

SHAPE Briefing



1998
2002
2006

Number 4

Trends and insights from SHAPE, the Survey of the Health of All the Population and the Environment

Highlights

- The majority of children in Hennepin County were reported to be in *excellent* to *very good* health. Fewer than 3 percent were reported as having *poor* or *fair* health.
- More than one in twenty children (5.8 percent) were identified as having a current health condition (physical, mental/behavioral or combined) that limits their childhood activities. This equates to approximately 16,000 children with activity limiting conditions in Hennepin County.
- Of those children who have a current health condition that limits their childhood activities, 84.1 percent had conditions that are expected to last 12 months or longer. This equates to approximately 13,000 children living with chronic, activity-limiting health conditions in Hennepin County.

Upcoming Issues

- ◆ Chronic conditions among Hennepin County children
- ◆ Health insurance
- ◆ Nutrition and exercise

Introduction

This briefing provides key findings on the overall health of Hennepin County's children and summary measures of health conditions that may limit a child's activities. **SHAPE 2006** is the third in a series of surveys collecting information on the health of Hennepin County residents and factors that affect their health. More than 10,000 households in the county participated in **SHAPE 2006**, providing information on more than 8,000 adults and 4,000 children.

Background

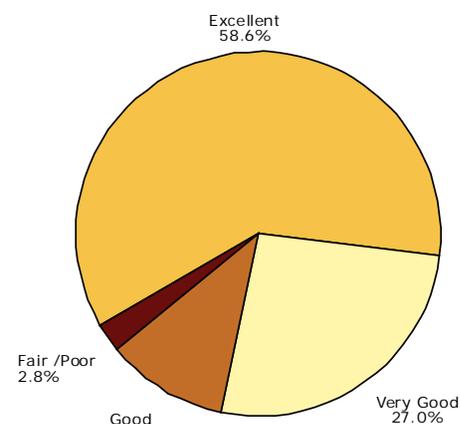
The **SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey** collected data on the health status of children aged 0 to 17 by conducting telephone interviews with the adult most knowledgeable about the health of the randomly selected child of interest within the household. An overview of the survey questionnaire and the data collection strategy for **SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey** is available in *SHAPE Briefing, Number 3*.

The majority of Hennepin County children enjoy *excellent* or *very good* health

The **SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey** asked parents and caregivers to provide an overall assessment of their child's health by asking them: *How would you describe the health of your child? In general, would you say: Excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?*

This question was one of several incorporated into the **SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey** that was drawn or adapted from other national surveys of children's health. It follows the format of the *National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)* questionnaire¹ (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Overall health of Hennepin County children, 2006

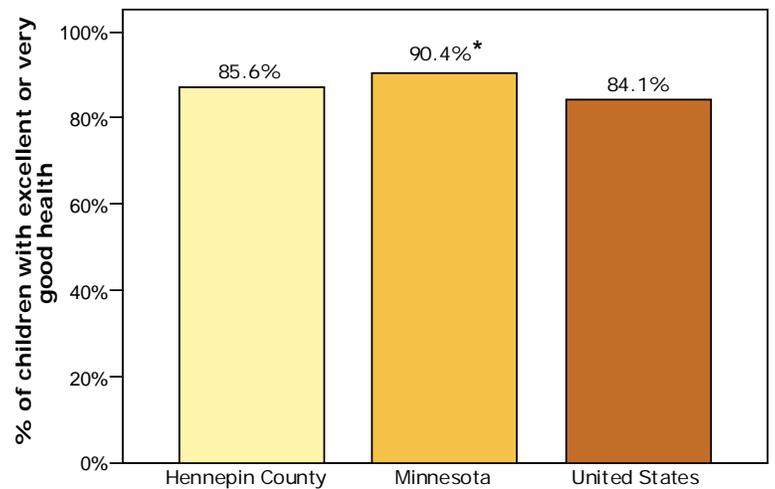


SOURCE: SHAPE 2006

Hennepin County results are less favorable than the statewide rate

The *SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey* findings indicate that 85.6 percent of children in Hennepin County were reported as having *very good* or *excellent health*. Comparable data from the 2005 NCHS survey indicated that across the state of Minnesota, 90.4 percent of all children were reported as having *very good* or *excellent health*. The difference in these rates was statistically significant, suggesting that Hennepin County children are less likely to enjoy *very good* or *excellent health* than other children in the state² (see Figure 2). There was no statistical difference detected between the county's rate and the nationwide rate of 84.1 percent.

