County Health Rankings

Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health

2010

Alabama

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Population Health Institute

Translating Research into Policy and Practice

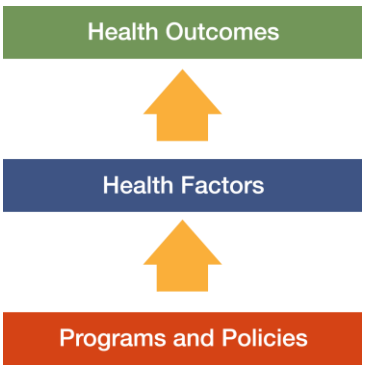
Introduction

Where we live matters to our health. The health of a community depends on many different factors, including quality of health care, individual behavior, education and jobs, and the environment. We can improve a community's health through programs and policies. For example, people who live in communities with ample park and recreation space are more likely to exercise, which reduces heart disease risk. People who live in communities with smoke-free laws are less likely to smoke or to be exposed to second-hand smoke, which reduces lung cancer risk.

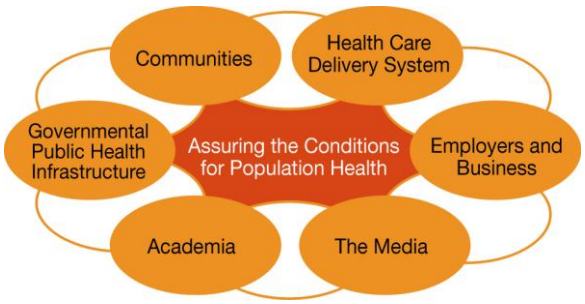
The problem is that there are big differences in health across communities, with some places being much healthier than others. And up to now, it has been hard to get a standard way to measure how healthy a county is and see where they can improve.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute are pleased to present the 2010 *County Health Rankings*, a collection of 50 reports that reflect the overall health of counties in every state across the country. For the first time, counties can get a snapshot of how healthy their residents are by comparing their overall health and the factors that influence their health, with other counties in their state. This will allow them to see county-to-county where they are doing well and where they need to improve. Everyone has a stake in community health. We all need to work together to find solutions. The *County Health Rankings* serve as both a call to action and a needed tool in this effort.

All of the *County Health Rankings* are based upon this model of population health improvement:



In this model, health outcomes are measures that describe the current health status of a county. These health outcomes are influenced by a set of health factors. These health factors and their outcomes may also be affected by community-based programs and policies designed to alter their distribution in the community. Counties can improve health outcomes by addressing all health factors with effective, evidence-based programs and policies.



