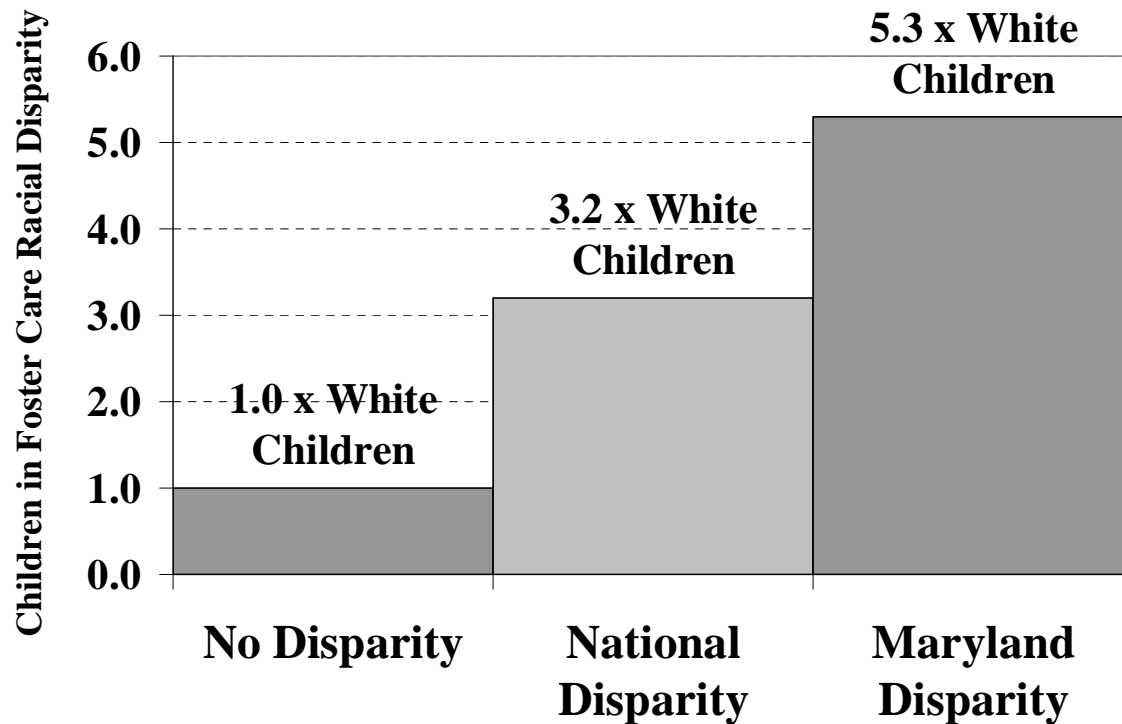


Child Welfare Racial Disparities

Foster Care Racial Disparities in Maryland Are 50% Worse Than the National Average

