

2020 Health Disparities Profile: Middlesex and New London Counties including Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (MPTN)

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Produced for the Office of Minority Health (**Grant No. 1 CPIMP201214-01-00**)
by the State of Connecticut Office of Health Strategy (CTOHS) and DataHaven

DataHaven contracted with the Office of Health Strategy to produce Health Disparities Profiles for each topic area and Evaluation Plan and Design under this grant award. DataHaven (ctdatahaven.org) is a non-profit organization with a 25-year history of public service to Connecticut. Its mission is to empower people to create thriving communities by collecting and ensuring access to data on well-being, equity, and quality of life. DataHaven is a formal partner of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership.

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Introduction

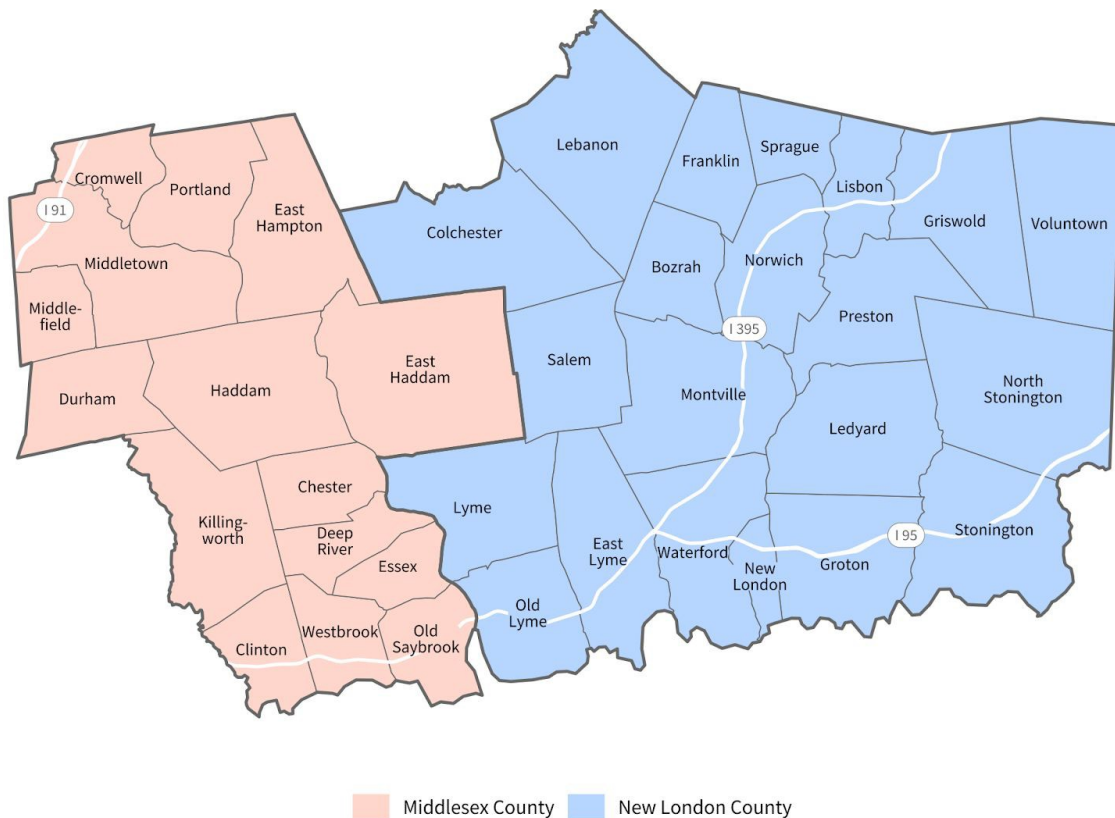
This first version of the Health Disparities Profile was produced to meet guidance provided by the Office of Minority Health. Based on this guidance, we focus here on providing a general overview of disparities by race/ethnicity and geographic location, rather than on other important factors such as age, gender, or socioeconomic status.¹ We intend to refine this document over time based on stakeholder feedback. Additional data on local conditions are available through DataHaven, the CT Department of Public Health, and other individual state and federal agency websites, as well as through community health needs assessments produced by area hospitals and local health departments. All data visualizations and maps in this document were created by DataHaven.

Area Demographics

Middlesex and New London Counties are home to more than 430,000 people. The cities of Norwich and New London are more racially and ethnically diverse than the region overall. Nineteen percent of the population is under 18 years of age, and another 18 percent are over age 65. Eighteen percent of the population of the region (about 76,000 people) are females between the ages of 15 and 44, a population of particular interest to the Office of Minority Health and CT Office of Health Strategy.

