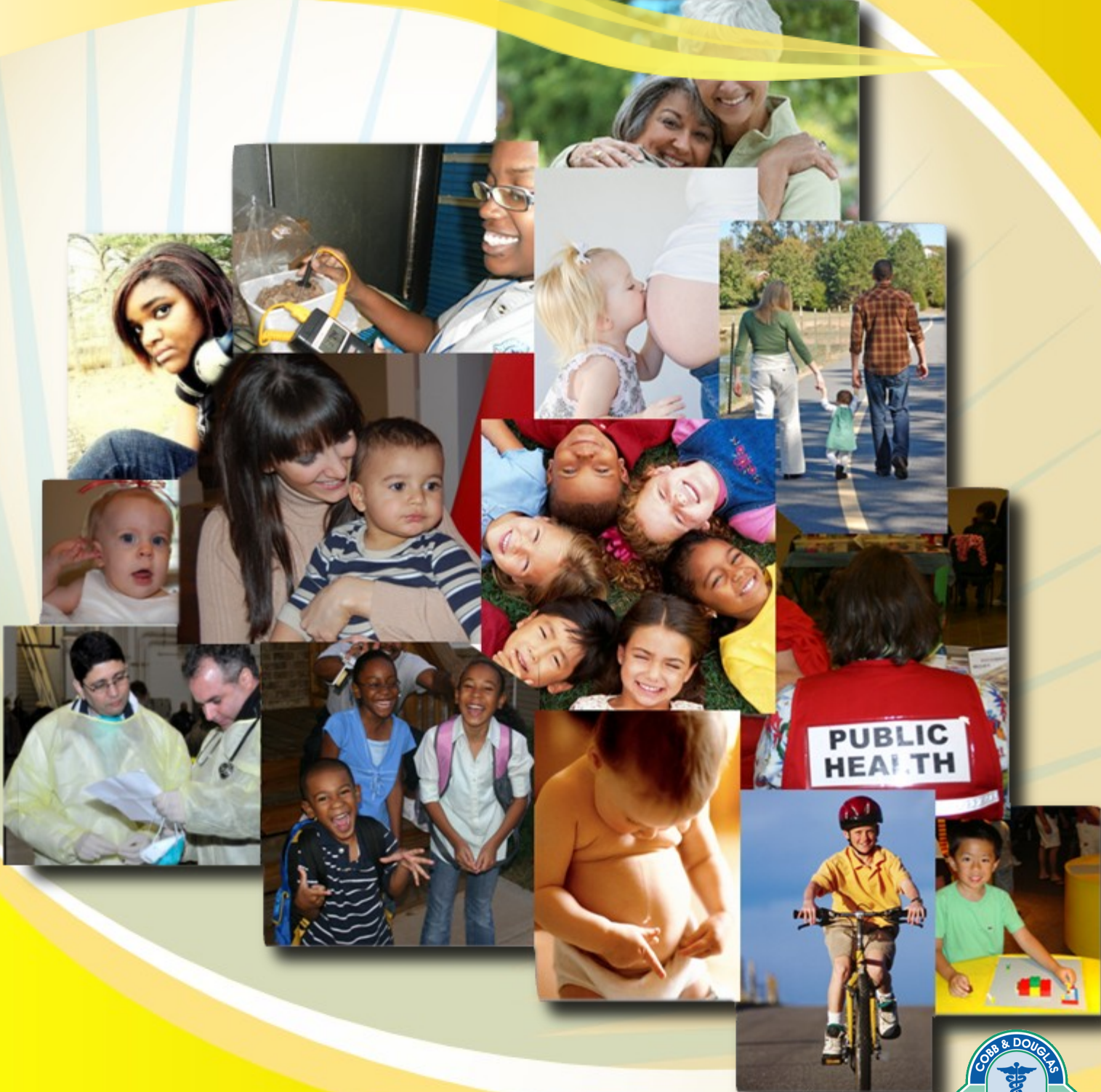


Highlights



HIGHLIGHTS

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Cobb and Douglas Public Health (CDPH) staff designed [How Healthy Are We?](#) to provide a general assessment of Cobb County residents' health. We partnered with the Cobb County Community Services Board to provide the information for the section on behavioral health. The contents of this report represent information we track, trend and use to assess our community's current and future health needs. We hope this report provides you with valuable information regarding the health of the community in which we live, work and play. Below are highlights from the report.

Population

The population in Cobb County continues to grow and has a large percentage of youth and an increasing percentage of minority populations.

- Over one-fourth of the population is under the age of 19.
- Minority populations grew 26% over the past 5 years.
- There is a greater percentage of Hispanics in Cobb County than in Georgia.
- Almost 5% of households are linguistically isolated and do not have a household member who speaks English well. These language differences often make healthcare communications difficult.

Access to Care

Residents must have access to healthcare (facilities and providers) in order to be healthy.

- Primary care physicians (family practitioners, internists and pediatricians) make up 34% of Cobb County physicians. These physicians provide the gateway to healthcare, including specialty care.
- The current economy causes job and insurance loss, resulting in residents not receiving regular dental care. Regular dental care is vital to good health.
- The percentage of uninsured individuals in Cobb County is higher than in Georgia despite the fact that Cobb County is ranked as the 4th highest county in the state for household income.

