

# Low Birth Weight for Singleton Births

Low birth weight (LBW) is a major contributor to infant mortality and morbidity. Care for the LBW infant is costly. These data are limited to singleton births in order to explore factors other than plurality (multiple births) which may influence LBW trends.

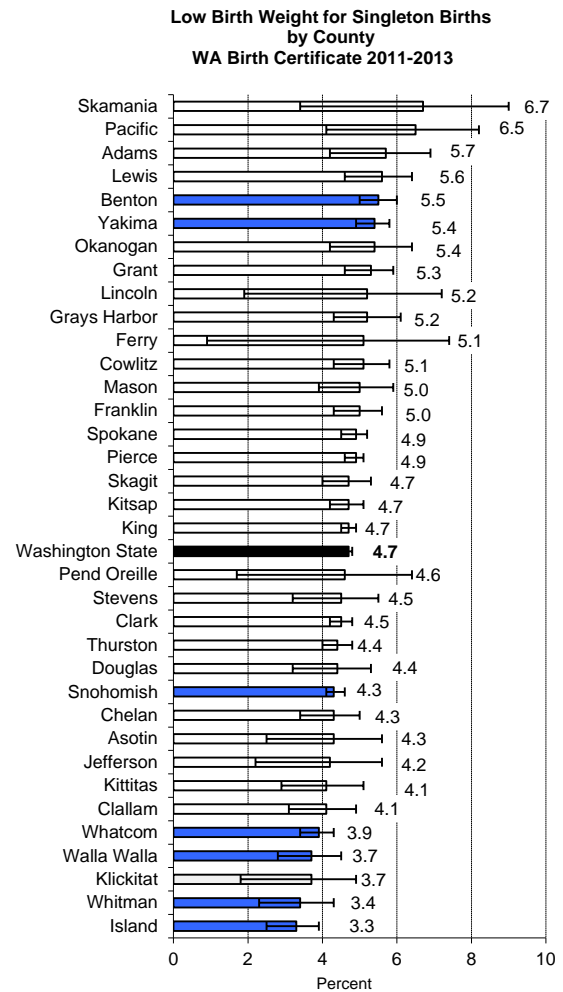
## Key Findings:

- In 2013, the LBW rate for singletons was 4.9 percent, representing 4,063 births in Washington State, compared to a national rate of 6.3 percent. The total Washington LBW rate (which includes multiple births) was 6.4 percent or 5,545 births in 2013, compared to a national rate of 8.0 percent for total LBW in 2013.<sup>1,2</sup>
- The total Washington LBW rate increased from 5.3 percent in 1990 to 6.4 percent in 2013. The singleton LBW rate also increased from 4.3 percent in 1990 to 4.9 percent in 2013.<sup>2</sup>
- Singleton LBW births were higher among younger women age 15-19 and women 35-44 and older compared to other age groups. Rates were higher among black women compared to women of other races and ethnicities.<sup>2</sup>
- Singleton LBW births increased with lower income. Rates were highest among women on welfare receiving TANF, 6.5 percent, compared to women receiving Medicaid's Pregnancy Medical coverage, 5.0 percent, and non-Medicaid women, 4.0 percent.<sup>4,a</sup> Undocumented women, who are predominantly Hispanic, often have incomes lower than women receiving TANF, but their rate was lower at 4.4%.
- Female infants were more likely to be LBW than male infants.<sup>2</sup>


**Definition:** Low birth weight is a newborn birth weight less than 2,500 grams (5 lbs. 8 oz). The analysis in this chapter is limited to singleton (one baby) births.