Map of study area

Towns in Middlesex and New London Counties



¹For a more general discussion, see Davila, K., Abraham, M., & Seaberry, C. (2020). Towards Health Equity in Connecticut: The Role of Social Inequality and the Impact of COVID-19. New Haven, CT: DataHaven. <https://www.ctdatahaven.org/reports/towards-health-equity-connecticut>.

Population by race/ethnicity, 2019

Area	Total	White		Black		Latino		Asian		Native American		Other Race	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Connecticut	3,575,074	2,392,013	67%	383,416	11%	574,240	16%	161,257	4%	9,955	<1%	54,193	2%
Middlesex County	163,053	136,807	84%	9,119	6%	10,095	6%	5,017	3%	312	<1%	1,703	1%
Middletown	46,511	31,152	67%	7,043	15%	5,195	11%	2,709	6%	132	<1%	280	1%
New London County	267,390	202,296	76%	15,537	6%	28,213	11%	11,091	4%	1,650	1%	8,603	3%
Norwich	39,260	24,008	61%	4,370	11%	5,664	14%	3,208	8%	438	1%	1,572	4%
New London	26,966	12,102	45%	4,058	15%	9,005	33%	645	2%	40	<1%	1,116	4%

Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.

Population by age group, 2019

Area	Under 18 years	18 to 34 years	35 to 64 years	65 years and over	Total
Connecticut	743,833	789,888	1,440,300	601,053	3,575,074
Middlesex County	29,313	32,572	69,096	32,072	163,053
Middletown	7,901	13,887	17,587	7,136	46,511
New London County	52,401	61,708	105,860	47,421	267,390
Norwich	8,182	10,081	14,380	6,617	39,260
New London	5,165	9,112	9,700	2,989	26,966

Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.

Female population between 15 and 44 years, 2019

Area	Total	White	Black	Latina	Asian	Native American	Other race
Connecticut	672,214	395,644	85,708	135,376	41,649	1,841	11,996
Middlesex County	28,164	21,747	1,880	2,442	1,564	17	514
New London County	47,639	33,202	3,429	6,672	2,351	248	1,737

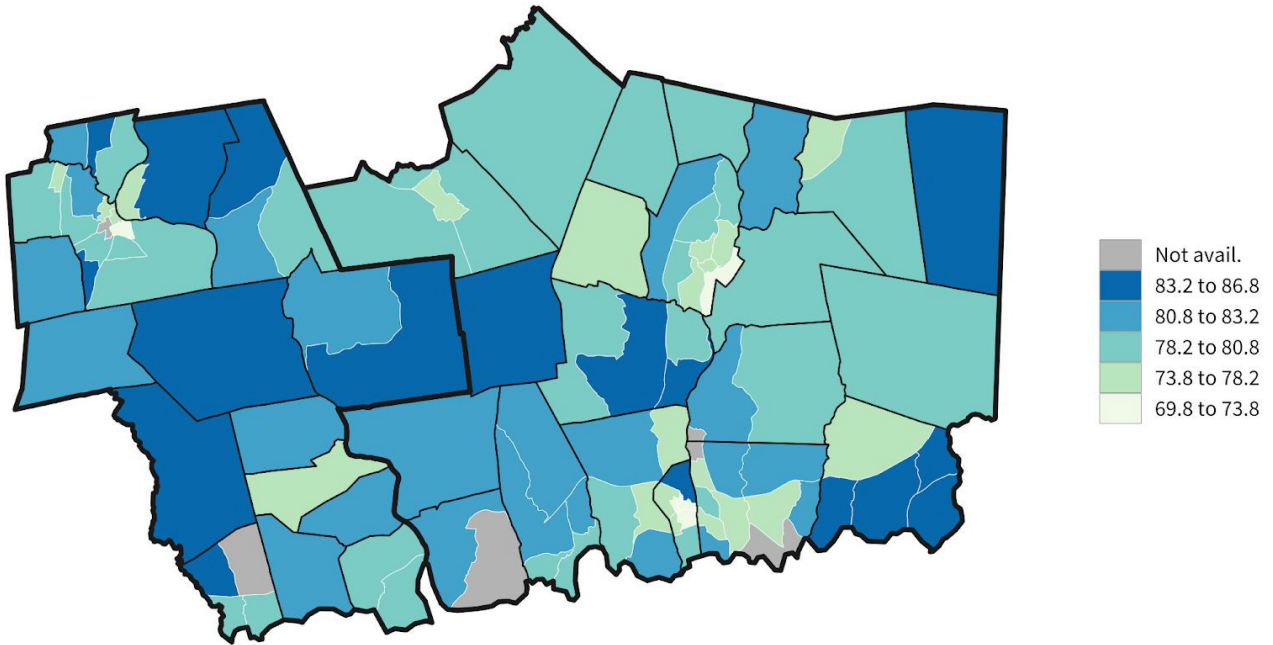
Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.

