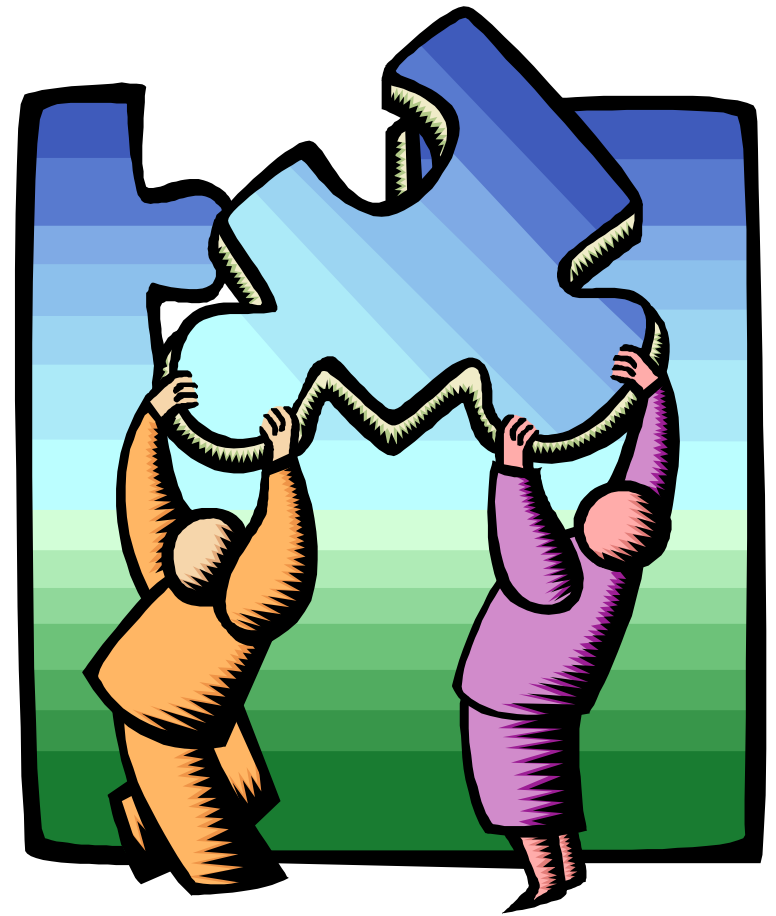


## For More Information...

Additional details and descriptions of the data indicators are provided in the complete 2002 Community Health Assessment reports available through:

- Parish, University and College reference departments
- School District Offices
- The Rapides Foundation website at [www.rapidesfoundation.org](http://www.rapidesfoundation.org)
- Access to an interactive website

For more information about the 2002 Community Health Assessment project, please call Annette Clark at The Rapides Foundation at (318) 443-3394 or (800) 994-3394.



# Report on Community Health Avoyelles Parish, Louisiana

Summary of Findings from the  
**2002 Community Health Assessment**

Sponsored by



Prepared by



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# Our Purpose

Dear Community Member:

This assessment was conducted to identify issues of primary concern and to provide critical information to all those in a position to make an impact on the health of our community — healthcare providers, government, social service agencies, businesses and religious groups, to name just a few. The results will enable all of us to more strategically establish priorities, develop interventions, and commit resources to improve the health of our community.

We believe the Community Health Assessment can — and will — serve as a tool toward reaching three basic goals:

- To improve resident's health status, increase their life spans and elevate their overall quality of life.
- To reduce health disparities among residents.
- To increase accessibility to preventive health services for all community members.

While there are many positive indicators of health status in our community, there is much work to do. Health is — and must be — an issue of concern and action for all of us. We hope the information revealed through the Community Health Assessment will encourage collaboration to address the multi-faceted health needs of our community.

