



State of the County Health Report

Jackson County
December 1, 2014



HealthyCarolinians
JACKSON COUNTY

Demographics

- 2013 Population Estimate: 40,919
 - White: 85.5%
 - Black: 2.2%
 - American Indian/Alaskan Native: 9.4%
 - Asian: 0.9%
 - Hispanic/Latino: 5.1%
- Percent Change: 1.6% from April 2010 to July 2013

The median household income during 2008-2012 in Jackson County was \$36,403 compared to North Carolina's median household income of \$46,450.

Leading Causes of Death in Jackson County, 2008-2012

Rank	Cause	# Deaths	Death Rate
1	Cancer	387	167.4
2	Diseases of the Heart	357	162.1
3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	104	46.9
4	All other unintentional injuries	88	43.5
5	Cerebrovascular diseases	63	28.5
6	Alzheimer's disease	55	27
7	Pneumonia & Influenza	42	20.2
8	Diabetes mellitus	39	16.7
9	Septicemia	31	14.3
10	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, & Nephrosis	31	14.7
11	Suicide	25	13
12	Chronic liver disease & cirrhosis	21	9.8
13	Unintentional motor vehicle injuries	20	9.3
14	Homicide	4	n/a
15	AIDS	0	n/a
	All causes (some not listed)	1598	735.0

Jackson County's top three leading causes of death are **identical** to the top three leading causes of death in North Carolina as a whole. These leading causes of death in Jackson County have not changed over the past few years.

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data-

Cancer & Diseases of the Heart

- In 2008-2012, the total cancer mortality rate fell in Jackson County
 - From 174.1 to 167.4– a **decrease of 3.8%**
- In 2008-2012, the breast cancer mortality rate fell in Jackson County
 - From 26.6 to 19.6– a **decrease of 26.3%**
- In 2008-2012, the heart disease mortality rate fell in Jackson County
 - From 174.6 to 162.1– a **decrease of 7.2%**
 - Males in Jackson County have had a significantly higher heart disease mortality rate than females for the past decade

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data-

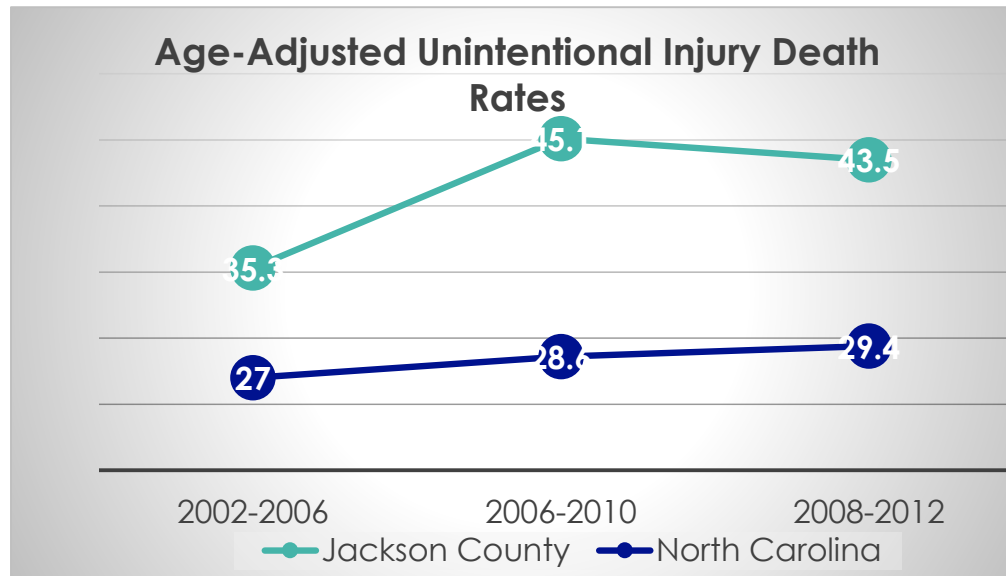
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease & Stroke

- In 2008-2012, the chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD) mortality rate rose in Jackson County
 - From 45.1 to 46.9– an **increase of 3.9%**
- In 2008-2012, the stroke mortality rate stayed the same in Jackson County
 - From 28.5 to 28.5– **no change**
 - Jackson County's rate is **36.8% lower** than North Carolina's rate (45.1)