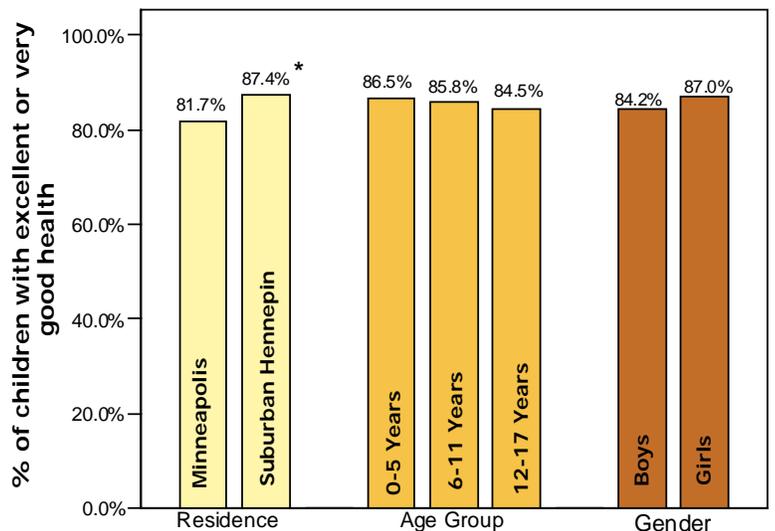
Figure 2. Percent of Hennepin County children who have *excellent* or *very good* overall health, 2006; with Minnesota and US statistics, 2005



* Differences between Minnesota and the rates for US and Hennepin County are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.
SOURCE: SHAPE 2006, NSCH 2005

Consistency found in overall health status across groups. Data from the *SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey* were analyzed to determine if there were any statistically significant differences in the overall health of Hennepin County children among groups based on residence, age or gender.

Figure 3. Percent of Hennepin County children who have *excellent* or *very good* overall health by residence, age and gender, 2006



* Difference in rates between urban and suburban residents is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.
SOURCE: SHAPE 2006

Urban versus suburban residence. Findings for children residing in Minneapolis indicate that 81.7 percent were reported as having *excellent* or *very good health* and 4.4 percent were described as having *poor* or *fair health*. In suburban Hennepin County, 87.4 percent of children were described as having *excellent* or *very good health* and 2.1 percent were described as having *poor* or *fair health*. The differences in overall health status between Minneapolis and suburban Hennepin children were statistically significant (see Figure 3).

Overall health by age. At the national level, some statistically significant differences in overall health have been observed among children at different age levels. The 2005 NSCH report noted:

*Younger children are more likely to be reported in excellent or very good health than are school-aged children or adolescents. Of children aged 5 and under, 86.0 percent were reported to be in excellent or very good health, compared to 83.8 percent of children aged 6–11 and 82.6 percent of children aged 12–17.*³

The *SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey* findings for Hennepin County children do not reflect the age-based pattern observed nationally. Children from all age groups appear to enjoy similar levels of *excellent* or *very good health*: 86.5 percent of children aged 0 to 5 were reported to be in *excellent* or *very good health*, as were 85.8 percent of children aged 6 to 11. Similarly, for adolescents aged 12 to 17 the value was 84.5 percent (see Figure 3).

