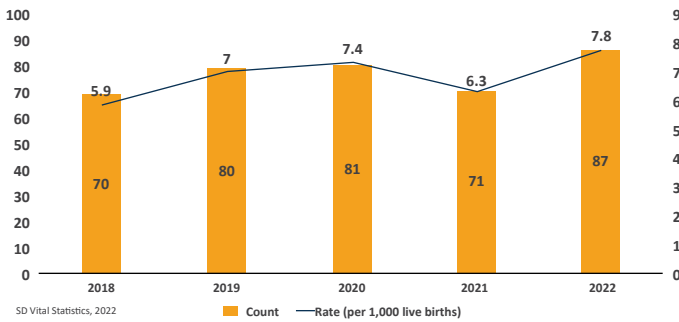


INFANT MORTALITY

in South Dakota

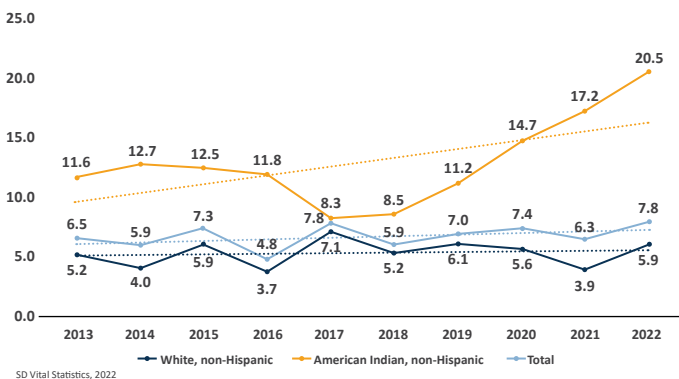


FIVE-YEAR INFANT MORTALITY RATES AND COUNTS, 2018-2022



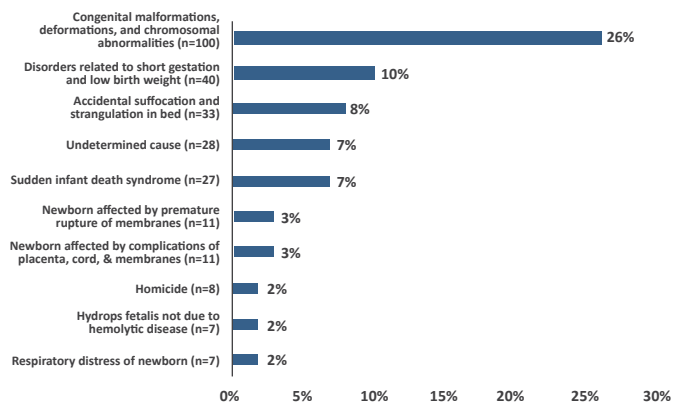
From 2018-2022, there were 389 infant deaths in SD. The overall infant mortality rate increased from 6.3 in 2021 to 7.8 in 2022. This is the highest rate for SD since 2017 which was also 7.8.

INFANT MORTALITY RATES BY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2013-2022



2022 was the worst single year for American Indian infant mortality since DOH started collecting data in this manner (2004). The American Indian rate rose from 17.2 to 20.5 deaths per 1,000 live births. There were 47 White infant deaths and 30 American Indian infant deaths in 2022. Infant mortality rates of American Indian, non-Hispanic have historically been 2-3 times higher than that of white, non-Hispanic infants in SD.

SOUTH DAKOTA RESIDENT LEADING CAUSES OF INFANT DEATH, 2018-2022



The #1 cause of death for infants in South Dakota (2018-2022) is congenital malformations, deformations, and chromosomal abnormalities at 26% followed by disorders related to short gestation and low birth weight at 10%. Twenty five percent of infant deaths in this 5-year period were related to sleep or an unsafe sleep environment. These deaths would be included under accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed; undetermined cause; and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in the graph above.

South Dakota has also seen a steady increase in post-neonatal mortality rates. The 2018-2022 five year post neonatal rate is 3.7, up from 2.9 in 2017-2021. Post neonatal refers to deaths that occur from 28 days after birth to 1 year of age. Most infant deaths in the post neonatal period are related to infant sleep or an unsafe sleep environment. **There were 97 sleep-related deaths reviewed by SD's child death review (CDR) teams from 2018-2022.**

- **66%** of these sleep-related deaths occurred while **baby was sharing a sleep surface** such as an adult bed, couch, or chair.
- **53%** of infants were **bed-sharing** in an adult bed with another adult and/or child.
- **84%** of the sleep-related deaths were **potentially preventable** according to the death review teams.

Reducing INFANT MORTALITY in South Dakota

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO PREVENT INFANT MORTALITY?

- + **Conducting infant death review statewide** to better understand why infants die to prevent future deaths and disseminate these findings to all South Dakotans.
- + **The DOH collaborates with the Governor's Office to promote safe sleep to parents of newborns** by including the *Sleep Baby Safe and Snug* book (Charlie's Kids Foundation) in the governor's Strong Families mailings. These mailings go out to families who recently had a baby in SD.
- + The DOH partners with the **National Cribs for Kids program to distribute safe sleep kits** (which include a Graco Pack 'n Play) through their Community Health Offices and partners. **Close to 1,000 kits are distributed each year** to families in need of a safe place for baby to sleep.
- + **The OCFS continues to educate families on the importance of infant safe sleep practices** through safe sleep posts on *For Baby's Sake* Facebook page, on the *For Baby's Sake* pages of the DOH website, and through print materials like the client-centered *Safe Sleep, Every Sleep* infographic developed using Child Death Review data.



- + One of the newest collaborative strategies to decrease infant mortality is between the OCFS and birthing hospitals in the state. **The OCFS is working with birthing hospitals to become Hospital Safe Sleep Certified through the national Cribs for Kids program.** This certification ensures that hospital policies and staff messaging are consistent with evidence based safe sleep practices. There are currently 4 birthing hospitals bronze-level certified and 1 with gold certification.

- + **The DOH expanded the Bright Start program** across the state which supports expectant, first-time moms by connecting them with a free personal nurse to walk alongside them every step of pregnancy and through their child's second birthday.



- + **The DOH Pregnancy Care program provides guidance to pregnant families through Community Health Nurses across the state.** The program promotes early and adequate prenatal care and provides prenatal education and support throughout the pregnancy and postpartum period to help decrease infant mortality.