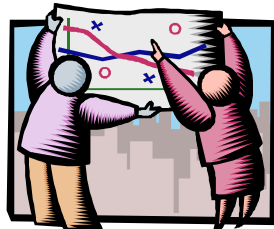
# The Research

The area defined for the purposes of this research includes Avoyelles Parish, Louisiana, as part of an overall larger study area including 11 parishes in Central Louisiana. The research process included:

**Community Health Survey** — This assessment involved a telephone survey measuring health status and behavioral risk factors among 400 adults (18 and older) in Avoyelles Parish.

**Secondary Data** — Existing data, especially public health data and statewide and nationwide risk assessments, complement the survey process and, in some cases, provide a benchmark against which the results of the survey may be compared.

**Community Health Panels** — The third research phase consisted of a Community Health Panel where community representatives were gathered in a focus group setting. The goal of this panel was to gain greater perspective on the health of area residents.



# Education Indicators

	Avoyelles Parish	LA	US
<b>EDUCATION LEVELS</b>			
<b>% Less Than 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Education</b>	16.1	9.3 ☁	7.5 ☁
<b>% High School Graduate or Higher</b>	59.8	74.8 ☁	80.4 ☁
<b>4<sup>th</sup> GRADE LEAP 21 (LOUISIANA EDUCATION ASSESSMENT PROGRAM) SCORES</b>			
<b>% "Unsatisfactory"</b>			
<b>English Language Arts</b>	11	16 ☀	
<b>Mathematics</b>	17	23 ☀	
<b>Science</b>	11	15 ☀	
<b>Social Studies</b>	18	21 ☀	
<b>10<sup>th</sup> GRADE GEE 21 (GRADUATE EXIT EXAMINATION) COMPOSITE SCORES (Out of a Possible 350)</b>			
<b>English Language Arts</b>		<b>299</b>	
<b>Overall</b>	294	☁	
<b>Black Students</b>	276	☁	
<b>White Students</b>	304	☁	
<b>Low-Income Students</b>	286	284 ☀	
<b>Mathematics</b>		<b>298</b>	
<b>Overall</b>	296	☁	
<b>Black Students</b>	269	☁	
<b>White Students</b>	310	☁	
<b>Low-Income Students</b>	286	281 ☀	

Icons represent a favorable (☀) or unfavorable (☁) comparison to benchmark data. Blank spaces indicate that data are not available.

# Health Care Resources

**Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs)** may be a whole parish or a group of contiguous parishes, a group of parishes or civil divisions or a group of urban census tracts in which residents have a shortage of personal health services.

**Healthcare Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs)** may have shortages of primary medical care, dental or mental health providers and may be urban or rural areas, population groups or medical or other public facilities.

In the Rapides Foundation Service Area, **each of the 11 parishes** has been designated a Medically Underserved Area, signifying a shortage of personal health services for residents of these parishes.

Further, note the following designations as Health Professional Shortage Areas:

- Allen, Avoyelles, Concordia, Grant, LaSalle, Vernon and Winn Parishes are designated as HPSAs for primary care services for all residents.
- Catahoula Parish is designated as a primary care HPSA for low-income residents; Natchitoches Parish is designated as a primary care HPSA for two census tracts in the northwest portion of the parish; Rapides Parish is designated as a primary care HPSA for persons eligible for Medicaid.
- Catahoula, Natchitoches, Vernon and Winn Parishes are designated as HPSAs for dental care services for all residents.
- Allen Parish is also designated as an HPSA for mental health care services for all residents.

## Health Care Resource Shortage Designations

	Medically Underserved Area (MUA)	Health Professional Shortage Area: Primary Care	Health Professional Shortage Area: Dental Care	Health Professional Shortage Area: Mental Health Care
Allen	X	X		X
Avoyelles	X	X		
Catahoula	X	For Low-Income Populations	X	
Concordia	X	X		
Evangeline	X			
Grant	X	X		
LaSalle	X	X		
Natchitoches	X	Northwest Area Only	X	
Rapides	X	For Medicaid-Eligible Population		
Vernon	X	X	X	
Winn	X	X	X	

Source: Division of Shortage Designation, Bureau of Primary Health Care and Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services.

