UPDATE

A bi-monthly newsletter of the Solano County Health & Social Services Department.

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Letter from the Director

Dear Reader:

There are a number of indicators that can predict future quality of life. Getting an education is one. Higher educational attainment is associated with lower unemployment and higher wages, higher family income, and better health for adults and their children.

Other factors also impact future quality of life. Providing a healthy start in life for children beginning with proper prenatal care, regular wellness check-ups, immunizations and prompt treatment of illness reduces the potential for and cost of future health and behavioral problems. Better physical and mental health results in better study and other habits.

Teen pregnancy and proper prenatal care are other important measures of a community's social health. Researchers estimate that Americans who finish high school, reach the age of 20, and get married before they have a child have only an eight percent chance that their child will grow up in poverty. For those who do not reach these milestones before having their first child, the odds are almost reversed, with a 79 percent chance of their children living in poverty. The consequences for their babies include a greater chance of being born with low birth weight, dying within the first year of life or being abused or neglected.

Of course, there are always exceptions who overcome the odds but, in general, delaying becoming a parent until one is more mature, makes it more likely for a family to succeed.

This edition of **UPDATE** looks at prenatal care and births to teenage mothers in Solano County. (See Pages 6 & 7.) Working to reduce the number of births to teen mothers and making sure that all pregnant women get proper prenatal care are both part of the important mission of the Maternal & Child Health Bureau of the Public Health Division.

The Maternal & Child Health Bureau (MCH) provides services to pregnant women, mothers, children and family members. MCH works in collaboration with the entire Health and Social Services Department and with other county, city, non-profit and for-profit entities, to provide prenatal care and perinatal services to give babies a healthy start in life along with such services as parenting classes, help for teen parents to stay in school and graduate, and programs that work to reduce infant mortality.

The link between teenage pregnancy and poverty has been shown in numerous studies. Interestingly, new poverty estimates for the US were released in late July. They show that poverty has increased nationwide including here in Solano County. Among the groups hardest hit are households headed by single mothers and children. The new poverty figures are shown on Page 3. The growth in the number of persons living in poverty, coupled with more families going without health insurance, are almost certainly among the forces behind the steady downward trend in the H&SS Index.

Sincerely,

Patrick O. Duterte
Director

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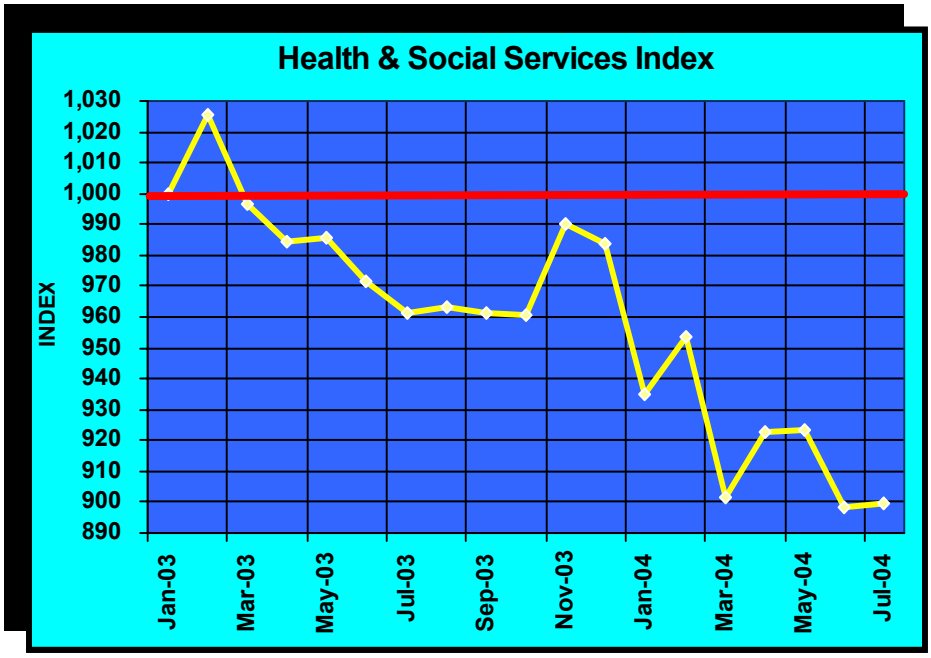


The **Health & Social Services (H&SS) Index** combines workload data from 15 key services provided by H&SS, along with data on unemployment in Solano County, to provide a monthly indicator of community demand for health and social services.