- The National Healthy People 2020 objective is to reduce the total LBW rate to no more than 7.8%. At a 6.4% total LBW rate, Washington is presently meeting this objective.<sup>3</sup>

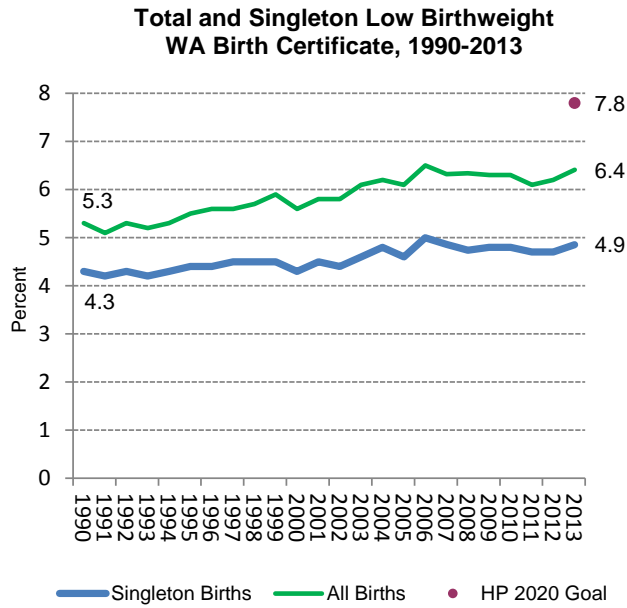
## County<sup>2</sup>



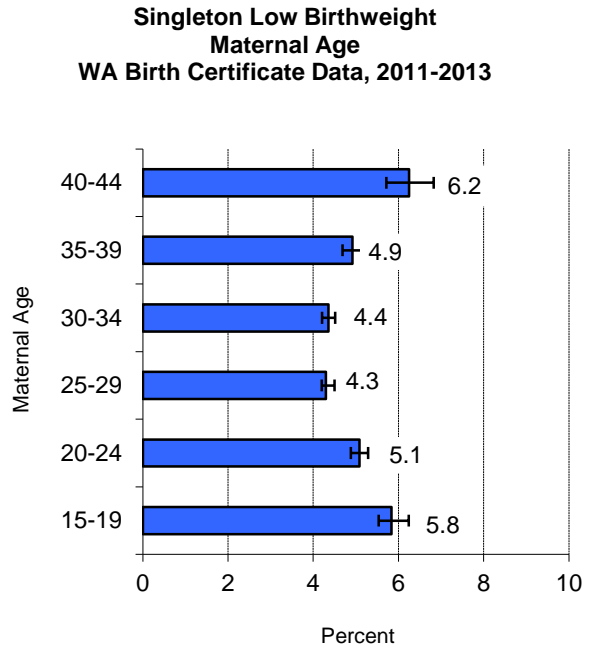
County rate not calculated for Columbia, Garfield, San Juan and Wahkiakum counties. These counties had less than 5 infants born with low birth weight, or the relative standard error of the rate was  $\geq 30\%$