Note: "Designated" status for civilian population as of November 2002.

# Healthy People 2010 Goals

Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health is part of the Healthy People 2010 initiative that is sponsored by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010 outlines a comprehensive, nationwide health promotion and disease prevention agenda. It is designed to serve as a roadmap for improving the health of all people in the United States during the first decade of the 21st century.

Like the preceding Healthy People 2000 initiative—which was driven by an ambitious, yet achievable, 10-year strategy for improving the Nation's health by the end of the 20th century—Healthy People 2010 is committed to a single, overarching purpose: promoting health and preventing illness, disability, and premature death.



**Understanding and Improving Health**

To access the full set of objectives, visit the Healthy People 2010 website at [www.healthypeople.gov](http://www.healthypeople.gov).

## Reading the Charts

The following pages describe some of the top findings of this assessment relative to regional, statewide and national findings, as well as to Healthy People 2010 targets where available.

In the charts on the following pages, statistical tests are performed and identified through the use of icons:



Indicates that the local findings are more favorable than the benchmark group, and that the difference is statistically significant. For example, a "sunny" icon in the US column means that local findings are better than national findings.



Indicates that the local findings are less favorable than the benchmark group, and that the difference is statistically significant. For example, a "rainy" icon in the HP2010 column means that local findings do not satisfy Year 2010 targets.

# Deaths & Disease

	Avoyelles Parish	Central LA Median	LA	US	HP2010
<b>DEATH RATES PER 100,000 FOR SELECTED CAUSES, AGE-ADJUSTED TO 2000 POPULATION</b>					
Heart Disease	405.7	344.9 ☁	306.6 ☁	267.8 ☁	213.7 ☁
Cancer	267.0	251.0 ☁	232.8 ☁	202.7 ☁	159.9 ☁
Motor Vehicle Crashes	48.5	28.3 ☁	21.5 ☁	15.5 ☁	9.0 ☁
Stroke	66.8	69.0	69.1	61.8	48.0 ☁
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	47.2	47.2	40.8 ☁	45.8	
Diabetes Mellitus	29.4	29.4	42.4 ☀	25.2 ☁	15.1 ☁
Pneumonia/Influenza	30.7	33.6 ☀	25.9 ☁	23.6 ☁	
Suicide	11.3	10.3 ☁	12.0 ☀	10.7 ☁	5.0 ☁
Homicide	2.3	4.9 ☀	10.7 ☀	6.2 ☀	3.5 ☀
<b>CHRONIC DISEASE PREVALENCE</b>					
% Arthritis/Rheumatism	32.0	30.8		20.3 ☁	
% Sciatica/Chronic Back Pain	23.2	22.0		20.0	
% Deafness/Trouble Hearing	13.9	12.0		9.3	
% Asthma	12.0	9.7		9.9	
% Diabetes	11.9	9.9 ☁	6.7 ☁	5.5 ☁	
% Blindness/Trouble Seeing	13.3	12.4		9.2 ☁	
% Tested for HIV in Past Year (18-64)	25.2	30.5		30.6	

Icons represent a statistically favorable (☀) or unfavorable (☁) comparison to benchmark data. Blank spaces indicate that data are not available.

# Access to Health Services

	Avoyelles Parish	Central LA	LA	US	HP2010
<b>INSURANCE COVERAGE</b>					
% Lack Health Insurance (18-64)	33.5	26.0 ☁	25.6 ☁	15.6 ☁	0.0 ☁
<b>ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE SERVICES</b>					
% Have a Regular Clinic or Physician	85.6	83.7		85.0	96.0 ☁
% Trouble Accessing Health Care (For Any Reason)	41.4	42.3		26.0 ☁	7.0 ☁
% Cost Prevented Dr Visit in Past Year	22.5	18.7 ☁		10.4 ☁	
% Cost Prevented Rx in Past Year	23.6	22.7		9.5 ☁	
% Lack of Transportation Prevented Doctor Visit	13.0	10.0		5.2 ☁	
% Inconvenient Office Hours Prevented Doctor Visit	16.6	14.3		12.7	
% Had Difficulty Getting Dr Appt	14.3	16.5		13.3	

Icons represent a statistically favorable (☀) or unfavorable (☁) comparison to benchmark data. Blank spaces indicate that data are not available.