All of the monthly numbers — clients served, program caseloads, number of unemployed, referrals, etc. — are added together and then converted into an index score. The January 2003 total serves as the index bench line figure of 1,000. The index scores for subsequent months reflect change from the January level. Like the Dow Jones or NASDAQ, higher scores suggest positive developments — fewer people looking for work or requiring the services that H&SS provides, for example. Falling numbers suggest increasing need for H&SS's safety net services.

Please note: The index is not a direct measure of need. Many socioeconomic factors influence need. At the same time, various factors, such as eligibility guidelines and available revenues, influence the amount of service that H&SS can provide regardless of need or demand for service.

INDICATOR	Jan-03	Mar-03	May-03	Jul-03	Sep-03	Nov-03	Jan-04	Mar-04	May-04	Jul-04
Number Unemployed	13,800	12,800	12,300	13,800	12,100	11,800	13,100	13,600	11,700	13,300
Number of I&R Calls	2,772	2,555	2,596	2,906	3,029	2,178	2,655	2,520	2,059	2,184
CalWORKs Cash Assistance Caseload	9,405	9,439	9,794	9,753	9,968	10,116	10,402	10,452	11,021	10,982
New CalWORKs Applications	385	337	330	403	396	394	469	567	324	367
Food Stamp Recipients	11,515	12,261	12,690	12,517	13,106	13,312	13,761	14,389	15,420	15,472
General Relief Recipients	256	320	323	325	359	394	385	367	374	387
Medi-Cal Enrollment	14,327	14,494	14,827	15,198	15,484	15,414	15,746	16,227	16,276	16,492
CMSP Enrollment	4,228	4,515	4,746	4,794	4,941	4895	4,922	5,266	5,227	5,413
Elder or Dependent Adult Abuse Referrals	98	115	123	110	90	82	106	95	95	90
Elder or Dependent Adult Abuse Confirmed	40	27	35	20	31	16	36	29	26	27
In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Authorized Cases	2,254	2,254	2,226	2,231	2,278	2,299	2,324	2,329	2,329	2,328
Child Abuse Referrals	390	378	382	324	349	313	387	452	410	304
Medical Clinic Visits	2,595	2,752	2,664	2,496	2,721	2,024	2,615	3,025	2,614	2,454
Dental Clinic Visits	447	431	434	425	379	278	283	401	315	290
Mental Health Clients	2,701	2,833	2,793	2,754	2,784	2,559	2,756	2,804	2,592	2,529
Substance Abuse Clients	699	635	621	529	530	510	566	602	575	651