Leading Causes

There are specific leading causes of illness, hospitalization and death in the county.

- The top 5 leading causes of mortality (death) for Cobb County are consistent with the United States' top 5 leading causes of mortality.
- Heart disease, cancer and stroke are the leading causes of illness (morbidity), death (mortality) and premature death in Cobb County.
- The age adjusted mortality rate for Cobb County is lower than it is for Georgia.
- Pregnancy and normal delivery cause a high number of hospitalizations, indicating a growing county.
- Preventable deaths, including accidents, homicide and suicide, are the leading causes of premature deaths (death prior to age 75).

Chronic Diseases

Chronic diseases (diseases lasting longer than 3 months) such as diabetes and asthma continue to cause a high number of illnesses and deaths in the county; they also cause high healthcare costs.

- Cancer is the leading cause of premature death (<75 years of age) in Cobb County, followed by heart disease.
- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer mortality for both men and women in Cobb County.
- The age adjusted mortality rate due to breast cancer in females is slightly higher in Cobb County than in Georgia or the United States.
- In 2007, the age adjusted mortality rate due to alcoholic liver disease was slightly higher in Cobb County than in Georgia. Additionally, based on self-reported results, Cobb County adults report a higher incidence of heavy drinking and binge drinking than adults in Georgia (2006-2008).
- In 2008, a higher percentage of adult residents reported being "overweight" in Cobb County than in Georgia; however, a lower percentage of adults in Cobb County reported being "obese" than did adults in Georgia.

Infectious Diseases

Infectious diseases can spread quickly through populations, causing high numbers of illness, death and disability.

- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) such as gonorrhea, syphilis, AIDS and hepatitis B are prevalent in Cobb County and in Georgia.
- In 2008, Georgia ranked 3rd highest in the U.S. for rates of primary and secondary syphilis; from 2003-2007, Cobb County ranked 7th highest out of Georgia's 159 counties for the rate of syphilis (cases per 100,000 population).
- The number of tuberculosis (TB) cases in Cobb County decreased by 30.8% from 2008-2009; a similar decrease was seen throughout the state of Georgia.
- Vaccine-preventable diseases are still occurring in Cobb County; childhood immunization rates are slightly lower in the County than in Georgia.
- The CDC expects the H1N1 flu virus to return in the 2010-2011 flu season, along with seasonal flu viruses. Unlike seasonal flu, H1N1 primarily affected persons 49 and under in 2009. This year's seasonal flu vaccine will protect against H1N1 and 2 other flu viruses.

Maternal and Child Health

One can assess the overall health status of the population by analyzing the health of mothers and their babies.

- Overall pregnancy rates are higher in Cobb County than in Georgia.
- Teen pregnancy rates increased overall in 2006 and 2007 in both Georgia and Cobb County.
- The Hispanic population has the highest pregnancy rates both overall and for teens (15-19 years) in the County.
- Hispanics, compared to all populations, have the highest rate of inadequate prenatal care.
- Cobb County ranks poorly in the percentage of infants who are born with low birth weight (LBW) which can cause serious medical problems in the infants. Incidents of LBW occur most frequently in the black population.

Maternal and Child Health (continued)

Cobb County's youth play a key role in determining the County's future health status.

- In the 2008 – 2009 school year, 9.6% of 12th grade students in Marietta City Schools and 15.6 % in Cobb County Schools reported using tobacco in the last 30 days.
- In the 2008 – 2009 school year, 5.2% of students in Marietta City Schools and 8.4 % in Cobb County Schools reported binge alcohol drinking in the last 30 days.
- Obesity in children and adolescents continued to be a major public health concern in the United States, Georgia and the County. In 2009, 12.4% of Georgia's youth were reported as being obese compared to 12.0% in the United States.

Behavioral Health

Behavioral health refers to how a person's mental well-being affects his or her actions and ability to function.

- It is estimated that 26.2% of adults suffer from a mental disorder in a given year in Cobb County.
- Estimates suggest that approximately 6% of adults suffer from a serious mental illness such as major depression, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia in Cobb County.

Community Safety

Residents must feel safe in their community in order to enjoy a good quality of life.

- The violent crime rate is lower in Cobb County than in Georgia.
- From 2004-2008, larceny was the most frequently committed crime in Cobb County.
- During the same period, injuries due to external causes (such as motor vehicle crashes, homicide, falls and suicide) accounted for 25.7% of all Cobb County Emergency Department visits; falls were the number one cause of injury-related Emergency Department visits.
- In 2008, Cobb County ranked 2nd highest out of the 159 counties in Georgia for the number of motor vehicle crash fatalities.
- Motor vehicle crashes remain a leading cause of hospitalization and death in the county.

Environmental Health

The environment plays a key role in the health status of the community.

- Cobb County has an award winning water system. In 2009, drinking water met or exceeded all safety and quality standards set by the State of Georgia and the Environmental Protection Agency.
- In 2009, Metropolitan Atlanta (including Cobb County) air quality measured in the unhealthy range 16 out of the 340 days measured.
- In 2009, 27 hazardous waste sites were identified in Cobb County.
- In 2009, the greatest numbers of positive rabies tests were for raccoons.