Life Expectancy

Life expectancy at birth is generally high throughout the region relative to national averages, but is well below the national average in central areas of Middletown, Norwich, and New London. On the map below, these areas are shaded with the lightest color, indicating that residents in those areas are estimated to have a life expectancy of less than 74 years. Lower life expectancy in these areas may be attributed to higher burdens of chronic diseases, especially cardiovascular disease, as well as the other social inequalities presented in this report.

Average life expectancy varies by 17 years across the region

Life expectancy in years, 2010–2015



Source: National Center for Health Statistics U.S. Small-Area Life Expectancy Estimates Project Files, 2010–2015.
Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

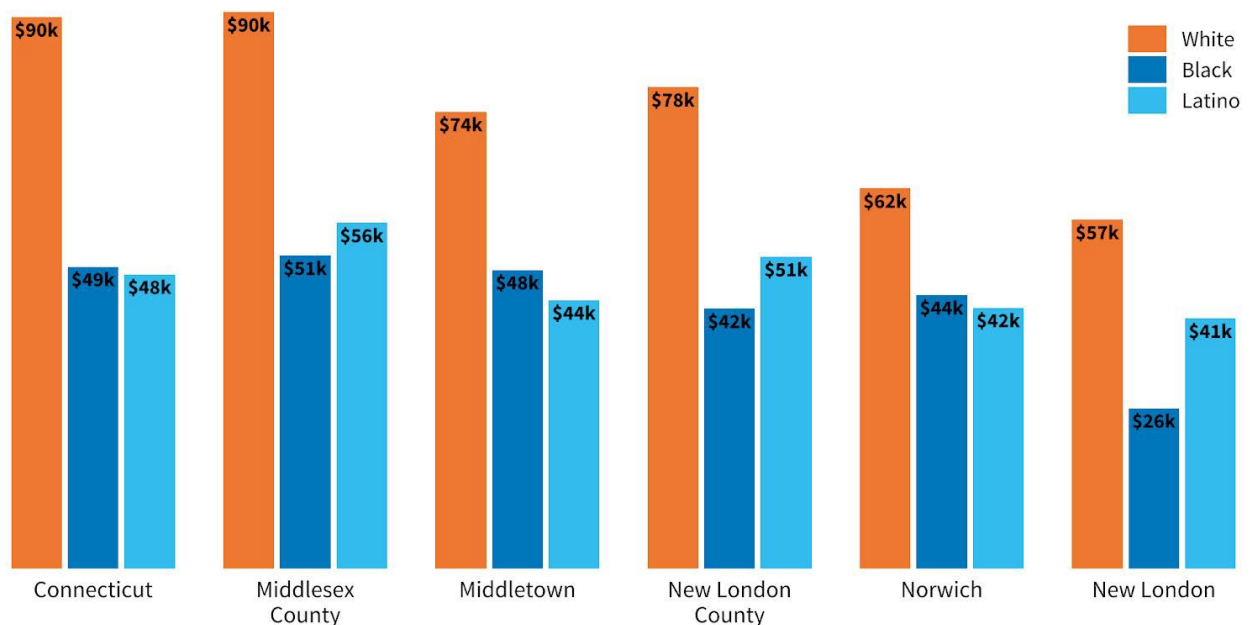
Education and Economic Stability

Income and Poverty

Similar to statewide trends, household income across the region is much higher for white households. However, household incomes in New London are much lower than the region and state—especially for Black households, whose median income is just \$26,000 per year. Poverty rates are similarly elevated among Black, Latino, and Native American populations, with poverty rates in the city of New London much higher than state averages.

Income for Black and Latino households is much lower than white households

Median household income by race of head of household, 2019



Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.
 Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Poverty rates are higher among people of color and in Middletown, Norwich, and New London

Percent of people who live in poverty, 2019

Area	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	6%	18%	22%	8%	17%
Middlesex County	5%	16%	20%	10%	36%
Middletown	8%	20%	29%	11%	N/A
New London County	7%	24%	20%	7%	6%
Norwich	11%	21%	14%	6%	0%
New London	12%	37%	35%	20%	N/A

Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.
 Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Educational Attainment and Youth Opportunity

While the region tracks closely with the state in adult educational attainment, statewide disparities in high school completion also prevail in the region. Higher shares of adults ages 25 and over in Norwich of all races and ethnicities have less than a high school diploma, and Black and Latino adults in New London significantly lag in educational attainment relative to the state average. Regionally, most Black, Latino, and white adults consider their areas a good place to raise children, but there are large geographic disparities in perceptions of youth opportunity.