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data-

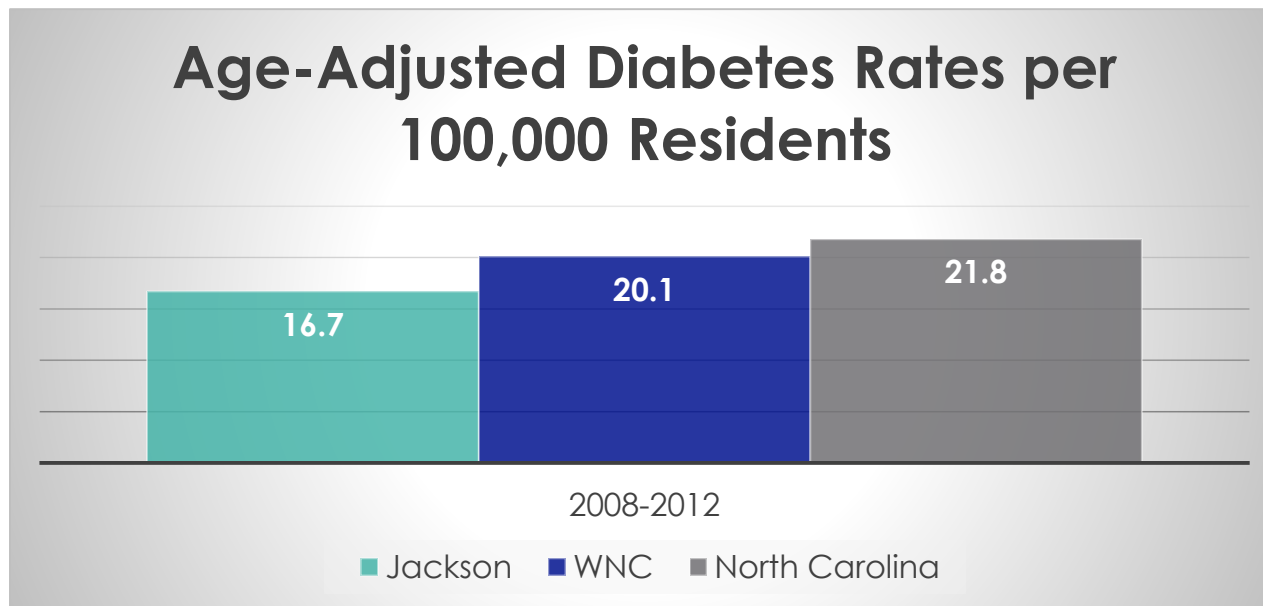
Unintentional Injury & Suicide

The unintentional injury mortality rate (excluding motor vehicles) in Jackson County was **23.2% higher** in 2008-2012 than in 2002-2006.



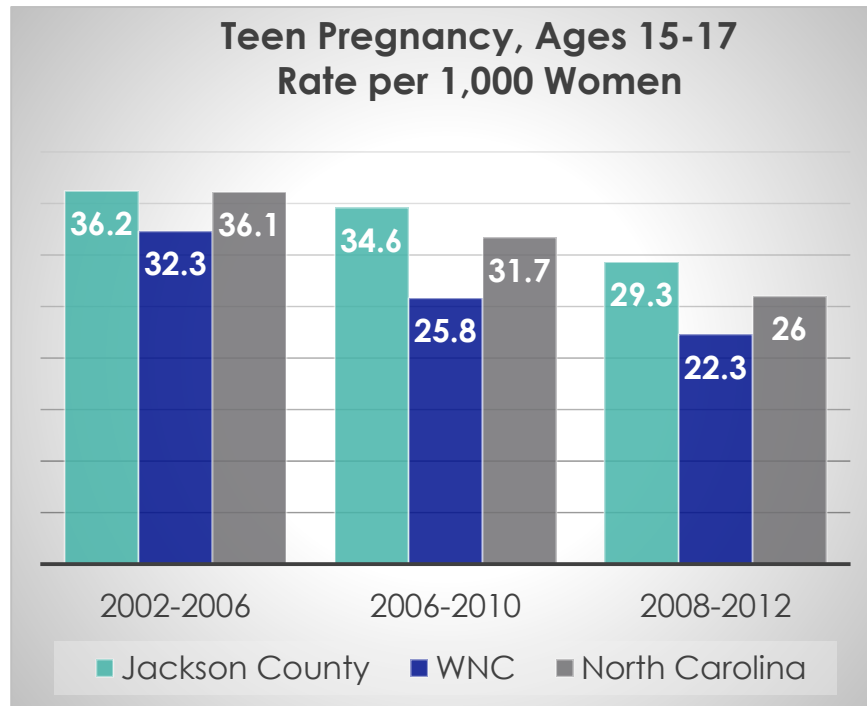
The suicide rate **decreased** during the 2008-2012 aggregate period, by **28.1%**. Jackson County's rate of 13 during this period is **6.5% higher** than North Carolina's rate of 12.2.