# Preventive Health Services

	Avoyelles Parish	Central LA	LA	US	HP2010
<b>PRIMARY CARE SERVICES</b>					
% Had Routine Checkup in Past Year	72.0	69.7		64.1 ☀	
% Child Has Had Checkup in Past Year	81.4	83.2		85.6	
% Have Visited Dentist in Past Year	57.9	59.1		68.9 ☁	56.0
% Seniors With a Flu Shot in Past Year	72.7	70.6	60.3	65.7	90.0 ☁
<b>CANCER SCREENINGS</b>					
% Digital Rectal Exam in Past Yr (50+)	44.3	45.2		57.1 ☁	
% Mammogram in Past 2 Yrs (W 40+)	76.0	74.3		78.2	70.0
% Breast Self-Exam Monthly (W)	54.0	53.3		42.9 ☀	
% Pap Smear in Past 3 Years (W)	84.3	83.0	87.7 ☁	84.0	90.0 ☁
% Prostate Exam Past 2 Yrs (M 40+)	67.6	68.8		69.9	
% Testicular Exam Ever (M)	45.2	53.3 ☁		62.4 ☁	
% Testicular Self-Exam Monthly (M)	9.8	12.8		12.5	
<b>INJURY CONTROL</b>					
% "Always" Wear Seat Belt	65.4	68.2	74.3 ☁	75.0 ☁	92.0 ☁
% Child "Always" Uses Auto Restraint	76.4	90.4 ☁		98.9 ☁	100.0 ☁

(W) = Women; (M) = Men

Icons represent a statistically favorable (☀) or unfavorable (☁) comparison to benchmark data. Blank spaces indicate that data are not available.

Avoyelles Parish Central LA LA US HP2010

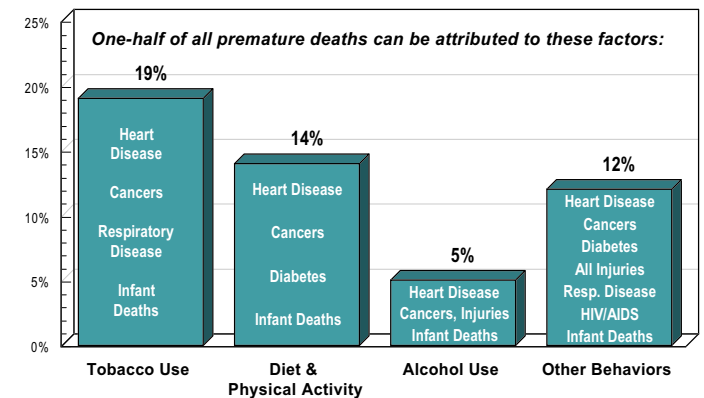
<b>SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION)</b>					
Gonorrhea	72.6	92.4 ☀	305.7 ☀	131.6 ☀	19.0 ☁
Chlamydia	116.5	194.7 ☀	383.0 ☀	257.5 ☀	
Syphilis	2.5	1.6 ☁	14.7 ☀	2.2 ☁	0.2 ☁
<b>OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASE (RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION)</b>					
Tuberculosis	1.6	4.1 ☀	8.2 ☀	5.8 ☀	1.0 ☁
Hepatitis A	3.1	1.5 ☁	5.0 ☀	12.0 ☀	4.5 ☀
Hepatitis B	6.6	0.7 ☁	4.6 ☁	4.2 ☁	

Icons represent a statistically favorable (☀) or unfavorable (☁) comparison to benchmark data. Blank spaces indicate that data are not available.