Over 20,000 adults in the region do not have a high school diploma

Adults 25 and up without a high school diploma or equivalent, 2019

Area	White		Black		Latino		Asian		Native American	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	98,059	6%	33,051	13%	90,060	28%	10,671	10%	1,256	20%
Middlesex County	5,070	5%	727	12%	927	16%	261	8%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	1,399	6%	448	10%	466	16%	73	4%	N/A	N/A
New London County	8,289	6%	1,518	15%	3,294	22%	987	12%	N/A	N/A
Norwich	1,681	9%	439	16%	702	23%	405	16%	N/A	N/A
New London	487	6%	560	21%	1,479	31%	17	4%	N/A	N/A

Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.

Perceptions of youth opportunity are lower in Norwich and New London

Percent of adults who report their area is an excellent or good place to raise children, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	70%	74%	54%	59%	74%	63%
Middlesex County	80%	80%	83%	79%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	71%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	74%	75%	70%	71%	70%	62%
Norwich	55%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	45%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

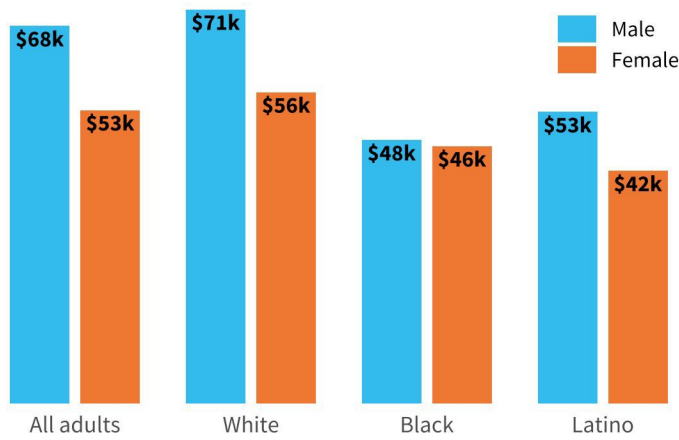
Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

The Gender and Racial/Ethnic Wage Gap

Regionwide, men outearn women, although the wage gap between white men and women is greater than between Black men and women or Latino men and Latinas. Median wages are also lower for Black and Latino workers regardless of sex than for white workers. Similarly, men out-earn women across educational attainment levels. Men with no high school diploma out-earn women with a high school diploma, and men with some college out-earn women with a four-year college degree.

The region has a wage gap not just by sex, but by race as well

Median earnings among full-time, year-round workers ages 25+ by race and sex, Middlesex & New London Counties, 2018



Source: American Community Survey 2013–2018 5-year estimates via IPUMS.
 Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Men outearn women across education levels

Median earnings among full-time, year-round workers ages 25+ by education and sex, Middlesex & New London Counties, 2018, with ratio of women’s pay to men’s



Source: American Community Survey 2013–2018 5-year estimates via IPUMS.
 Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Transportation Access

Having access to a vehicle supports families in meeting their basic needs such as travel to employment, school, and health care. According to the August 2020 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 8 percent of white, 21 percent of Black, and 17 percent of Latino adults in Connecticut said they do not often have access to a car when they need one. Furthermore 7 percent of white, 19 percent of Black, and 25 percent of Latino adults in Connecticut have had to stay home due to lack of transportation at some point in the past year. As of 2018, nearly 7,000 households in the region had no vehicle at home—half of which were Black and Latino households. Public transit services have limited reach in Middlesex and New London Counties, especially during evenings and weekends.

More than one in five Black households lack access to a vehicle

Households with no vehicle available, by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2018

Area	White		Black		Latino		Other Race	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	57,366	6%	26,928	22%	30,423	18%	8,107	11%
Middlesex County	2,908	5%	515	15%	199	6%	201	7%
New London County	3,768	4%	1,068	22%	1,294	15%	464	7%

Source: American Community Survey 2013–2018 5-year estimates via IPUMS.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Food Insecurity and SNAP Utilization

Statewide, Black, Latino, and Native American adults reported not having enough money to buy food at some point in the past year at two to three times the rate of white adults. These gaps were similar in New London County and marginally better in Middlesex County. Overall, more adults in Middletown, Norwich, and New London reported not having enough money to buy food than adults statewide. Likewise, SNAP (food stamp) utilization is highest among Black, Latino, and Native American households—nearly 50 percent of Black households and 40 percent of Latino households in New London reporting using SNAP benefits at some point in the past year, as did more than a quarter of Native American households statewide.