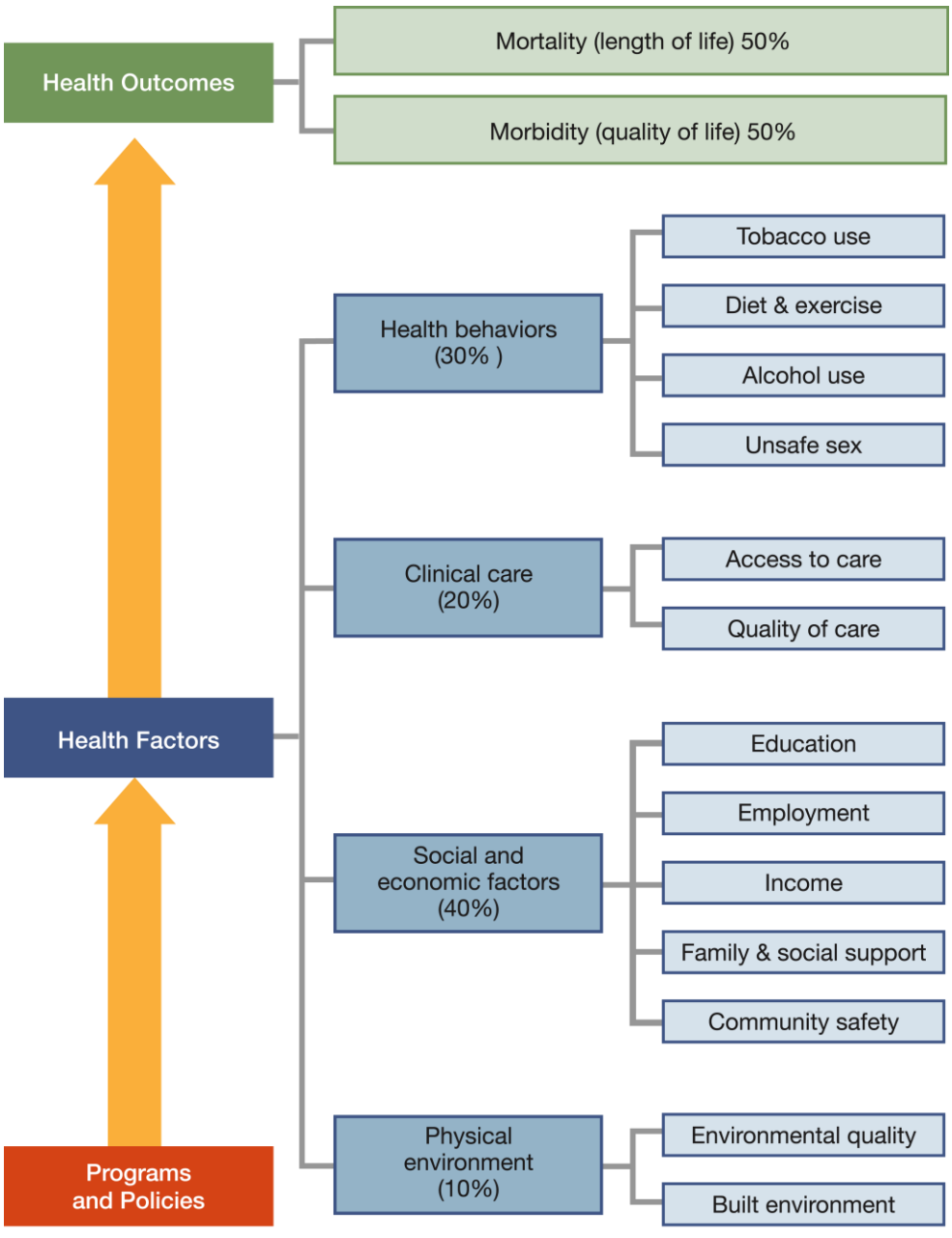
Institute of Medicine, 2002

To compile the *Rankings*, we built on our prior work in Wisconsin, worked closely with staff from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Dartmouth College, and obtained input from a team of expert advisors. Together we selected a number of population health measures based on scientific relevance, importance, and availability of data at the county level. For a more detailed explanation of the choice of measures, see www.countyhealthrankings.org.

The Rankings

This report ranks Alabama counties according to their summary measures of **health outcomes** and **health factors**, as well as the components used to create each summary measure. The figure below depicts the structure of the *Rankings* model. Counties receive a rank for each population health component; those having high ranks (e.g., 1 or 2) are estimated to be the "healthiest."

Our summary **health outcomes** rankings are based on an equal weighting of mortality and morbidity measures. The summary **health factors** rankings are based on weighted scores of four types of factors: behavioral, clinical, social and economic, and environmental. The weights for the factors (shown in parentheses in the figure) are based upon a review of the literature and expert input but represent just one way of combining these factors.