NUMBERS LIVING IN POVERTY UP IN SOLANO COUNTY

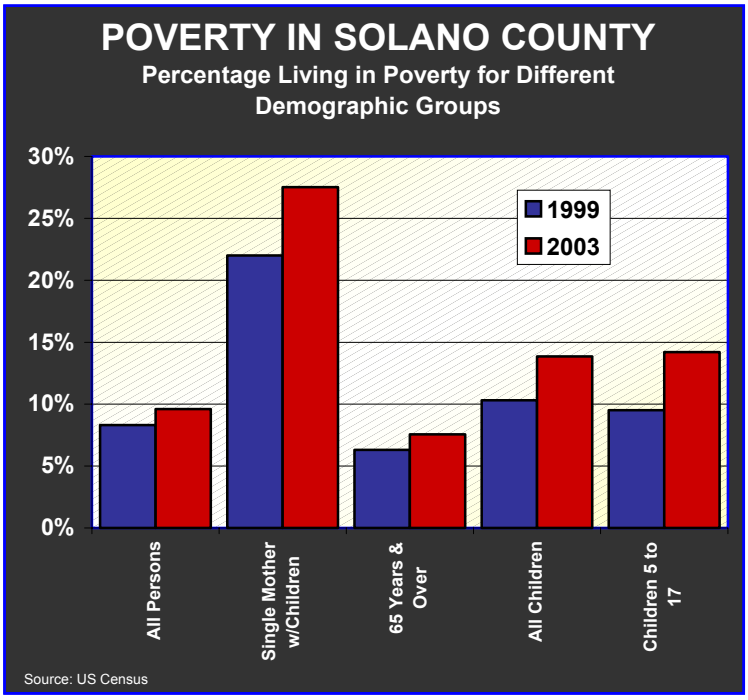
New census figures released in late August showed growing poverty nationwide. In Solano County, the poverty rate — the percentage of people living in poverty — rose from 8.3 percent in 1999 to 9.6 percent in 2003. The number of people living in poverty increase from just over 31,000 to almost 40,000.

In 1999, Solano County's poverty rate was below the Bay Area average but is now higher.

As shown in the table in the lower right hand corner, the same income standard is used to gauge poverty for the entire continental United States. That means that even though the Bay Area is one of the most expensive places to live in the nation, the same income is used to measure poverty as in a less expensive region. For Solano County, the poverty rate is even further from meeting the cost of living than in most of the rest of the country.

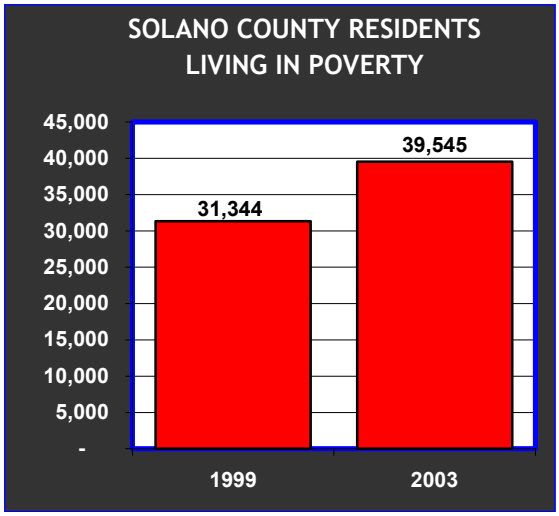
Single mothers with children are among the households with the highest proportion of poverty. 1 in 4 such households live in poverty and many more earn only just above the poverty threshold.

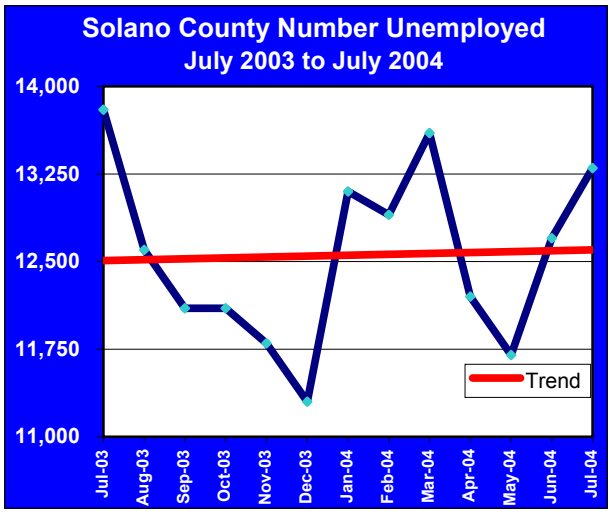
A family of four with one person working full-time and earning the minimum wage ($6.75) would earn only $14,040 — $4,000 below the poverty line.

