



New Report Ranks Vermont 2nd in the Nation for Health of Women, Children and Infants



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BURLINGTON – A new report ranks Vermont second overall in the nation for women and children’s health.

United Health Foundation’s 2016 America’s Health Rankings® Health of Women and Children Report provides an in-depth look at state successes and challenges in promoting the health of women, infants and children.

The report evaluates and ranks the 50 states based on more than 60 measures of health and well-being from 18 individual sources of data. Vermont is joined at the top with its neighboring Northeast states, Massachusetts (#1) and New Hampshire (#3).

“This is another in a long series of national indicators that show Vermont’s approach to promoting positive health outcomes is making a real difference in people’s lives,” said Breena Holmes, MD, director of maternal and child health.

In addition to overall scoring, states are ranked relative to each other in three categories, Women, Infants and Children, as well as by individual measures. Vermont ranked third in the nation for women’s health, third for infants, and fourth for children.

Notable successes for Vermont:

- 81.9% of children have adequate health insurance (Rank: 1)
- 97.8% of women had prenatal care before the third trimester (Rank: 1)
- 96.4% of babies age zero to 2 years received a well-baby checkup in the past 12 months (Rank: 2)
- 85.6% of women age 18 to 44 have a dedicated health care provider (Rank: 3)
- 29.6% of infants are breastfed exclusively at 6 months of age (Rank: 1)

Notable challenges for Vermont:

- 20.8% of pregnant women age 18 to 44 smoke (Rank 47)
- 15.8% of pregnant women age 18 to 44 consumed alcohol (Rank: 49)
- 12.4% homeless family households (per 10,000 households) (Rank: 46)

“These are complex issues, and we have been working for years in Vermont to bend the curve,” said Holmes. “This report is only a snapshot, but when I see that nearly all women are getting prenatal care, and that Vermont kids can get the care they need because they have health insurance, I know we are on the right path.”

Holmes acknowledged that the report also makes clear there is still significant work to do. “The challenges of

behavior change drive many of the steep hurdles we face,” Holmes said. “We are making slow but steady headway in reducing the number of pregnant women who smoke, and we’re seeing positive results in our efforts to address drinking while pregnant, such as with our **049 – Zero alcohol for nine months** outreach to health care providers.”

“We have to stay focused and not be afraid to innovate. I can trace our success with health insurance coverage for kids and the resulting access to care back to the vision that created Dr. Dynasaur. Working together with health care providers and our community partners, we will continue to improve health outcomes.”

To read the report, visit <http://www.americashealthrankings.org/learn/reports/2016-health-of-women-and-children-report>

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