About 1 in 8 adults in the region report not having enough money to buy food in the past year

Percent of adults who report not having enough money to buy food in the past year, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	13%	10%	24%	28%	9%	18%
Middlesex County	9%	8%	20%	13%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	14%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	14%	13%	26%	33%	6%	13%
Norwich	19%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	20%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Many households receive SNAP benefits

Households utilizing SNAP in the past year, 2019

Area	White		Black		Latino		Asian		Native American	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	67,339	7%	34,650	26%	56,091	32%	3,145	6%	958	26%
Middlesex County	4,042	7%	893	26%	675	21%	196	11%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	1,578	11%	814	31%	612	38%	70	8%	N/A	N/A
New London County	7,088	8%	1,823	34%	2,334	27%	199	5%	155	19%
Norwich	1,575	14%	609	39%	553	31%	49	4%	N/A	N/A
New London	775	15%	747	47%	1,259	39%	47	20%	N/A	N/A

Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Financial Security

Regionwide, about 40 percent of adults believed the ability for residents in their area to find suitable employment was excellent or good, but this rate was much lower among Native American adults in New London County (25 percent), higher among Latino adults in Middlesex County (53 percent), and lower for adults overall in Norwich (28 percent). While most adults reported they were living comfortably or doing alright financially, this share was lower among Black and Latino adults in New London County, and in New London. Native American adults in New London County reported doing better financially than Native American adults statewide. The section below on COVID-19 describes some of the impacts on family economic security in 2020.

Many adults report that opportunities to secure high-quality jobs in their area are limited

Percent of adults who report the ability of residents in their area to obtain suitable employment is excellent or good, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	40%	43%	29%	36%	47%	30%
Middlesex County	37%	38%	40%	53%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	41%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	41%	42%	36%	36%	46%	25%
Norwich	28%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	34%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Adults in New London, and other groups in the region, are less likely to be financially secure

Percent of adults reporting that they are living comfortably or doing alright financially, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	66%	69%	51%	56%	74%	49%
Middlesex County	69%	71%	59%	72%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	65%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	65%	67%	51%	46%	63%	67%
Norwich	61%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	54%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

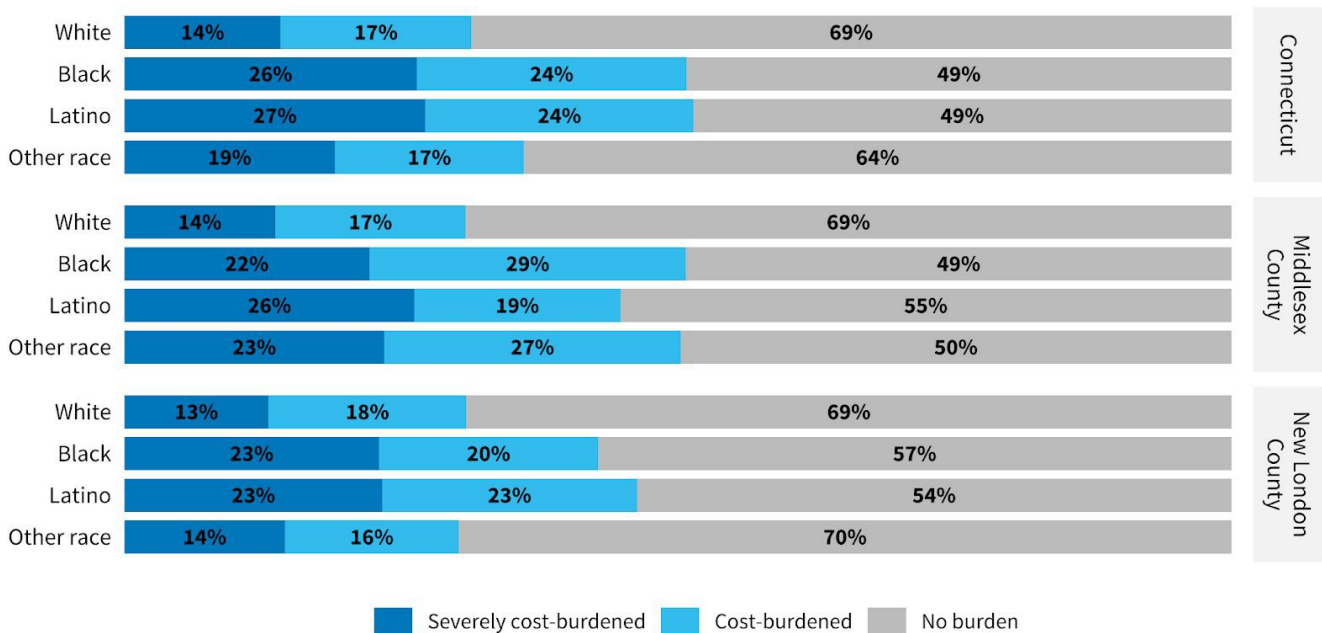
Housing and the Physical Environment

Housing Cost Burden

Housing cost-burden, spending more than 30 percent of household income on housing costs such as mortgage, rent, and utilities, can impose financial distress on families. Regionally, nearly half of Black and Latino households are cost-burdened—and nearly one in four Black and Latino households are severely cost-burdened, meaning that they spend at least half of their incomes on housing costs.