Overall health by gender. The *SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey* findings were parallel to the state- and national-level findings that indicated there are no detectable gender differences for overall health. In Hennepin County, 84.2 percent of boys and 87.0 percent of girls were reported as having *very good* or *excellent* health. Similarly, the NSCH found that nationally, 83.5 percent of boys and 84.7 percent of girls were reported as having *very good* or *excellent* health.⁴ However, the percentages that were found for Hennepin County children were significantly different from those observed for children statewide; overall in Minnesota 89.5 percent of boys and 91.3 percent of girls were described as enjoying *very good* or *excellent* health (see Figure 3).

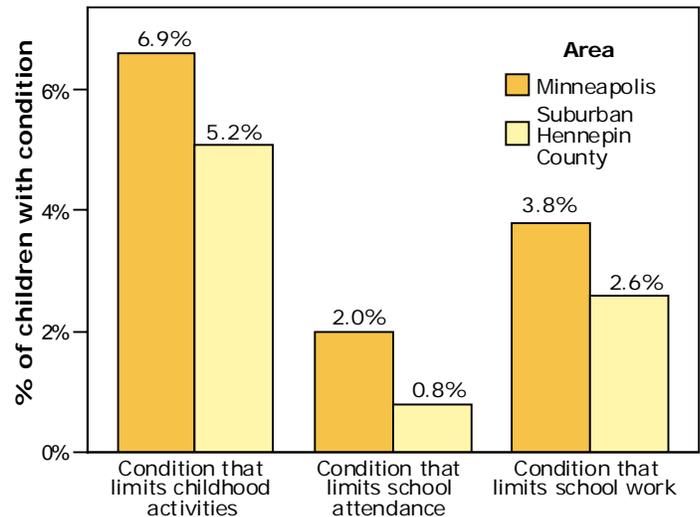
Conditions that limit children's usual activities

Participants in the *SHAPE 2006 - Child Survey* were also asked about health conditions that may limit the activities of their children. The conditions affecting the child could be physical, mental/behavioral or any combination of these. The questions included three specific ways in which a child's activities might be affected: the ability to do usual childhood activities; the ability to attend school regularly; the ability to do regular school work. Additional questions were asked to determine if the child's condition(s) was expected to last more than 12 months.

Conditions limiting usual childhood activities. Among children aged 0 to 17, 5.8 percent were identified as having a current health condition that limited their ability to do childhood activities usual for their ages. This equates to approximately 16,000 children⁵ with an activity-limiting condition (physical, mental/behavioral or combined) in Hennepin County. Of the children who have these conditions, 84.1 percent had conditions that were expected to last 12 months or longer. This equates to approximately 13,000 children living with chronic, activity-limiting health conditions in Hennepin County.

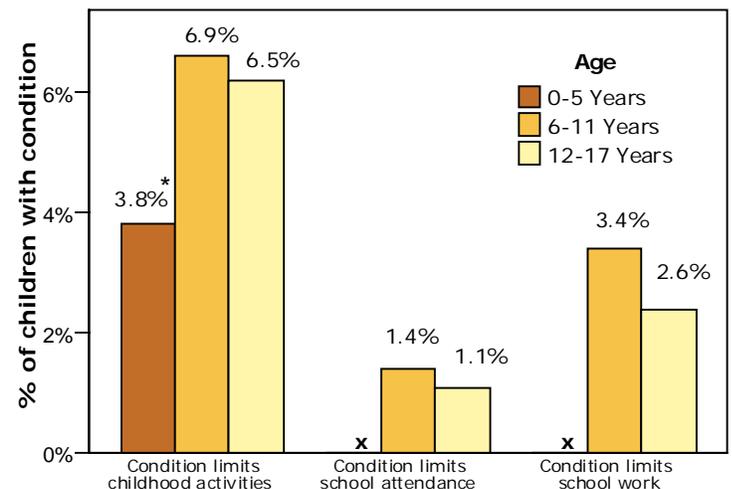
Conditions limiting activities at school. School-aged children (aged 6 to 17 years old) have a low likelihood of having a current health condition that affects their ability to attend school regularly (1.2 percent or 2,000 children). When the child's condition did have an impact, it was more likely to place limits on the child's ability to complete regular school work than to affect his or her regular school attendance (3.0 percent, or 6,000 children for limited school work).

