



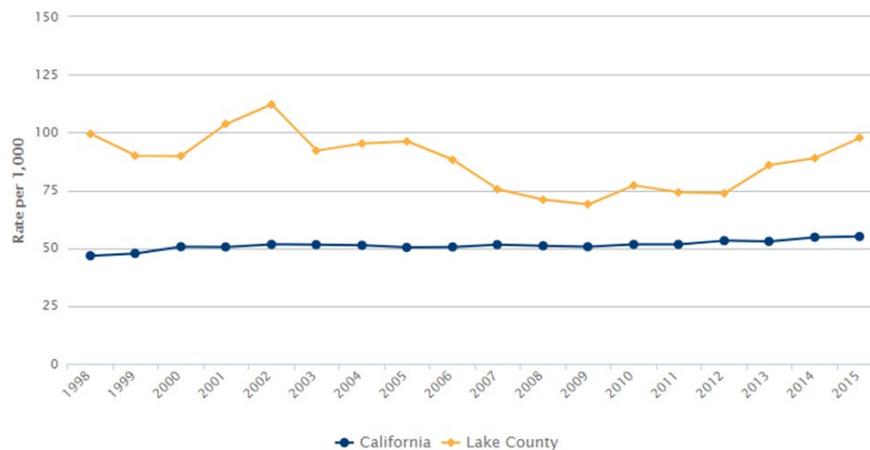
Importance: The safety and security of children is a community-wide concern. Safe environments, child care facilities, schools, homes and relationships are critical to the wellbeing of all children. Accidents happen, but known hazards and abusive behaviors can and must be prevented. The physical, mental and emotional effects of child abuse persist long after the abuse occurs. Child abuse is a core underlying factor to high rates of school dropout, homelessness, incarceration, and chronic health and addiction issues.



Recent statistics: There were 925 reported child victims of abuse/neglect in Lake County in 2018. That is one child abuse report every 10 hours. There were 117 verified child victims of abuse/neglect in 2018.¹⁹



Trend over time: Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect 1998-2015, per 1,000 children under age 18



Possible reasons why: According to Child Welfare data for Lake County, 76.9% of verified child abuse allegations in 2018 were due to general neglect and 15.4% were due to caretaker absence/incapacity. General neglect is the failure of a parent/guardian or caretaker to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter or supervision to a child. Caretaker absence/incapacity indicates that a child has no parent or guardian capable of providing appropriate provisions for care. This could be due to incarceration, institutionalization, addiction, abandonment, or other factors, when there is no provision of care that has been arranged for the child during his/her absence. Risk factors for child abuse and neglect include: poverty, unemployment, alcohol/drug abuse, history of child abuse/neglect or violence in the family, limited support systems, and poor health of parent.²⁰

¹⁹ Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project, Center for Social Services Research, University of California at Berkeley. http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/

²⁰ Source: "Child Abuse and Neglect in CA, Part I," Legislative Analyst's Office https://lao.ca.gov/1996/010596_child_abuse/cw11096a.html

DELINQUENT ACTIVITY OF CHILDREN IN LAKE COUNTY

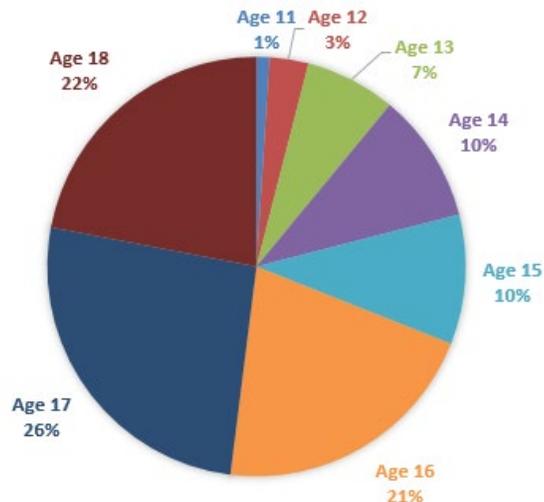


Importance: There are many reasons and risk factors involved in a minor's decision to break the law. No matter the cause of the offense, involvement by law enforcement can be an opportunity for a child on a dangerous and damaging path to be redirected and for protective factors to be strengthened. Children who start offending before age 12 are more likely to continue offending into early adulthood. Drug dealing and possession of weapons are offenses which have the highest likelihood of duration and persistence into early adulthood.²¹



Recent statistics: According to Lake County Juvenile Probation, 154 juveniles were on probation in 2018 (71% male, 29% female) and an average of 6 to 10 Lake County youth were in Juvenile Hall at any one time during 2018.

Lake County Juveniles on Probation in 2018, by Age



Possible reasons why: There are many risk factors for delinquency including exposure to violence (on television, in games or in life), substance use, aggression, hyperactivity, antisocial tendencies (attitudes, beliefs, behaviors), dishonesty, low IQ, medical/physical problems, poverty, antisocial parents, poor parent-child relationship, inappropriate discipline, separation from parents, abuse, neglect, poor performance in school, delinquent peers, neighborhood crime/drugs, gang membership, family conflict, poor monitoring/supervision, risk taking, and restlessness.

²¹ Source: "From Juvenile Delinquency to Young Adult Offending," National Institute of Justice. <https://www.nij.gov/topics/crime/Pages/delinquency-to-adult-offending.aspx>



TOGETHER, HOW WILL WE IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR OUR CHILDREN?

We are committed to making sure that our community has the most up-to-date information to help us make sound decisions that benefit Lake County's children.

We are committed to promoting a common definition & understanding of prevention.

We are committed to publicly recognizing positive efforts and highlighting positive changes in our community that emphasize prevention and prioritize the next generation's health and wellbeing.



Elected Officials and Local Leaders: Will you consider – hosting a town hall, all-staff meeting, and/or other gathering in 2020 to allow us to share The State of Our Children and engage those in your circle of influence in coming up with solutions?



Service Providers and Educators: Will you consider – adapting existing programs and services to address the issues of concern identified by the data, as needed? Share openly with the community your efforts to improve children's outcomes and engage their participation when appropriate?



Business Leaders: Will you consider – providing internships, mentoring your teenage employees, creating a family-friendly workplace and environment, becoming a trauma-informed business, giving back in ways that prioritize prevention in the community?



Community Members: Will you consider – sharing this information broadly to help us get the word out, advocating for children and youth in your neighborhood, attending a child abuse prevention training, coaching youth sports/activities, becoming a mentor, donating to or volunteering with a prevention-focused local organization, joining the Children's Council?

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