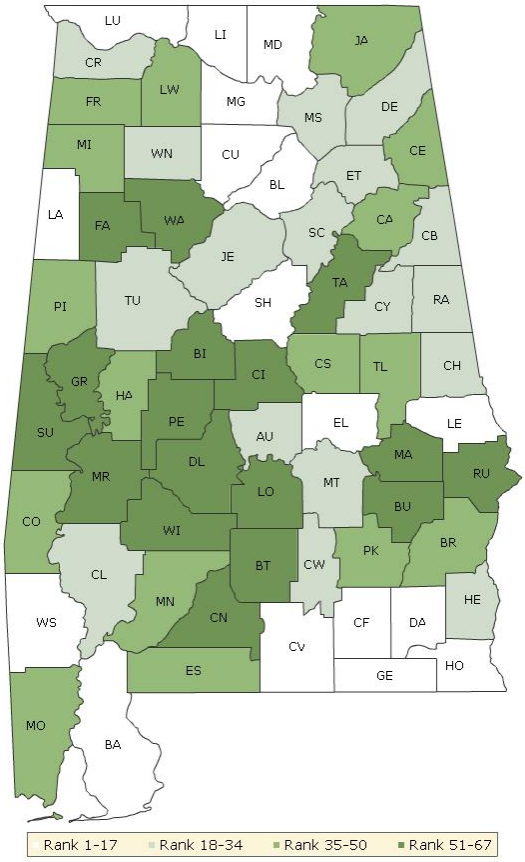


County Health Rankings model ©2010 UWPHI

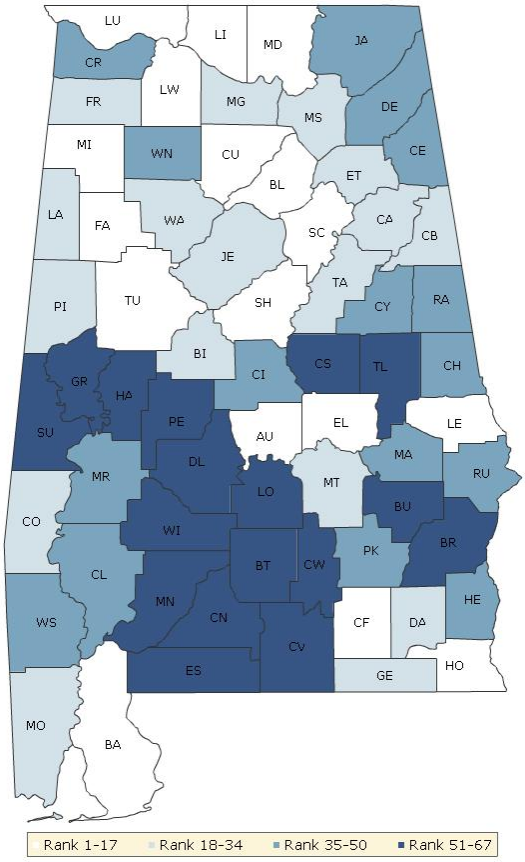
The maps on this page display Alabama's counties divided into groups by health rank. The lighter colors indicate better performance in the respective summary rankings. The green map shows the distribution of summary health outcomes. The blue displays the distribution of the summary rank for health factors.

Maps help locate the healthiest and least healthy counties in the state. The health factors map appears similar to the health outcomes map, showing how health factors and health outcomes are closely related.

HEALTH OUTCOMES



HEALTH FACTORS



Summary Health Outcomes & Health Factors Rankings

Counties receive two summary ranks:

- Health Outcomes
- Health Factors

Each of these ranks represents a weighted summary of a number of measures.

Health outcomes represent how healthy a county is while health factors are what influences the health of the county.

Rank	Health Outcomes	Rank	Health Factors
1	Shelby	1	Shelby
2	Lee	2	Madison
3	Baldwin	3	Baldwin
4	Madison	4	Limestone
5	Morgan	5	Elmore
6	Limestone	6	Lauderdale
7	Elmore	7	Cullman
8	Houston	8	Tuscaloosa
9	Coffee	9	Blount
10	Blount	10	Autauga
11	Dale	11	Lee
12	Lauderdale	12	Houston
13	Geneva	13	Coffee
14	Washington	14	Fayette
15	Cullman	15	Marion
16	Covington	16	Lawrence
17	Lamar	17	St. Clair
18	St. Clair	18	Montgomery
19	DeKalb	19	Bibb
20	Montgomery	20	Cleburne
21	Clarke	21	Morgan
22	Tuscaloosa	22	Mobile
23	Autauga	23	Pickens
24	Crenshaw	24	Marshall
25	Marshall	25	Walker
26	Jefferson	26	Geneva
27	Clay	27	Talladega
28	Chambers	28	Etowah
29	Henry	29	Lamar
30	Colbert	30	Calhoun
31	Randolph	31	Jefferson
32	Cleburne	32	Franklin
33	Winston	33	Choctaw
34	Etowah	34	Dale
35	Jackson	35	Chilton
36	Pickens	36	Washington
37	Pike	37	Colbert
38	Monroe	38	Cherokee
39	Lawrence	39	Macon
40	Tallapoosa	40	DeKalb