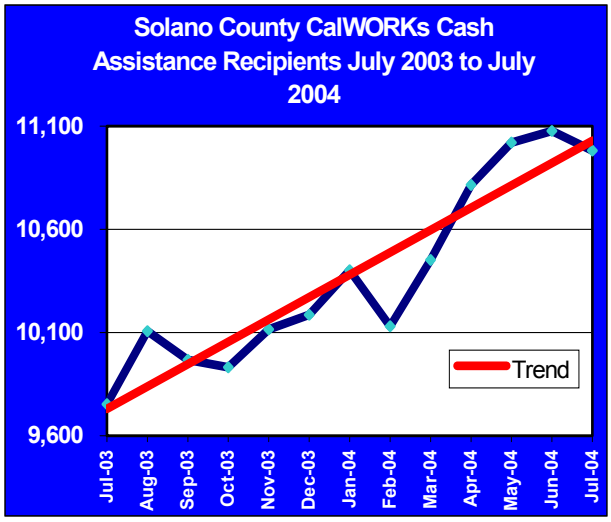


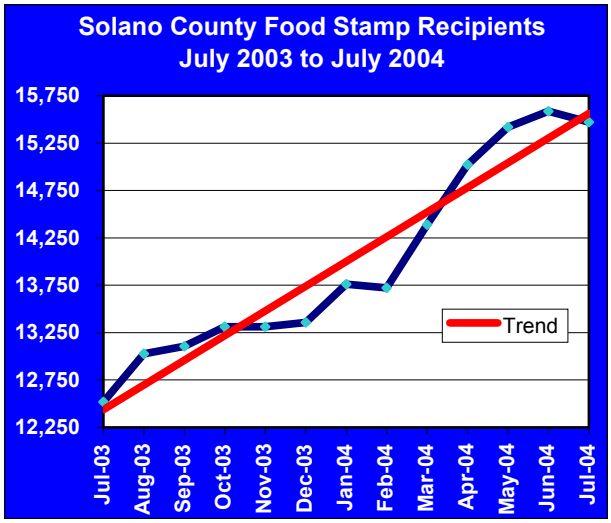
2004 HHS Poverty Guidelines

Family Size	48 States & DC	Alaska	Hawaii
1	$9,310	$11,630	$10,700
2	$12,490	$15,610	$14,360
3	$15,670	$19,590	$18,020
4	$18,850	$23,570	$21,680
5	$22,030	$27,550	$25,340
6	$25,210	$31,530	$29,000
7	$28,390	$35,510	$32,660
8	$31,570	$39,490	$36,320
For each additional person, add	$ 3,180	$ 3,980	$ 3,660









ECONOMY/EMPLOYMENT

- The number of unemployed in Solano County rose by 600 in July compared to June. The unemployment rate increased from 5.9 percent in June to 6.1 percent in July.
- The increase in both June and July suggest that the County is not succeeding in generating employment for those entering the workforce such as high school and college graduates.
- The July 2004 rate was lower than 6.3 percent figure for July 2003.
- The County's unemployment rate was lower than for the state as a whole (6.5. percent) but higher than the 5.5 percent national average. The unemployment rate in neighboring counties was lower than in Solano County. July rates: Napa, 4.5%; Yolo, 4.7%; Contra Costa, 5.3%.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

- Public assistance programs leveled off and dipped slightly in July but remained at the highest levels since welfare reform began.
- The overall upward trend appears to reflect the continued soft labor market and increasing poverty. (See Page 3.)
- The number of food stamp recipients was 24 percent higher in July 2004 than in July 2003. CalWORKs recipients increased by 12.5 percent during the same period.
- There were 3,000 more food stamp recipients and 1,200 more CalWORKs recipients at the beginning of FY 2004-05 than at the beginning of FY 2003-04.
- The food stamp program is intended to help low income households improve their nutrition by supplementing income. The larger growth in the number of food stamp recipients appears to reflect growth in the "working poor" – households that are not earning enough to meet the high cost of living in the Bay Area.