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data- Diabetes



The graph above shows that Jackson County's diabetes mortality rate during the 2008-2012 aggregate period is lower than both WNC's and North Carolina's rates. Jackson County saw a **8.2% decrease** in diabetes mortality rate from the 2007-2011 aggregate period.

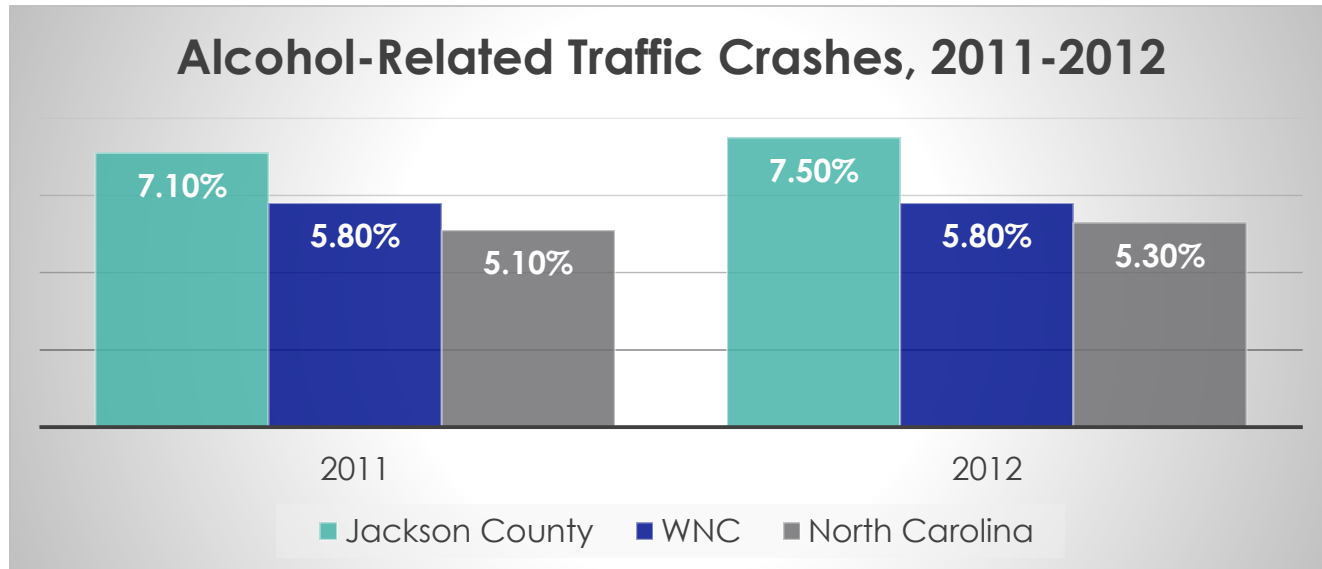
Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data- Teen Pregnancy



2013 Data Updates

- 46 pregnancies among 15-19 year olds
- Repeat pregnancies: 21.7%
- Ranking: 70th out of 100 counties
- Change since 2012: **15% decrease**