 Significantly different from state

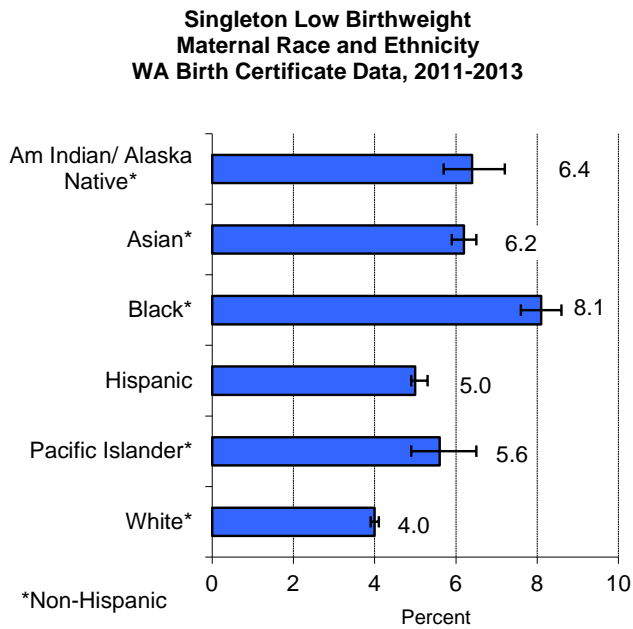
**Time Trend**<sup>2,3</sup>



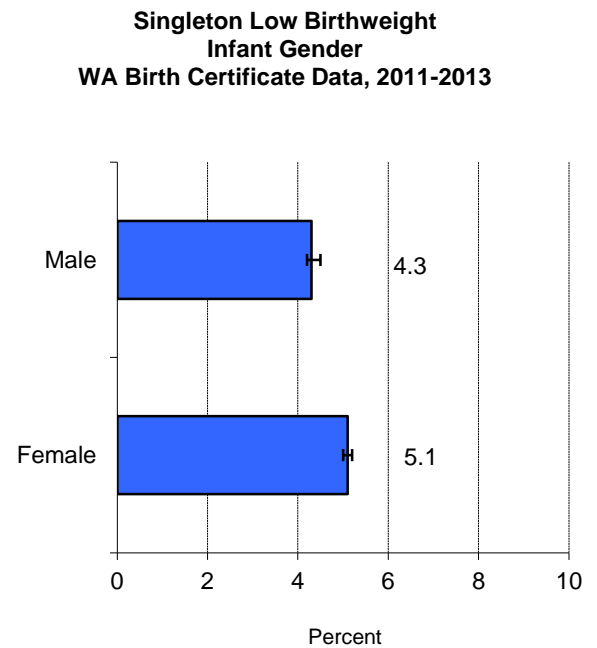
**Age**<sup>2</sup>



**Maternal Race and Ethnicity**<sup>2</sup>

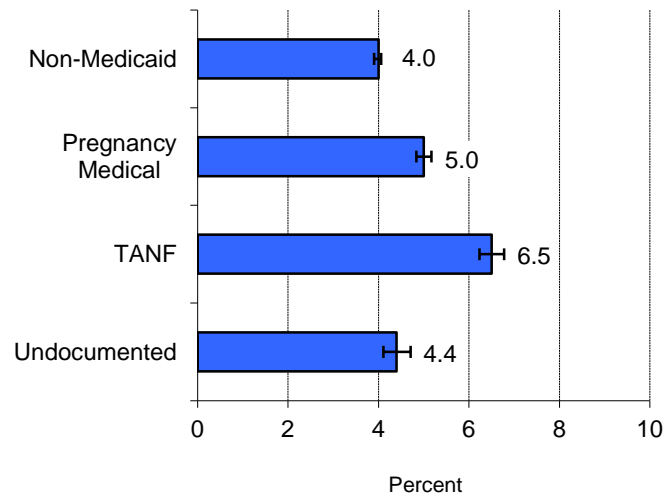


**Infant Gender**<sup>2</sup>



## Medicaid Status<sup>4,a</sup>

### LBW for Singleton Births Medicaid Program WA First Steps Data Base, 2011-2013



#### Data Sources

1. Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Osterman JK, et al. *Births: Final Data for 2013*. National vital statistics reports; vol. 64, no. 1. National Center for Health Statistics 2015. Website: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr62/nvsr64\\_01.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr62/nvsr64_01.pdf)
2. *Washington State Birth Certificate Data: Vital Registration System Annual Statistical Files, Births 1980-2013 [Data file]*. (July, 2014). Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health.
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2020. Accessed January 16, 2014 at <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/default.aspx>
4. Cawthon, L. (2014). *Characteristics of Women Who Gave Birth in Washington State* (First Steps Database). Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

#### Endnotes

- a. Medicaid women received maternity care paid for by Medicaid. Medicaid recipients were divided into three major subgroups (from highest to lowest socioeconomic status) based on program eligibility. **Pregnancy Medical** were women eligible for the pregnancy medical assistance program. These women were U.S. citizens or legal US residents, and were eligible to receive Medicaid because they were pregnant and had incomes at or below 185% the federal poverty line; **TANF** were women enrolled in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. These women were very low income (generally < 50% the federal poverty level) and received cash assistance (TANF) in addition to Medicaid. **Undocumented** were women who were not legally admitted for permanent residence, lack temporary residence status, or were not lawfully present in the U.S. They were eligible to receive Medicaid because they were pregnant and had incomes at or below 185% the federal poverty level. Undocumented women were not eligible for TANF although their incomes were often lower than women on TANF. All three Medicaid groups had incomes below most non-Medicaid women. Note that Medicaid eligibility status for pregnant legal residents who were not US Citizens changed in Spring 2009. Prior to Spring 2009, legal residents who were not US Citizens were grouped with Undocumented women (and called Non-Citizens).

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