PUBLIC HEALTH

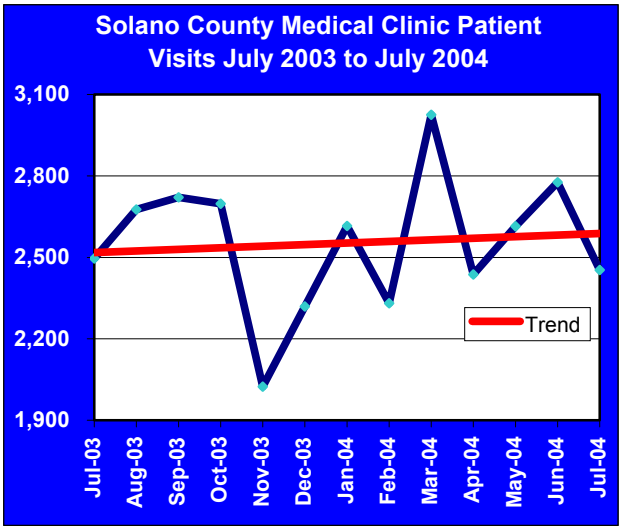
- Visits to the two Solano County health clinics — Fairfield and Vallejo — averaged about 2,550 patients monthly. Over the course of the year, visits were fairly constant — probably a reflection of lack of capacity than lack of demand.

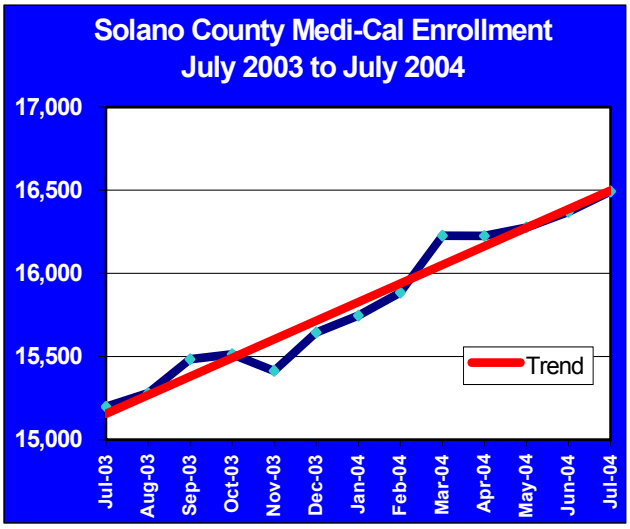
· Medi-Cal enrollment increased 8.5% between July 2003 and July 2004. Despite the rapid increase and addition of 1,000 persons (plus an additional 600 CMSP participants), visits to the two county medical clinics were fairly stable throughout the fiscal year. Among the possible reasons: As enrollment expands, newer enrollees have fewer medical issues, clients are making less frequent clinic visits (perhaps because their health needs are being better managed), or clinics are operating near capacity and appointments are not readily available.

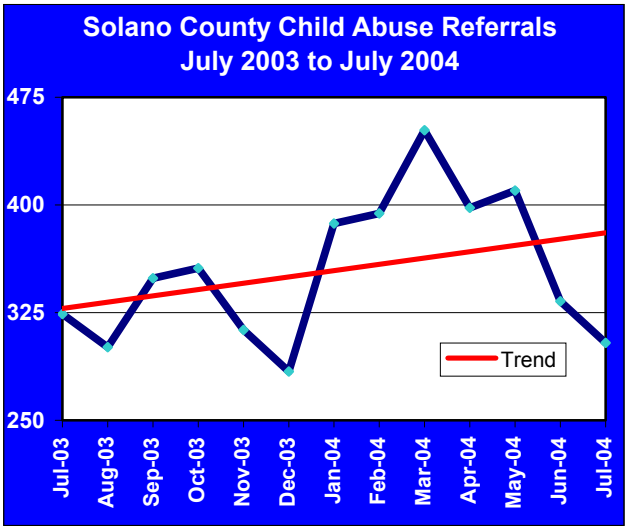
CHILD WELFARE

- The number of referrals for child abuse or neglect declined somewhat over the last three months. The general trend for the fiscal year, however, was up.