## Actual Causes of Death

While we may measure deaths due to heart disease, stroke, cancers, or infant deaths, we should always keep in mind that factors such as tobacco use, diet, physical activity and alcohol use substantially contribute to these deaths.

For example, as shown in the adjacent chart, tobacco use accounts for 19% of all U.S. deaths.



Other lifestyle and personal behavior (nongenetic) risk factors include microbes, toxins, firearms, sexual behavior, motor vehicles, and drug use. Source: McGinnis, J.M., & Foegen, W.H. (1993). Actual Causes of Death in the United States. JAMA, 270(18), 2207-2212.

## Births

	Avoyelles Parish	Central LA Median	LA	US	HP2010
<b>MATERNAL &amp; INFANT HEALTH</b>					
% of Births to Teenagers	19.4		17.1 ☹️	12.3 ☹️	
% of Births With Low Birthweight	12.2	10.2 ☹️	10.0 ☹️	7.6 ☹️	5.0 ☹️
Infant Death Rate (Deaths/1,000 Live Births)	9.0	9.0	9.3 ☀️	7.0 ☹️	4.5 ☹️

Icons represent a statistically favorable (☀️) or unfavorable (☹️) comparison to benchmark data. Blank spaces indicate that data are not available.

## Health Status

	Avoyelles Parish	Central LA	LA	US	HP2010
<b>PHYSICAL HEALTH</b>					
% "Fair/Poor" Physical Health	21.9	20.4	16.3 ☹️	12.3 ☹️	
% Activities Limited by Health Problem	21.3	20.3		14.9 ☹️	
% Overweight	70.0	66.3 ☹️	60.0 ☹️	56.9 ☹️	
% Obese	32.5	28.5 ☹️	23.5 ☹️	19.1 ☹️	15.0 ☹️
<b>MENTAL HEALTH</b>					
% Prolonged Depression (2+ Years)	34.6	30.6 ☹️		23.9 ☹️	
% Depressed Persons Seeking Help	34.3	33.4		42.5 ☹️	50.0 ☹️

Icons represent a statistically favorable (☀️) or unfavorable (☹️) comparison to benchmark data. Blank spaces indicate that data are not available.

## Behavioral Health Risk

	Avoyelles Parish	Central LA	LA	US	HP2010
<b>CARDIOVASCULAR RISK FACTORS</b>					
% With One or More Cardiovascular Risk Factor	96.2	93.7 ☹️		84.7 ☹️	
<b>NUTRITION &amp; EXERCISE</b>					
% Self-Reported "High-Fat" Diet	19.4	17.6 ☹️		10.4 ☹️	
% Use Food Labels	64.6	63.1		68.7	
% Five or More Servings of Fruits/Vegetables per Day	22.9	23.1	15.8 ☀️	30.0 ☹️	
% No Leisure-Time Physical Activity	21.1	30.2 ☀️	36.2 ☀️	20.2	
<b>TOBACCO &amp; ALCOHOL USE</b>					
% Current Smoker	26.4	24.3	24.1	22.8	12.0 ☹️
% Households With Kids in Which Someone Smokes at Home	28.9	25.8 ☹️		23.0 ☹️	10.0 ☹️
% Chronic Drinker (2+ Drinks/Day)	7.2	4.2 ☹️	4.0 ☹️	5.0	
% Binge Drinker (5+ Drinks/Occasion)	19.4	15.2	15.0	16.4	6.0 ☹️
% Drinking & Driving in Past Month	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.7	
<b>BLOOD PRESSURE &amp; CHOLESTEROL</b>					
% Told Have High Blood Pressure	37.9	34.3 ☹️	26.0 ☹️	23.4 ☹️	16.0 ☹️
% Told Have High Blood Cholesterol	23.2	23.9	26.5 ☀️	21.4	17.0 ☹️

Icons represent a statistically favorable (☀️) or unfavorable (☹️) comparison to benchmark data. Blank spaces indicate that data are not available.