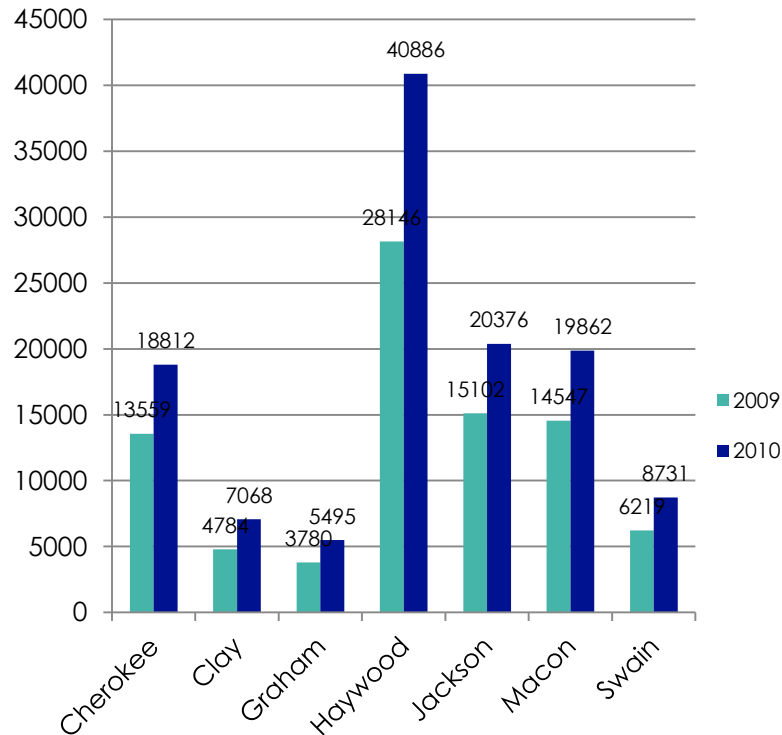
Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data- Substance Abuse



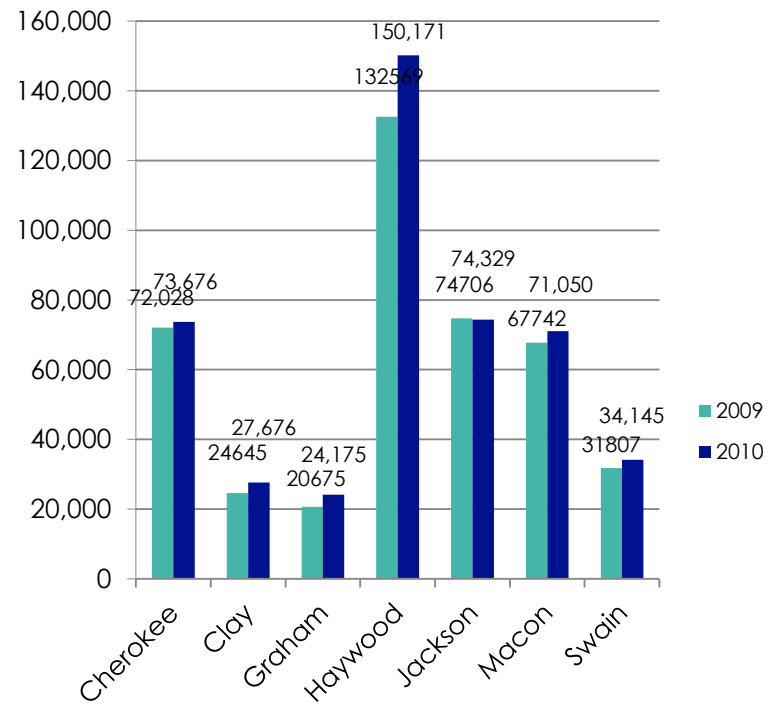
More crashes are alcohol-related in Jackson County than in WNC or North Carolina– **29% more than WNC and 42% more than North Carolina in 2012**

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data- Substance Abuse

Number of recipients of prescriptions for controlled substances



Number of prescriptions for controlled substances



- Selected as a result of the most recent community health assessment
- CHA:
<http://health.jacksonnc.org/community-health-data/>
- Community Health Action Plans:
<http://health.jacksonnc.org/healthy-carolinans/>

Community Health Priorities: Healthy Eating

Increase the percentage of Jackson County adults who consume 5 or more ½ cup servings of fruits and vegetables daily to 30%.

Progress Within Last Year

HEAT: Healthy Eating Action Team

- Food of the Month Campaign
 - Highlighted a local, seasonal fruit or vegetable monthly
 - *Partners: Senior Center, Mainstreet Sylva Association, Jackson County Farmers Market, MountainWise, & Jackson County Public Schools*
 - Promoted through:
 - 5 press releases to the local newspaper
 - Displays at the farmers market and corner stores
 - Presence at the Healthy Living Festival, Taste of Sylva, & Stroke Screening
- Healthy Snack Masters Competition
 - Cooking competition open to all Jackson County Public School students
 - *Partners: School Health Advisory Council & Jackson County Public Schools*
 - **32** entries, **21** selected to compete, **13** competed
 - **4** winners selected based on team dynamic and age