- Over 500 children are in foster care in any given month.







SUCCESS STORY: Accommodating mothers & babies

Studies have repeatedly shown that infants who are breastfed exclusively for six months and continue to receive their mother's milk for at least a year are healthier, smarter and have fewer medical problems. As a result, their parents miss less work and have improved morale while at work – it is a win/win situation when a breastfeeding mother returns to work and is supported by her employer to continue to provide her milk for her baby.

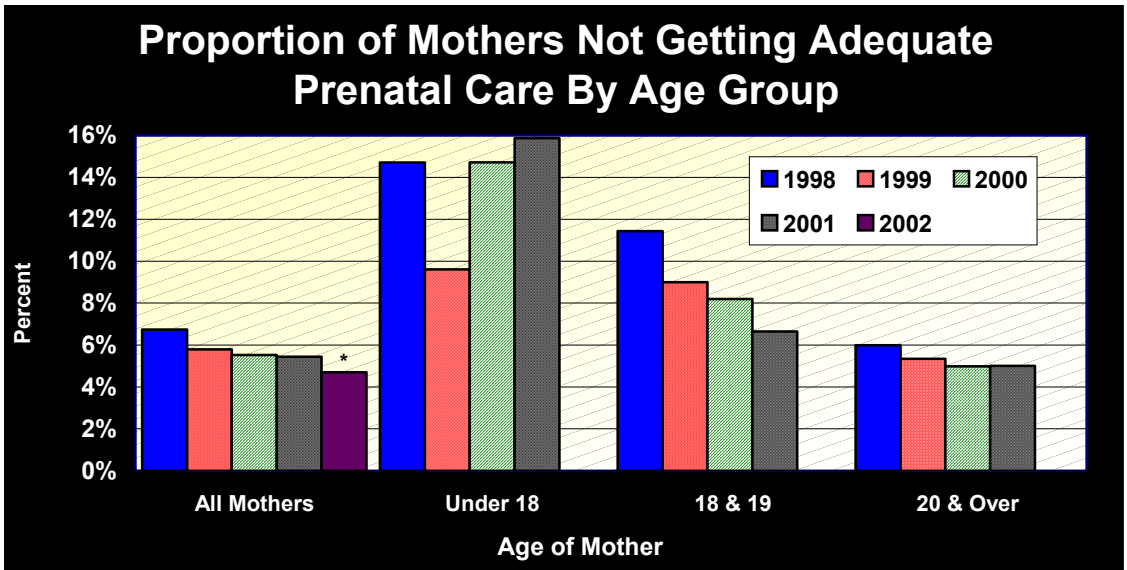
State law (AB 1025, the Lactation Accommodation Bill) now requires employers to provide a reasonable amount of break time and dedicated space, other than a restroom, so that breastfeeding mothers can pump their milk for their babies. Mothers can also use the room for breastfeeding. In some cases fathers (see picture) are able to bring the child to work.

The bill took effect in 2002, the same year that the H&SS administration building opened on Beck Drive in Fairfield. As part of the design of the building, a lactation room was set aside for breastfeeding mothers and serves as a model for employers.

The benefits of the program are clear. According to one mother, "[B]ecause of the pumping room, I was able to breastfeed my son ... until he was over six months old. I ... continued to pump daily for another year. Jack is a very happy and healthy little boy who did not get so much as a cold until he was close to a year old, and I know that this is due in large part to the immunities I was able to pass on to him through breast milk."

Many mothers have been able to see the difference that the private room has made. One employee remembered that she was unable to pump with her first child. "I didn't have my own office," she wrote, "nor was there a room that I could use that wouldn't inconvenience anyone. So after four months, I stopped breastfeeding and started her on formula." The difference that the accommodations made for her second child was "huge". As she noted, " My first born constantly had ear infections to the point where she had tubes placed in her ears before she reached the age of two. Whereas ... my second child, who [turned] two at the end of August, has had only one that I could remember."