Figure 4. Percent of Hennepin County children with activity-limiting conditions by geographic area, 2006



SOURCE: SHAPE 2006

Figure 5. Percent of Hennepin County children with activity-limiting conditions by age, 2006



* Differences for youngest and other age groups are significant at $p < 0.05$.
 X Questions were asked only about school-aged children.

SOURCE: SHAPE 2006

Findings on activity-limiting conditions similar across groups

The data on activity-limiting conditions were also analyzed to determine if there were any statistically significant differences among groups of Hennepin County children based on their residence, age or gender. These findings are summarized below.

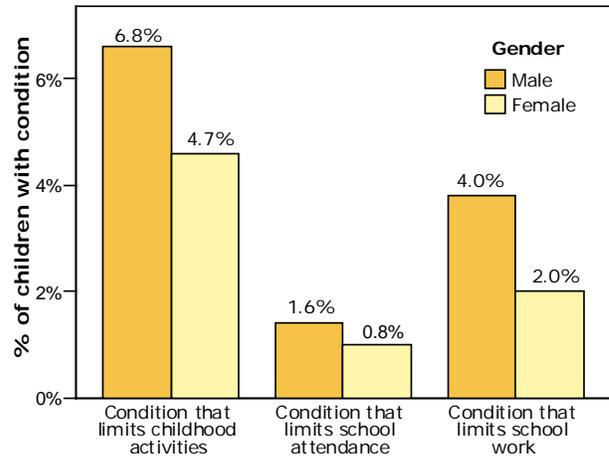
Urban versus suburban residence.

For each of the three limitations identified (childhood activities, regular school work, and school attendance), children in suburban Hennepin County seemed to fare slightly better than their urban counterparts. However, these differences were not found to be statistically significant (see Figure 4).

Limitations by child's age. Some differences appear to be based on the child's age. The rates are slightly higher for children aged 6 and over, and this difference was found to be statistically significant. In part, these rates may be explained by the child's "opportunity for exposure," that is, older children have accumulated more life-time during which these health conditions may have been assessed and diagnosed (see Figure 5).

Gender differences. Boys were slightly more likely to have a current condition that limited their usual childhood activities than were girls (6.8 percent for boys versus 4.7 percent of girls). Similarly, boys were slightly more likely to have conditions that limited their school attendance and their capacity to complete regular schoolwork. However, these apparent gender differences were not statistically significant (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Percent of Hennepin County children with activity-limiting conditions by gender, 2006



SOURCE: SHAPE 2006

Acknowledgments

The **SHAPE** project would like to thank the many individuals, community organizations, and subject-area experts who provided advice and support for the development of **SHAPE 2006**. A partial list of those who provided assistance to the **SHAPE 2006** project can be found on the **SHAPE** Web site listed below. The **SHAPE** project would especially like to thank the more than 10,000 residents of Hennepin County who generously took the time to complete the **SHAPE** survey.

For More Information

SHAPE 2006 is a collaborative project between the Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department and the University of Minnesota School of Public Health.

For more information on this *Briefing* or other topics related to the **SHAPE** project, or to receive this information in an alternate format, please contact SHAPE@co.hennepin.mn.us or 612-348-6150.

www.co.hennepin.mn.us
Search keyword: **SHAPE2006**

Notes:

1. - 4. US Department of Health and Human Services – Health Resources & Services Administration, The Health and Well-being of Children: A Portrait of States and the Nation, 2005. National data appear on page 8; Minnesota data appear on page 71. (Available at: www.cdc.gov/nchs/slats.htm)

5. Here and throughout, estimates of the number of children affected were based on US Census 2000 population (by age) for Hennepin County and rounded to the nearest 1,000. Information about the prevalence rates of specific chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes or autism among Hennepin County children can be found in *SHAPE Briefing, Number 5*.



Human Services and
Public Health Department