About half of all Black and Latino households regionally and statewide are cost-burdened

Housing cost-burden by race/ethnicity of head of households, 2018



Source: American Community Survey 2013–2018 5-year estimates via IPUMS.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

In the chart above, cost-burden indicates a household spending between 30 and 50 percent of household income on housing costs. Severe cost-burden indicates spending 50 percent or more of household income on housing costs. Households without cost-burden spend less than 30 percent of household income on housing costs.

Overcrowded Housing

Overcrowded housing plays an important role in the health and safety of residents. Statewide and across the region, overcrowding affects a small share of households overall, but disparately affects Black and Latino households. New London County has overcrowding rates similar to statewide averages for all racial and ethnic groups (except Asian households in New London County where overcrowding rates are significantly lower than their statewide averages). In contrast, overcrowding in Middlesex County is lower than the state average across all racial and ethnic groups.

Latino adults are substantially more likely to live in overcrowded housing than other groups

Households with more than one occupant per room, 2019

Area	White		Black		Latino		Asian		Native American	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	7,252	<1%	4,437	3%	10,771	6%	2,954	6%	158	4%
Middlesex County	388	<1%	42	1%	109	3%	9	<1%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	91	<1%	22	<1%	86	5%	9	1%	N/A	N/A
New London County	636	<1%	133	3%	501	6%	43	1%	32	4%
Norwich	192	2%	28	2%	149	8%	7	<1%	N/A	N/A
New London	17	<1%	52	3%	208	7%	14	6%	N/A	N/A

Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.

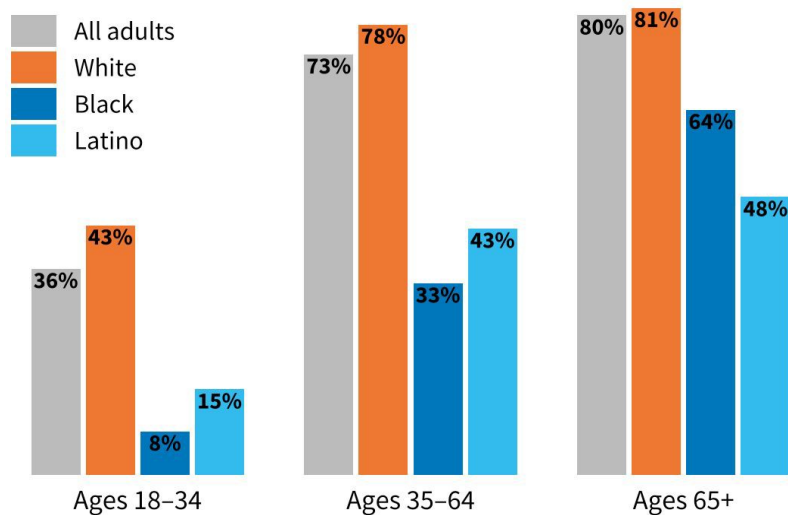
Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Homeownership

Regionally and across all age groups, white households are substantially more likely to own their home. While young adults are less likely to own their homes compared to older adults, white adults between the ages of 18 and 34 are more likely to own their homes than Black adults between the ages of 35 and 64. Across all races and ethnicities, homeownership rates are higher among older populations, and racial/ethnic disparities in homeownership rates are greatest among the age 18–34 cohort.

White young adults are more likely to own their homes than Black middle-aged adults

Homeownership rate by race and age of head of household, Middlesex & New London County households, 2018



Source: American Community Survey 2013–2018 5-year estimates via IPUMS.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Age of Home and Lead Risks

Statewide, Black and Latino households are more likely to live in a structure built before 1960, posing a greater risk of lead-based paint exposure than households living in newer structures. While Black and Latino households in the region are more likely to live in structures built before 1960 than white households, the share of Black and Latino households living in structures built before 1960 is lower than their statewide averages.

Age of housing contributes to higher lead risks among Black and Latino families

Households living in a structure built before 1960, by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2018

Area	White		Black		Latino		Other race	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	404,277	41%	62,573	50%	92,272	54%	25,124	34%
Middlesex County	19,507	34%	1,211	36%	1,237	40%	930	34%
New London County	32,711	38%	2,188	46%	3,909	45%	2,342	35%

Source: American Community Survey 2013–2018 5-year estimates via IPUMS.