Rank	Health Outcomes	Rank	Health Factors
41	Franklin	41	Winston
42	Mobile	42	Jackson
43	Marion	43	Clay
44	Cherokee	44	Henry
45	Barbour	45	Marengo
46	Calhoun	46	Pike
47	Escambia	47	Chambers
48	Hale	48	Russell
49	Choctaw	49	Clarke
50	Coosa	50	Randolph
51	Bibb	51	Coosa
52	Macon	52	Crenshaw
53	Talladega	53	Covington
54	Russell	54	Barbour
55	Butler	55	Tallapoosa
56	Conecuh	56	Monroe
57	Chilton	57	Conecuh
58	Marengo	58	Escambia
59	Fayette	59	Hale
60	Wilcox	60	Butler
61	Sumter	61	Sumter
62	Dallas	62	Bullock
63	Bullock	63	Dallas
64	Lowndes	64	Perry
65	Walker	65	Wilcox
66	Greene	66	Greene
67	Perry	67	Lowndes

Health Outcomes Rankings

The summary health outcomes ranking is based on measures of mortality and morbidity. Each county's ranks for mortality and morbidity are displayed here. The mortality rank, representing length of life, is based on a measure of premature death: the years of potential life lost prior to age 75.

The morbidity rank is based on measures that represent health-related quality of life and birth outcomes. We combine four morbidity measures: self-reported fair or poor health, poor physical health days, poor mental health days, and the percent of births with low birthweight.

Rank	Mortality	Morbidity
1	Shelby	Shelby
2	Lee	Baldwin
3	Madison	Lee
4	Baldwin	Morgan
5	Houston	Covington
6	Lauderdale	Madison
7	Limestone	Elmore
8	Lamar	Limestone
9	Blount	Macon
10	Coffee	Coffee
11	Morgan	Houston
12	Elmore	Henry
13	Dale	Geneva
14	Tuscaloosa	Coosa
15	Crenshaw	Marshall
16	DeKalb	Dale
17	Cullman	Washington
18	Washington	Marion
19	Autauga	Blount
20	Geneva	Etowah
21	St. Clair	Jefferson
22	Monroe	Montgomery
23	Clarke	St. Clair
24	Montgomery	Bibb
25	Colbert	Randolph
26	Tallapoosa	Pike
27	Winston	Butler
28	Clay	Clarke
29	Chambers	Cullman
30	Barbour	DeKalb
31	Cleburne	Lawrence
32	Franklin	Lauderdale
33	Mobile	Jackson
34	Marshall	Clay
35	Talladega	Autauga
36	Jefferson	Chambers
37	Choctaw	Cleburne
38	Pickens	Tuscaloosa
39	Covington	Pickens
40	Jackson	Conecuh

Rank	Mortality	Morbidity
41	Cherokee	Calhoun
42	Randolph	Crenshaw
43	Marengo	Escambia
44	Henry	Lamar
45	Calhoun	Cherokee
46	Hale	Russell
47	Etowah	Colbert
48	Lawrence	Winston
49	Fayette	Chilton
50	Pike	Wilcox
51	Escambia	Hale
52	Russell	Franklin
53	Marion	Mobile
54	Chilton	Walker
55	Conecuh	Dallas
56	Wilcox	Barbour
57	Bibb	Tallapoosa
58	Sumter	Bullock
59	Coosa	Monroe
60	Butler	Lowndes
61	Macon	Sumter
62	Dallas	Choctaw
63	Greene	Fayette
64	Lowndes	Talladega
65	Bullock	Marengo
66	Walker	Greene
67	Perry	Perry

Health Factors Rankings

The summary health factors ranking is based on four factors: health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic, and physical environment factors. In turn, each of these factors is based on several measures. Health behaviors include measures of smoking, diet and exercise, alcohol use, and risky sex behavior. Clinical care includes measures of access to care and quality of care. Social and economic factors include measures of education, employment, income, family and social support, and community safety. The physical environment includes measures of environmental quality and the built environment.

