

KEY MESSAGES

2018 Message Guide

What are the County Health Rankings?

Core Message: The County Health Rankings show us where we live matters to our health.

- An easy-to-use snapshot that compares counties within states, the Rankings show that where you live influences how well and how long you live.
- Good health allows people to fulfill their potential and thrive. The Rankings make it clear that good health is influenced by many factors beyond medical care such as **{insert factors of interest to your community}**—factors that **{County}** can do something about.
- Our county uses the Rankings to **{please insert a sentence about how your community has utilized the Rankings information}**
- All counties can take action to improve, no matter where they rank. It's not a race to the top. It is about progress toward better health.

2018 Rankings Specific Messages

- This year, we bring new analyses that show differences in health by place and by race.
- These differences are largely the result of gaps in opportunity – education, jobs, and affordable housing in our communities. These gaps disproportionately affect people of color.
- We explore this in our new enhanced report for **{State}** which shows that meaningful health gaps persist in the state not only by place but also among racial/ethnic groups.
- The healthiest county in **{State}** is **{County}** and the least healthy county is **{County}**. **{Your County}** is ranked **{X}** in the state in health outcomes.

Children in Poverty

Core Message: Every child deserves the opportunity to grow up healthy. But for children in poverty, the chances for poor health are high. They are less likely to have access to better resourced and quality schools, and are less prepared for living wage jobs leading to upward economic mobility and good health.

- In this year's State Report, we take a closer look at factors that can help communities focus their efforts to improve health – and children in poverty is one such factor.

- Child poverty rates in **{State}** are **{X}** compared to the national average of 20 percent. In your state, **{insert racial/ethnic group}** children are faring the worst and **{insert racial/ethnic group}** children are faring the best.
- We encourage communities across **{State}** to take a look at their data, compare it to nearby counties, and take action to decrease child poverty. Partner with local government, schools, and businesses and find strategies and guidance at countyhealthrankings.org.
- We know that if we build strong communities with quality education, strong emotional and social support, and access to quality health care and safe and affordable housing – our children will become more resilient, stronger and healthier adults.

Potential Solutions:

- We've already taken important steps here in **{State, Community, or County}** to expand opportunities so our children thrive by, for example **{spotlight an initiative/program underway to improve outcomes for your community's children}**.
- Other ideas for communities to explore include:
 - Investing in education from early childhood through adulthood to boost employment and career prospects;
 - Increasing or supplementing income and supporting asset development through expanded earned income tax credits, paid leave, or unemployment insurance;
 - Ensuring that everyone has adequate, affordable health care coverage and receives culturally competent services and care.

Rankings Resources, Tools and Potential Solutions

Core Message: The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps have easy-to-use resources and tools to help communities improve health in the “Take Action to Improve Health” section of countyhealthrankings.org.

- [What Works for Health](#) offers nearly 400 evidence-informed policies and programs to support local changemakers as they take steps toward building healthy communities.
- The Rankings' [Take Action Center](#) and [Community Coaches](#) also provide valuable guidance for local leaders and community partners to move with data to action.
- Learn more about all the resources and tools at countyhealthrankings.org