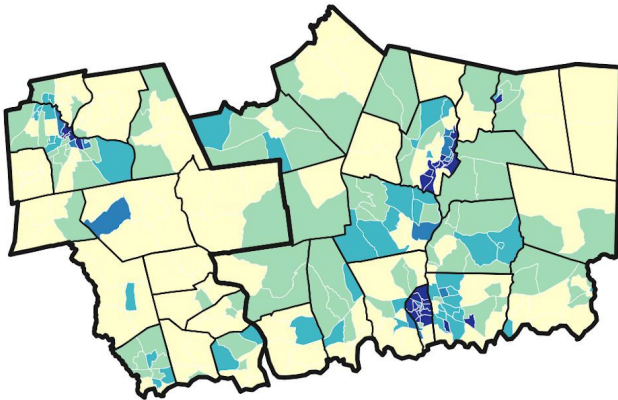
Environmental Justice

Lead exposure is often greater in urban areas with older housing units, as is seen in Middletown, Norwich, and New London. These areas are also home to more Black, Latino, and Native American residents, thereby disparately exposing those groups to the harms of lead poisoning. Similarly, these groups are more exposed than suburban white populations to waste treatment facilities and the hazards posed by proximity to those locations, as well as contamination from the New London Submarine Base, a national superfund site. Conversely, the less-urban areas of Middlesex County along the Connecticut River have long been subject to the hazards of wastewater discharge.

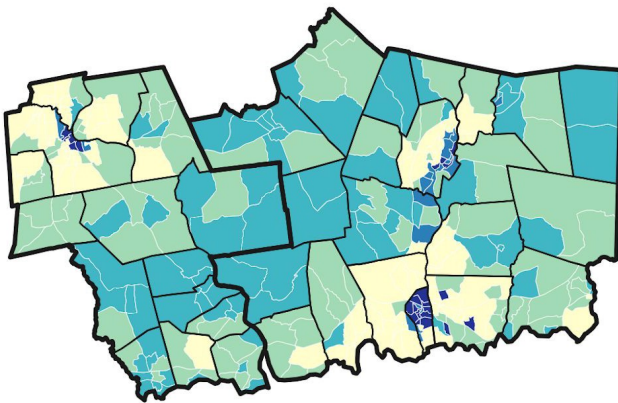
Residents of denser urban neighborhoods in Middletown, Norwich, and New London are at heightened risk of environmental health hazards

EPA environmental indices, percentile rank of disparate impact on low-income and nonwhite populations, 2019

Lead paint exposure



Proximity to treatment facilities



Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency. 2019 version. EJSCREEN.

Quality and Safety of the Built Environment

Black, Latino, and Native American adults often rate the quality of their neighborhood amenities below that which white adults rate them. Most adults in the region think their area parks are in excellent or good condition, though fewer Native American adults in New London County agree. Black and Latino adults in Middlesex County generally believe there are safe places to ride a bicycle in their area, while fewer Black, Latino, and Native American adults in New London County agree. Black and Latino adults in Middlesex County tend to think of their neighborhoods as safer, while New London County adults track closer to their statewide cohorts.

Adults in Middletown, Norwich, and New London perceive parks to be less well maintained

Percent of adults who report the condition of public parks in their area is excellent or good, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	72%	76%	58%	61%	70%	63%
Middlesex County	74%	75%	66%	81%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	69%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	73%	75%	69%	67%	68%	53%
Norwich	59%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	56%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Relative to statewide averages, adults in the region report lower levels of access to safe infrastructure for bicycling

Percent of adults who agree there are safe places to bicycle in their neighborhood, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	61%	60%	64%	61%	64%	53%
Middlesex County	58%	57%	66%	75%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	59%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	55%	56%	57%	58%	50%	34%
Norwich	42%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	68%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Most adults report it is safe to walk at night, but perceived safety is lower in Norwich and New London

Percent of adults who believe it is safe to walk at night in their neighborhood, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	69%	73%	58%	57%	66%	58%
Middlesex County	77%	77%	86%	72%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	72%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	73%	73%	61%	62%	88%	72%
Norwich	61%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	61%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Health Care Access and Social Context

Access and Insurance Coverage

Black, Latino, and Native American adults statewide were less likely to get health care when they needed it compared to white adults. One in five Native American adults in New London County said they did not get the health care they needed, compared to one in ten white adults. This is perhaps due in part to lower rates of health insurance coverage among Black, Latino, and Native American populations. Statewide as of 2019, Latinos and Native Americans were uninsured at four times the rate of white adults, and Black and Asian adults were uninsured at twice the rate of white adults. Throughout the region in 2019, nearly 15,000 people lacked health insurance coverage—about 5,500 of those were Indigenous and people of color.