Rank	Health Behaviors	Rank	Clinical Care	Rank	Social & Economic Factors	Rank	Physical Environment
1	Shelby	1	Jefferson	1	Shelby	1	Marion
2	Lauderdale	2	Shelby	2	Blount	2	Chilton
3	Limestone	3	Houston	3	Baldwin	3	Lawrence
4	Conecuh	4	Montgomery	4	Madison	4	Cullman
5	Baldwin	5	Mobile	5	Limestone	5	Lamar
6	Madison	6	Tuscaloosa	6	Elmore	5	Pickens
7	Elmore	7	Madison	7	Coffee	7	Hale
8	Lee	8	Dallas	8	Autauga	8	Dallas
9	Lamar	9	Chambers	9	Cullman	9	Chambers
10	Marion	10	Macon	10	Lee	10	Bibb
11	Pickens	11	Calhoun	11	St. Clair	11	Blount
12	Blount	12	Barbour	12	Lawrence	12	Elmore
13	Cleburne	13	Talladega	13	Cleburne	13	Franklin
14	Tuscaloosa	14	Autauga	14	Lauderdale	14	Winston
15	Clay	15	Tallapoosa	15	Morgan	15	Fayette
16	DeKalb	16	Choctaw	16	Tuscaloosa	16	Lauderdale
17	Cullman	17	Colbert	17	Bibb	17	DeKalb
18	Franklin	18	Fayette	18	Walker	18	Marshall
19	Winston	19	Russell	19	Colbert	19	Geneva
20	Fayette	20	Marengo	20	Jackson	20	Monroe
21	Montgomery	21	Clarke	21	Cherokee	21	Walker
22	Geneva	22	Baldwin	22	Dale	22	Dale
23	Henry	23	Walker	23	Fayette	23	Butler
24	Jefferson	24	Etowah	24	Etowah	24	Talladega
25	Houston	25	Limestone	25	Chilton	25	Washington
26	Choctaw	26	Sumter	26	Crenshaw	26	Randolph
27	Marengo	27	Morgan	27	Marshall	27	Jackson
28	Mobile	28	Elmore	28	Houston	28	Calhoun
29	Chambers	29	Lauderdale	29	Covington	29	Clay
30	Macon	30	Dale	30	Washington	30	Houston
31	Bibb	31	Pike	31	Geneva	31	Limestone
32	Coffee	32	Henry	32	Franklin	32	St. Clair
33	Pike	33	Coosa	33	Winston	33	Mobile
34	Marshall	34	Pickens	34	Jefferson	34	Coosa
35	Autauga	35	Coffee	35	Calhoun	35	Lee
36	Coosa	36	Hale	36	Randolph	36	Escambia
37	Talladega	37	Marion	37	DeKalb	37	Autauga
38	Randolph	38	Cullman	38	Lamar	38	Cherokee
39	Monroe	39	St. Clair	39	Clay	39	Etowah
40	Washington	40	Lee	40	Marion	40	Coffee