Progress Within Last Year

HEAT: Healthy Eating Action Team

- The Art of Healthy Eating
 - Implemented a Fall Festival that featured fruit and vegetable art contest and tasting
 - *Partners: Mainstreet Sylva Association, Jackson County Farmers Market, MountainWise, Jackson County Public Schools, Western Carolina University*
 - **100** fruit & vegetable art submissions by Jackson County youth with a prize of a free ticket to the Taste of Sylva
 - **90** youth attended the Taste of Sylva
- Healthy Eating Policy
 - Based on the NC Eat Smart, Move More Healthy Foods Policy 2013
 - *Partners: Jackson County Cooperative Extension*
 - Adopted by the Jackson County Cooperative Extension



Progress Within Last Year

Other Healthy Eating Initiatives

- The Jackson County Cooperative Extension was able to hire a **Family & Consumer Sciences Agent**. The FCS Agent is focusing on the Faithful Families curriculum.
- JCDPH implemented the **Eat Smart, Move More Weigh Less** curriculum at the Senior Center from July-October.
- MountainWise (Region 1 CTG) continued to implement the **Healthy Corner Store Initiative**, outfitting two corner stores in Jackson County with supplies that promote healthy options.
- Harris Regional Hospital in partnership with the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department implemented the 2nd annual **BlastOFF! Program**, a childhood obesity treatment program that impacted ~50 individuals.



Changes in Data

Fruit & Vegetable Consumption

- Guiding Data: Jackson County Community Health Opinion Survey, 2011
 - 55.2% of adults consume 3-5 ½ cup servings of fruits & vegetables daily
 - 8.5% of adults consume 6-8 ½ cup servings of fruits and vegetables daily
- Recent Data: WNC Healthy Impact Survey, 2012
 - 8.1% of adults consume an average of 5 or more 1 cup servings of fruits & vegetables daily

Adult Obesity

- Decrease in adult obesity from 33.1 to 32.6– **decreased by 1.5%**

Note: It is difficult to determine progress towards increasing fruit & vegetable consumption as the same question was not asked from original to follow-up data collection. Change in obesity data added as a result.

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Community Health Priorities: Physical Activity

Increase the percentage of adults in Jackson County getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity 5 or more days a week to 30%. (With emphasis on fall prevention)

Progress Within Last Year

A4L: Active for Life Action Team

- 5th Annual Healthy Living Festival
 - Held the 2nd Friday every May at the Recreation Center in Cullowhee
 - *Partners: Jackson County Recreation Center, Senior Center, & Local businesses*
 - **133** attendees and **47** exhibitors
 - Rated excellent with most attendees stating that they would share information and knowledge gained with family and friends
- 2nd Annual Stroke Screening
 - Held July 15, 2014 at the Senior Center in Webster
 - *Partners: Senior Center, Harris Regional Hospital, Western Carolina University*
 - **43** attendees and **6** exhibitors
 - Post-survey determined that attendees are exercising more, trying to quit smoking, and took screening results to PCP

Progress Within Last Year

A4L: Active for Life Action Team

- 4th Annual Get Fit Challenge
 - Annual fitness challenge open to county residents; **441** participants and **58** teams
 - *Partners: Harris Regional Hospital, Western Carolina University, Jackson County Recreation Center, Senior Center, Local gyms*
 - New to the Challenge: Move It Monday; Wellness Wednesday emails; & giveaways like pedometers, day passes to local gyms, & water bottles
- Exercise classes that promote balance
 - *Partners: Senior Center*
 - Get Some Balance in Your Life: **274** participants
 - Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program: **913** participants
 - Walk with Ease: **543** participants
 - Tai Chi for Arthritis: **665** participants



Progress Within Last Year

Other Physical Activity Initiatives

- Phase 1 of the **Tuckasegee River Greenway** was completed. A connecting pedestrian bridge will be constructed with anticipated completion date of Spring 2015.
- The Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department hired a **Outdoor Recreation Program Manager**. This job consists of coordinating outdoor recreation opportunities like canoeing, swimming trips, hiking, ski trips, etc. to Jackson County residents.
- The Jackson County Department of Public Health hired an **Active Routes to School Coordinator** for Region 1. This job consists of increasing the number of North Carolinians that meet the physical activity recommendations by increasing the number of elementary and middle school youth that walk and bike to school and increasing places for physical activity.
- MountainWise (Region 1 CTG) completed the regional **Health Impact Assessment** with the final product being a health chapter that includes physical activity recommendations for each county's comprehensive plan.