Sometimes Daddy can bring baby to work so mom can breastfeed: Ja'Nita, Mariano & Luis.



Inadequate Prenatal Care = Prenatal care first obtained in 3rd trimester or no prenatal care during pregnancy. * Age breakdown not available for 2002.

PRENATAL CARE

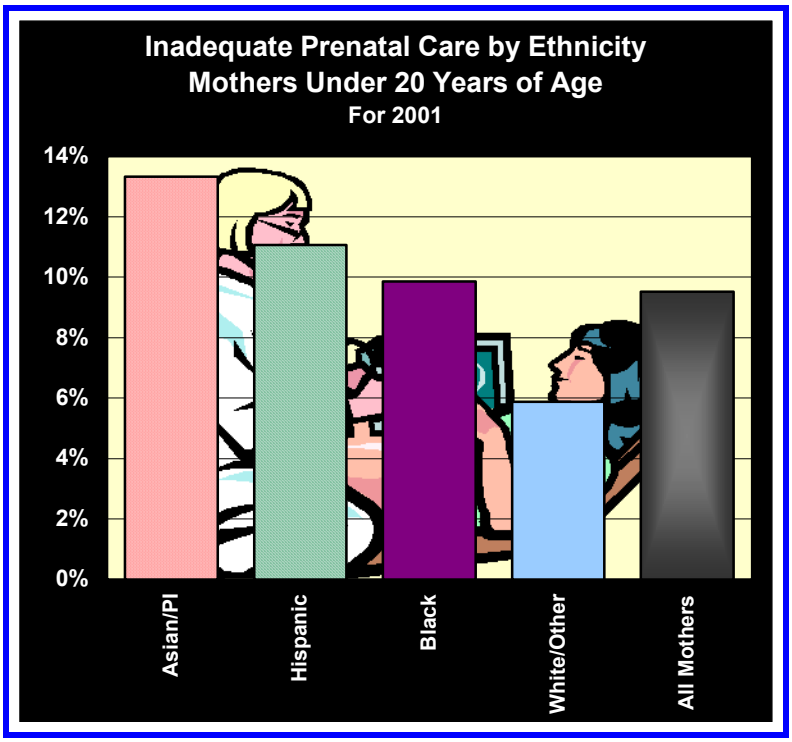
Solano County has the highest teen birth rate in the Bay Area and ranks 30th out of the State's 58 counties. However, the County's teen birth rate has fallen steadily over the past five years. Teenage mothers accounted for between 10 and 12 percent of all births in Solano County between 1998 and 2000. The proportion fell below 9 percent in 2002. [See Table at bottom right.]

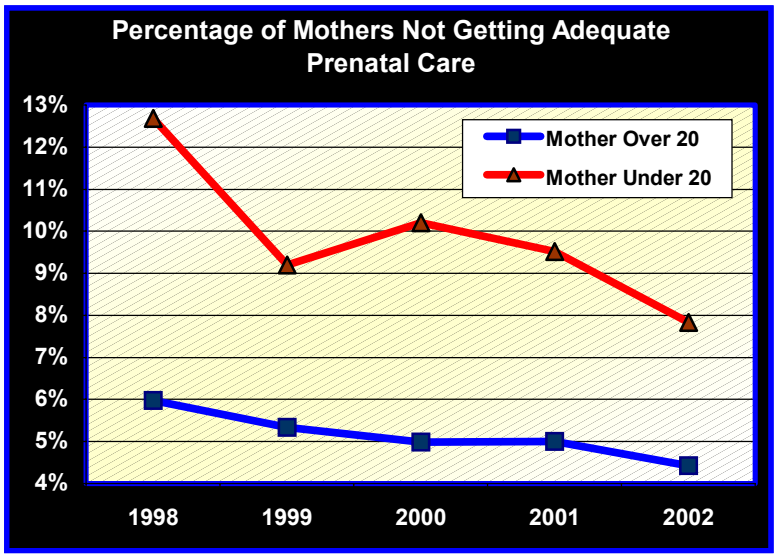
Younger mothers are much less likely to delay or not get prenatal care than mothers older than 20 — although the gap has narrowed over the last few years. Teenage mothers were 2.1 times more likely to forego prenatal care than older mothers in 1998. The ratio fell to 1.8 in 2002.