Rank	Health Behaviors	Rank	Clinical Care	Rank	Social & Economic Factors	Rank	Physical Environment
41	Cherokee	41	Bullock	41	Talladega	41	Tallapoosa
42	Lawrence	42	Perry	42	Pike	42	Tuscaloosa
43	Clarke	43	Wilcox	43	Pickens	43	Baldwin
44	Crenshaw	44	Lowndes	44	Mobile	44	Macon
45	Russell	45	Marshall	45	Choctaw	45	Crenshaw
46	Morgan	46	Monroe	46	Henry	46	Barbour
47	Etowah	47	Jackson	47	Russell	47	Madison
48	Covington	48	Greene	48	Tallapoosa	48	Pike
49	Calhoun	49	Washington	49	Butler	49	Clarke
50	Chilton	50	Escambia	50	Clarke	50	Perry
51	Barbour	51	Chilton	51	Montgomery	51	Morgan
52	Escambia	52	Geneva	52	Marengo	52	Montgomery
53	St. Clair	53	Bibb	53	Coosa	53	Russell
54	Dale	54	Lawrence	54	Barbour	54	Lowndes
55	Walker	55	Covington	55	Macon	55	Henry
56	Jackson	56	Cherokee	56	Escambia	56	Marengo
57	Colbert	57	Cleburne	57	Hale	57	Greene
58	Butler	58	Butler	58	Monroe	58	Colbert
59	Hale	59	Franklin	59	Sumter	59	Sumter
60	Tallapoosa	60	Blount	60	Conecuh	60	Choctaw
61	Bullock	61	Randolph	61	Chambers	61	Covington
62	Sumter	62	Lamar	62	Bullock	62	Wilcox
63	Dallas	63	Clay	63	Greene	63	Bullock
64	Perry	64	Crenshaw	64	Wilcox	64	Cleburne
65	Wilcox	65	DeKalb	65	Perry	65	Conecuh
66	Greene	66	Winston	66	Lowndes	66	Shelby
67	Lowndes	67	Conecuh	67	Dallas	67	Jefferson

2010 County Health Rankings: Measures, Data Sources, and Years of Data

	Measure	Data Source	Years of Data
HEALTH OUTCOMES			
Mortality	Premature death	National Center for Health Statistics	2004-2006
Morbidity	Poor or fair health	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2002-2008
	Poor physical health days	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2002-2008
	Poor mental health days	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2002-2008
	Low birthweight	National Center for Health Statistics	2000-2006
HEALTH FACTORS			
HEALTH BEHAVIORS			
Tobacco	Adult smoking	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2002-2008
Diet and Exercise	Adult obesity	National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion	2006-2008
Alcohol Use	Binge drinking	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2002-2008
	Motor vehicle crash death rate	National Center for Health Statistics	2000-2006
High Risk Sexual Behavior	Chlamydia rate	National Center for Health Statistics	2007
	Teen birth rate	National Center for Health Statistics	2000-2006
CLINICAL CARE			
Access to Care	Uninsured adults	Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, U.S. Census	2005
	Primary care provider rate	Health Resources & Services Administration	2006
Quality of Care	Preventable hospital stays	Medicare/Dartmouth Institute	2005-2006
	Diabetic screening	Medicare/Dartmouth Institute	2003-2006
	Hospice use	Medicare/Dartmouth Institute	2001-2005
SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS			
Education	High school graduation	National Center for Education Statistics[1]	2005-2006
	College degrees	U.S. Census/American Community Survey	2000/2005-2007
Employment	Unemployment	Bureau of Labor Statistics	2008
Income	Children in poverty	Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, U.S. Census	2007
	Income inequality	U.S. Census/American Community Survey[2]	2000/2005-2007
Family and Social Support	Inadequate social support	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2005-2008
	Single-parent households	U.S. Census/American Community Survey	2000/2005-2007
Community Safety	Violent crime[3]	Uniform Crime Reporting, Federal Bureau of Investigation	2005-2007
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
Air Quality[4]	Air pollution-particulate matter days	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency / Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	2005
	Air pollution-ozone days	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency / Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	2005
Built Environment	Access to healthy foods	Census Zip Code Business Patterns	2006
	Liquor store density	Census County Business Patterns	2006

[1] State data sources for KY, NH, NC, PA, SC, and UT (2007-2008).

[2] Income inequality estimates for 2000 were calculated by Mark L. Burkey, North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, www.ncat.edu/~burkeym/Gini.htm.

[3] Homicide rate (2000-2006) from National Center for Health Statistics for AK, AZ, AR, CO, CT, GA, ID, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MN, MS, MT, NE, NH, NM, NC, ND, OH, SD, UT, and WV. State data source for IL.

[4] Not available for AK and HI.

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