Changes in Data

Moderate Physical Activity

- Guiding Data: Jackson County Community Health Opinion Survey, 2011
 - 25% of adults report engaging in moderate physical activity at least 30 minutes a day/5 days a week
 - 10.4% of adults report not engaging in any physical activity
- Recent Data: WNC Healthy Impact Survey, 2012
 - 34.5% of adults report taking part in moderate physical activity at least 30 minutes a day/5 days a week
 - 18.7% of adults report not engaging in any leisure-time physical activity in the last month.

Access to Physical Activity

- Recent Data:
 - 98% of residents have access to exercise opportunities
 - 97.6% of adults feel easier access to activity spaces is important
 - 96.8% of adults feel improved access to greenspace/trails is important
 - 33% of adults do not believe that Jackson County currently provides the facilities & programs needed for children and youth to be physically active throughout the year

- Selected as a result of the most recent community health assessment
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Community Health Priorities: Substance Abuse

Reduce the percentage of 12-19 year old students that report the use of illicit drugs, alcohol, and tobacco in the past 30 days by 5%.

To increase awareness and knowledge about prescription drug abuse in Jackson County using the Project Lazarus model with the intent of decreasing overdose deaths.

Progress Within Last Year

SAAT: Substance Abuse Action Team

- All strategies on 2012-2016 SAAT Action Plan were reached in 2013.
- Strategies included:
 - Implement evidence-based substance abuse curricula at Jackson County Public Schools
 - Set up a referral system for Prime for Life
 - Pass a tobacco free county parks policy
- Based on changes in the data, 2013 SOTCH, and a grant opportunity; the team changed its focus and began implementing the Project Lazarus model.

Progress Within Last Year

SAAT: Substance Abuse Action Team

- SAAT uses the Hub & Wheel of the Project Lazarus model to guide implementation
 - Hub (always initiated): Public awareness, coalition action, data & evaluation
 - Wheel (initiated based on community needs): Community education, hospital ED policies, diversion control, & harm reduction



Progress Within Last Year

SAAT: Substance Abuse Action Team

- Reorganized coalition
 - Hired a coalition coordinator
 - *Recruited partners from law enforcement, Harris Regional Hospital, Western Carolina University, Mountain Projects, Jackson County Public Schools, and community at large*
- Implemented a Lunch & Learn
 - **35** attendees, **3** presenters
 - Presentations by Project Lazarus executive director, law enforcement, and personal experience
- Presented Project Lazarus model at community events
 - **5** presentations with various materials distributed