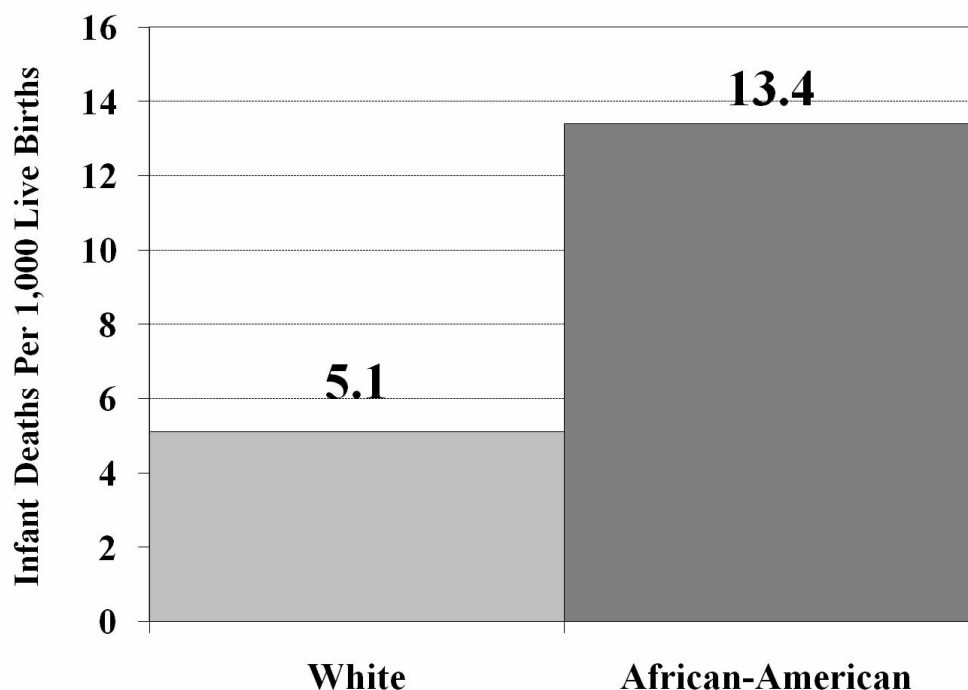


There are Cost-Effective Solutions

1. **Recognize the problem:** Maryland must first acknowledge that a significant problem exists. The fact that other states also have disparities is no excuse.
2. **Track the data:** Maryland needs to publish and monitor child welfare data by race and ethnicity.
3. **Train caseworkers in cultural competency:** With proper training, child welfare workers can more clearly understand the needs of families from diverse backgrounds and suggest services better tailored to meet the needs of those families. The training must be ongoing, not one-time. Minnesota did this.
4. **Train caseworkers in family-centered case practice.** Many African-American families have particularly strong extended supportive networks of relatives, friends and community members. With intensive retraining, caseworkers can help families formalize these networks to prevent home removals. States from Maine to Utah have reformed their case practice and safely reduced use of foster care.
5. **Expand services for parents.** Many more parents can keep their children safely in their own homes if they are provided in-home services, like housing assistance, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, whole-family therapy, child care and job training. Yet, African-American families are less likely to receive these services than similarly situated white families. Pennsylvania expanded family preservation services and reduced foster care by more than 11 percent.



Health Racial Disparities



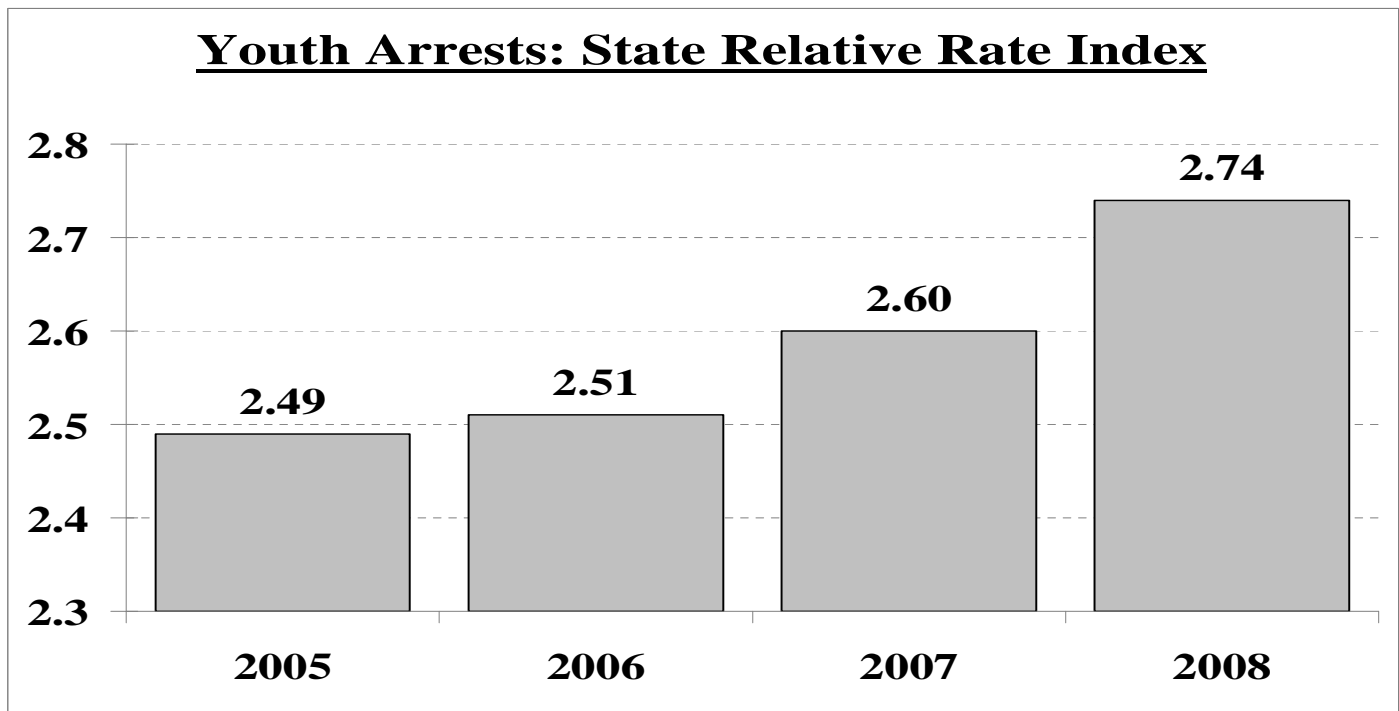
The infant mortality rate in Maryland is 8.0 deaths per 1,000 live births, almost double the U.S. 2010 Healthy People goal of 4.5 deaths per 1,000 live births. While this statistic is troubling in and of itself, disaggregating the data by race shows an even more alarming picture. African-American babies die at over 2.5 times the rate of White babies. There are also significant racial disparities in other birth outcomes such as low-birthweight births.

There are Cost-Effective Solutions

1. Improve a woman's **access to health care** and her health status before she becomes pregnant;
2. Ensure proper **care for women with a first poor birth outcome** to help prevent subsequent poor outcomes; and
3. Expand **home visiting programs**, such as Baltimore City Healthy Start, to additional high risk women.
4. Ensure that women have access to **culturally competent health services** before, during and after pregnancy.