Among teen mothers, Asian/Pacific Islanders were the group least likely to get prenatal care, followed by Hispanics.

The number of actual births to teenage Asian/Pacific Islanders was the lowest among all ethnic groups — 63 compared to 135 births to teen mothers for blacks, 155 for whites, and 202 for Hispanics.

In terms of the proportion of all births; for whites, 2001 figures showed that 6.6 percent of all live births were to teenage mothers. For Asian/Pacific Islanders the percentage was 7.1 percent. For Hispanics, teen mothers accounted for 12 percent of all live births; for blacks the percentage was 16.3 percent. The proportion of all births to teen mothers fell sharply for all ethnic groups between 1999 and 2001.





BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

YEAR	Total Live Births	Under 15	15 to 17	18 & 19	% of all Births to Teen Mothers
1998	5,510	10	212	399	11.3%
1999	5,539	11	214	425	11.7%
2000	5,891	8	179	422	10.3%
2001	5,763	6	167	384	9.7%
2002	5,851	4	165	345	8.8%

H&SS FY 05 BUDGET-IN-BRIEF

Budgeted Health & Social Services Revenues FY 2004-05					
DIVISION	Total Revenues	Realignment Revenues	General Fund Revenues	Program Revenues	% of Total
ADMINISTRATION	$ 1,709,280	$ -	$ 1,440,966	$ 268,314	0.7%
PUBLIC GUARDIAN	1,381,810	-	1,096,912	284,898	0.6%
SUBSTANCE ABUSE	5,985,773	-	512,342	5,473,431	2.5%
FAMILY HEALTH SERVICES	6,561,095	3,439,505	223,456	2,898,134	2.8%
MENTAL HEALTH MANAGED CARE	4,049,261	-	-	4,049,261	1.7%
MEDICAL SERVICES	17,502,514	6,871,127	815,165	9,816,222	7.4%
CHILD WELFARE SERVICES	17,494,435	3,030,023	1,367,328	13,097,084	7.3%
OLDER & DISABLED ADULTS	7,721,571	908,748	1,585,569	5,227,254	3.2%
EMPLOYMENT & ELIGIBILITY	51,726,973	-	2,216,354	49,510,619	21.7%
IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	654,325	-	-	654,325	0.3%
MENTAL HEALTH DIVISION	37,835,891	11,629,447	7,491,487	18,714,957	15.9%
PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION	22,609,665	5,394,882	928,983	16,285,800	9.5%
ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS	62,830,750	6,914,438	7,006,506	48,909,806	26.4%
TOTAL	$238,063,343	$38,188,170	$24,685,068	$175,190,105	100.0%
Percentage of Agency Revenues		16.0%	10.4%	73.6%	

Health & Social Services Agency Appropriations Trend for Past 5 Years					
Fiscal Year	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budgeted
Amount	$173m	$189m	$206m	$222m	$238m
Dollar Change		$16m	$17m	$16m	$16m
Percentage Change		9.2%	9.0%	7.8%	7.2%

- Began FY 05 with a balanced budget - meaning no accumulated deficits from prior years.
- The number of authorized positions fell from 1,301 in FY 02-03 to 1,204 in FY 03-04 to 1,140 for FY 04-05.
- Despite the reduction in staffing levels, the Department's appropriations budget has continued to grow between 7 and 9.5 percent annually to meet the increased demand for services.