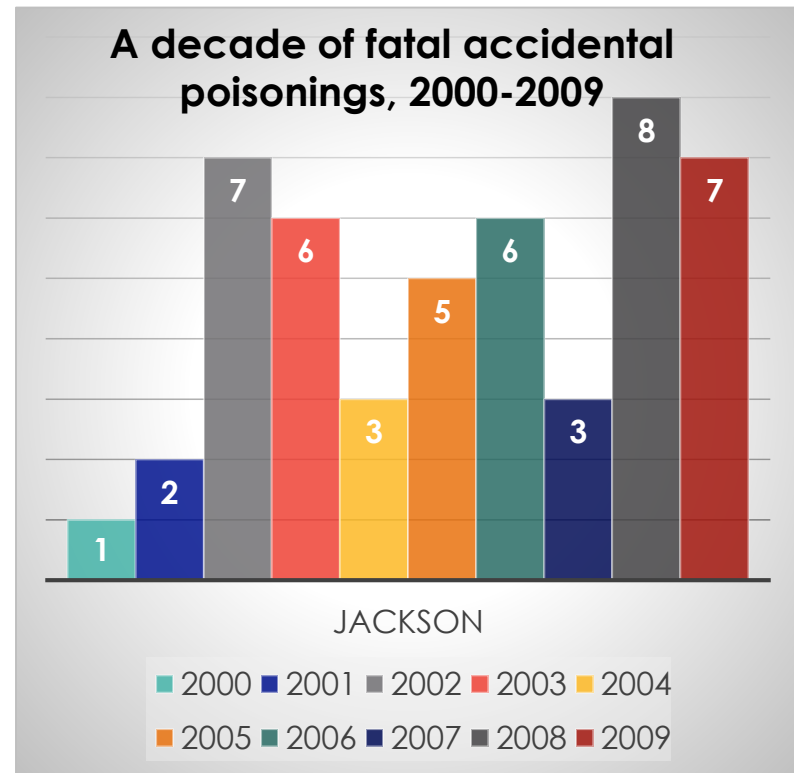
Progress Within Last Year

Other Substance Abuse Prevention Activities

- Mountain Projects Prevention Services is pleased to partner with SAAT in bolstering prevention in Jackson County.
- WNC Teen Institute
 - **8** youth attended the WNCTI Regional Seminar at the Lake Junaluska Conference Center
 - **11** youth attended the WNCTI Summer Conference at Mars Hill University
 - **17** youth participated in “Sticker Shock,” a project designed to reach adults who might purchase alcohol legally and provide it to minors. Stickers warning about the penalties for furnishing alcohol to minors were placed on alcohol products (multi-packs of beer, liquor bottles, etc.) at locations in **Sylva** and **Cashiers**.

Changes in Data

- Guiding & Current Data
 - PRIDE survey was not conducted in 2014.
 - As the focus on Project Lazarus was recently adopted, the guiding and current data are the same. Progress towards the objective can be better measured in subsequent years.



New & Emerging Issues

- Review of data combined with interviews with key leaders and health stakeholders indicated the following new or emerging issues that are affecting Jackson County's health status:
 - Access to facilities and programs where youth can be physically active
 - Lack of connection to locally grown foods
 - Overweight children
 - Fracking
 - Lack of public transportation
 - Cost of healthy food
 - Access to affordable organic produce & meat
 - Fast food culture
 - Violence
 - Lack of coping mechanisms in male adolescents
 - Prescription drugs
 - Heroin use and the increased risk of Hepatitis and HIV from needle use
 - Alcohol-related traffic accidents

New Initiatives

- **Project Lazarus:** JCDPH received funding from Project Lazarus and the Injury & Violence Prevention Branch to mobilize communities, educate providers and patients, reduce drug supply, reduce harm from available drugs, and evaluate program activities.
- **Active Routes to School:** NC Division of Public Health received funding from NC Department of Transportation to administer the Safe Routes to School Program across public health districts. The goal of the funding is to increase the number of North Carolinians that meet physical activity recommendations by increasing the number of elementary and middle schoolers who walk or bike to school.
- **Tuesdays to Thrive:** JCDPH partnered with Harris Regional Hospital to offer a health and wellness series that features timely health topics each month. Free screenings, information, etc. are provided to residents of Jackson County on the first Tuesday of every month.
- **Smart Start:** JCDPH hired two new Smart Start Child Health Care Consultants to work with the childcare centers in both Jackson and Haywood Counties, providing trainings to center staff, ensuring centers are following regulations, and offering lessons to youth.

Other Challenges Affecting the Health of our Community

- **Harris Regional and Swain Community Hospitals** were purchased by Duke LifePoint, transitioning from non-profit to for-profit facilities.
- **EPASS:** Applicants for Medicaid, Food Stamps and Health Choice (health insurance for children) can now apply completely on-line from any computer 24/7/365. Though the idea was to make it easier for working people, folks without transportation, or those who simply don't want to be seen applying for assistance at Social Services, many issues arose with implementation. Jackson County Department of Social Services, along with many other Departments across North Carolina, is still working through system issues and providing services as soon as possible.
- **2014 Board of Commissioners Elections:** Jackson County residents elected a predominately Democratic Board of Commissioners in the 2014 election. This is a change from the 2 Democrats, 2 Republicans, and 1 Unaffiliated make-up of the previous Board. This political change may have an affect on the health outcomes of residents.
- The implementation of the **Affordable Care Act (ACA)** has caused confusion for some and opportunity for others in terms of access to healthcare. Health Departments and other agencies are learning how to incorporate these changes in delivery of services.
- **WNC Health Insurance Navigators:** The Mountain Projects Navigators, health insurance navigators that assisted residents in understanding the ACA at no cost, lost grant funding.

- The 2014 State of the County Health Report will be presented/available at the following:
 - Jackson County Board of Health, January 2015
 - Posted on the Jackson County Department of Public Health website: <http://health.jacksonnc.org>
 - Electronic copy sent to the County Commissioners and County Manager
 - Press releases sent to the Sylva Herald, Crossroads Chronicle, and WRGC 540 radio
 - Hard copies available at Jackson County Department of Public Health



What Next?

Continued attention to collective action and monitoring impact & data collection for the 2015 Community Health Assessment

For more information on the State of the County Health Report, please contact Melissa McKnight at 828-587-8288 or melissamcknight@jacksonnc.org