Juvenile Justice Racial Disparities

Youth Arrests: State Relative Rate Index



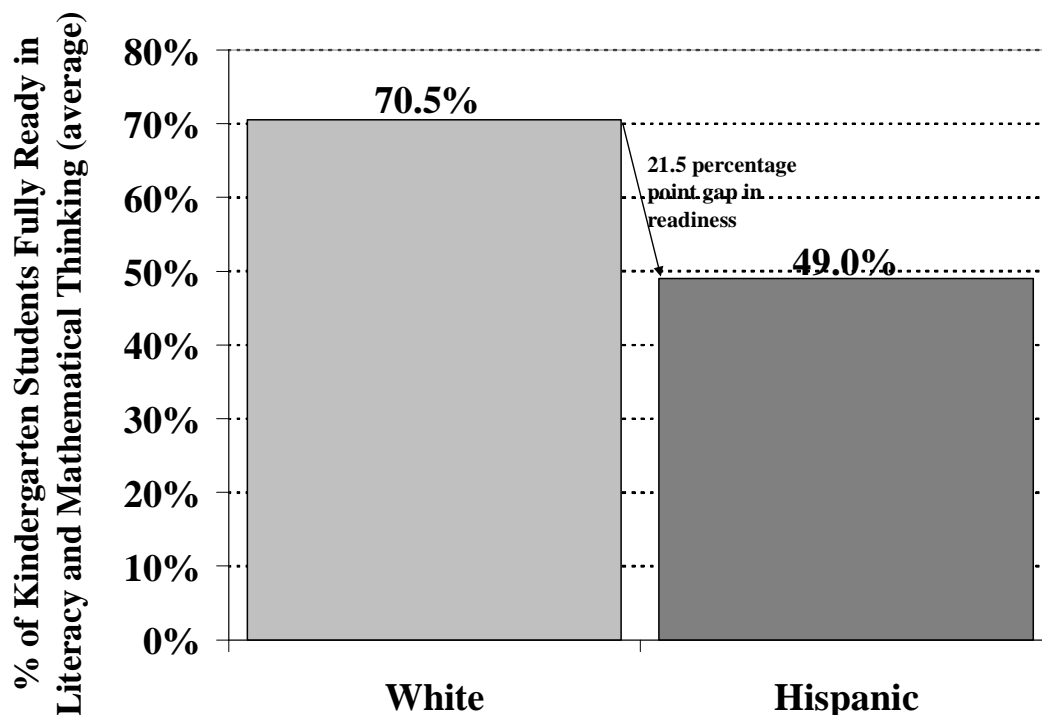
In Maryland, African-American youth are more than two and a half times as likely to be arrested as White youth and the problem is growing worse according to the Relative Rate Index (RRI), a tool used to measure disparities. The RRI is calculated by dividing the arrest rate for African-American youth by the arrest rate for White youth; the arrest rate is calculated by dividing the number of arrests for each group by the population of that group. An RRI of 1 indicates equality.

There are Cost-Effective Solutions

1. **Collect and analyze the data.** Successful jurisdictions gather, analyze, and use local juvenile crime data by race, offense, and location to develop the resources necessary to reduce disparities.
2. **Make services available.** Diversion services must be developed that are accessible—both geographically and financially—to families and youth who would otherwise be arrested.
3. **Address school practices that lead to arrests.** Specialized training is needed to aid teachers and other school staff in distinguishing between delinquent behaviors and acting-out behaviors related to educational issues and providing students with appropriate support services that prevent school-based arrests.
4. **Provide cultural competency training to police:** With training, followed up by coaching that introduces officers to community residents, organizations, services, and cultural characteristics of the neighborhoods they are policing, community-police relations and officers' knowledge of available services that prevent juvenile arrests can be enhanced.



Education Racial Disparities



In Maryland, less than half of Hispanic kindergarteners are ready for school, as indicated by the Maryland Model for School Readiness assessment given to all kindergarten students. In comparison, about three-quarters of White students are ready for school. The racial disparity gap in school readiness between White and Hispanic students is 21.5 percentage points at the state level. These disparities continue as children move into the early school grades, highlighting the need to address disparities as early in a student's school career as possible.

There are Cost-Effective Solutions

1. **Expand access to high-quality early education programs:** Districts with large populations of students who are less likely to be ready for kindergarten should expand access to quality preschool to ensure every family who wants their child in an early education program can find an affordable, quality option.
2. **Develop targeted outreach to the Hispanic population:** School systems should provide parental education that fosters an understanding about the importance of children attending early education programs and engaging in early literacy activities.
3. **Pay attention to the data:** Over the last several years there has been an increase in the Hispanic population across the state of Maryland. Local jurisdictions need to plan for the changes in the diversification of their population.
4. **Implement state standards and accountability:** Ensure that all early education programs are using quality curriculums that promote student learning. The State and local school districts should examine which early education programs are most effective in ensuring high-needs students are ready for kindergarten.
5. **Train educators in cultural competency:** Provide training to help teachers and staff understand and reduce the barriers facing the Hispanic community.