

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Disparities Among African Americans

African Americans face greater obstacles to obtaining sexual and reproductive health services than non-Hispanic white Americans. As a result, African Americans experience higher rates of reproductive cancers, unintended pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections than most other groups of Americans. Moreover, African-American patients are often diagnosed later than are others with the same health problems, and they have less access to high-quality, affordable care, resulting in higher death rates from the same conditions. For example:

REPRODUCTIVE CANCERS

- Among women diagnosed with breast cancer, African-American women are most likely to die from the disease (ACS, 2011a).
- African-American women with cervical cancer are twice as likely to lose their lives to this disease as are white women (ACS, 2011b).

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

- African Americans, while representing 14 percent of the U.S. population, account for 69 percent of gonorrhea cases and about half of all cases of chlamydia, HIV/AIDS, and syphilis (CDC, 2011).
- African Americans are nine times as likely as whites to be diagnosed with chlamydia, 20 times as likely to be diagnosed with gonorrhea, and eight times as likely to be diagnosed with syphilis (CDC, 2011).

UNINTENDED PREGNANCY

- African-American women have more than double the unintended pregnancy rate of white women. As a result, African-American women also have higher rates of abortion (Finer and Zolna, 2011).
- African-American teens aged 15–19 have higher rates of pregnancy, birth, and abortion than non-Hispanic white teens (Guttmacher, 2010).
- African-American teens are three times more likely to get pregnant than non-Hispanic white teens (Guttmacher, 2010).
- The birthrate for African-American teens is more than twice that of non-Hispanic white teens (Hamilton et al., 2011).
- The abortion rate for African-American teens is four times that of non-Hispanic white teens (Guttmacher, 2010).

HEALTH INSURANCE

- In 2010, 43.5 percent of African Americans, in comparison to 61.8 percent of non-Hispanic whites, used employer-sponsored health insurance (DeNavas-Walt, 2011).
- In 2010, 20.5 percent of African Americans were uninsured, as compared to 11.7 percent of whites (DeNavas-Walt, 2011).
- African-American women are more likely to be uninsured or under-insured than white women, and they often are forced to delay care because they lack the resources to pay for it. There are approximately 8.5 million uninsured African Americans, and more than 70 percent of the uninsured have gone without health coverage for more than a year (DeNavas-Walt, 2011, Kaiser Family Foundation, 2011).

HEALTH, EDUCATION, ECONOMY

Disparities Among African Americans

NON-REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- The African-American infant mortality rate is more than twice as high as that for white infants (Kochanek, 2011).
- The death rate for cancer among African Americans is 22 percent higher than among whites (ACS, 2011b).
- African Americans are more than twice as likely to die of diabetes than white Americans (Xu, 2010).
- College- and graduate-school educated African-American mothers have a higher infant mortality rate than white mothers who didn't finish high school (Kashef, 2003).
- African-American children are 69 percent more likely to be uninsured than white children (CDF, 2007).
- Almost 20 percent of African Americans did not have a usual source of health care (Roberts, 2000).

EDUCATION

- In 2011, just 14 percent of the nation's African-American eighth graders tested proficient in reading — nearly three times fewer than the number of white students taking the test (NCES, 2011).
- In 2009, 19 percent of African Americans were college graduates, as compared to 30 percent of whites (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

ECONOMICS

- For every dollar of wealth owned by the typical white family, the typical African-American or Latino family owns only 16 cents (Insight Center for Community Economic Development, 2010).
- African-American families in the United States have a median net worth of \$20,600, only 14.6 percent of the \$140,700 median white net worth (Muhammad, 2008).
- When African Americans do buy homes, they are 34 percent more likely than whites to receive the highest interest and subprime mortgage loans, even when their income and credit scores are the same (Morris, 2009).
- African-American children are more than three times as likely as white children to be born into poverty and to be poor, and are more than four times as likely to live in extreme poverty (CDF, 2007).
- While white women in the prime working years of ages 36–49 have a median wealth of \$42,600 (still only 61 percent of their white male counterparts), the median wealth for women of color is only \$5 (Insight Center for Community Economic Development, 2010).
- African Americans will lose between \$71 billion and \$92 billion in home-value wealth from subprime loans (Rivera, 2008).
- Forty-one percent of African-American families earn less than 133 percent of the federal poverty level (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010).

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