Black, Latino, and Native American adults are less likely to get health care when they need it

Percent of adults who didn't get the health care that they needed in the past year, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	8%	7%	10%	15%	10%	15%
Middlesex County	7%	7%	16%	6%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	9%	8%	11%	12%	7%	20%
Norwich	14%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	11%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Uninsurance rates are higher among Latino and Native American residents

Population without health insurance coverage, 2019

Area	White		Black		Latino		Asian		Native American	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	72,925	3%	25,310	7%	75,309	13%	9,977	6%	1,109	12%
Middlesex County	3,366	2%	405	5%	944	9%	362	7%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	680	2%	256	4%	259	5%	169	6%	N/A	N/A
New London County	5,466	3%	645	5%	2,869	11%	733	7%	200	12%
Norwich	865	4%	155	4%	540	10%	272	8.5%	58	13%
New London	463	4%	246	6%	1,376	16%	114	18%	N/A	N/A

Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Experiences of Discrimination

Statewide, more than one in ten adults report having experienced discrimination when seeking health care, although rates among Black adults are about 50 percent higher than for white adults, and about twice as high among Native American adults as white adults. These rates are particularly elevated for Black, Latino, and Native American adults in the region.

Black, Latino and Native American adults statewide are also more likely to report unfair treatment when interacting with police. Black adults in the region report negative interactions at higher rates than Black adults statewide (37 percent compared to 25 percent), and at more than three times the rate of white adults (11 percent) in the region.

Many adults in the region have experienced discrimination when seeking health care

Percent of adults who have ever been treated with less respect or received services that were not as good as what other people get when seeking health care, 2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	11%	10%	15%	16%	3%	18%
Middlesex County	13%	12%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middletown	16%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	12%	10%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Norwich	13%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	14%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middlesex / New London Counties Combined	12%	11%	25%	29%	3%	17%

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Black adults are substantially more likely to report unfair treatment when interacting with police

Percent of adults who have ever been unfairly stopped or threatened by the police, 2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	11%	9%	25%	17%	4%	20%
Middlesex County	11%	8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middletown	12%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	10%	9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Norwich	13%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	16%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middlesex / New London Counties Combined	11%	9%	37%	14%	2%	21%

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2018.

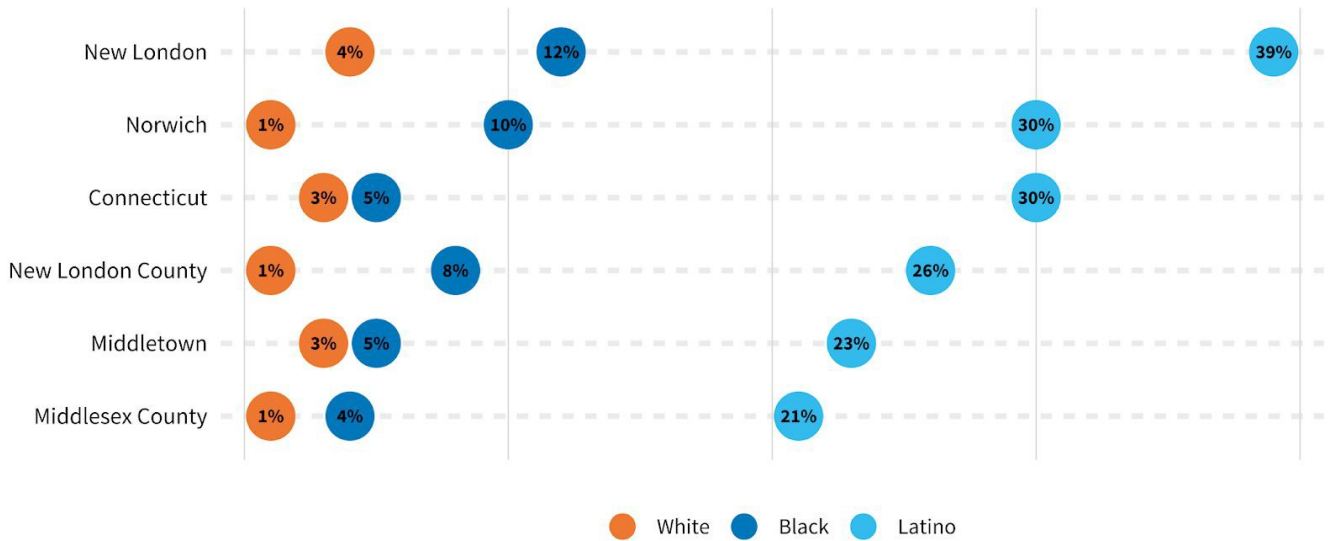
Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Linguistic Isolation

Linguistic isolation affects people who speak English less than “very well,” and can make interactions at work, school, or in health care settings more difficult—even leading some people to forgo those interactions. Latino populations have much higher rates of limited English proficiency compared to Black and white populations. Especially in New London, linguistic isolation affects more than one in three Latinos compared to fewer than one in 20 white people.

Especially in cities, Latino residents are less likely to speak English well

Percent of people ages 5 and up who speak English less than “very well” by race/ethnicity, 2019



Source: American Community Survey 2014–2019 5-year estimates.

Health Disparities

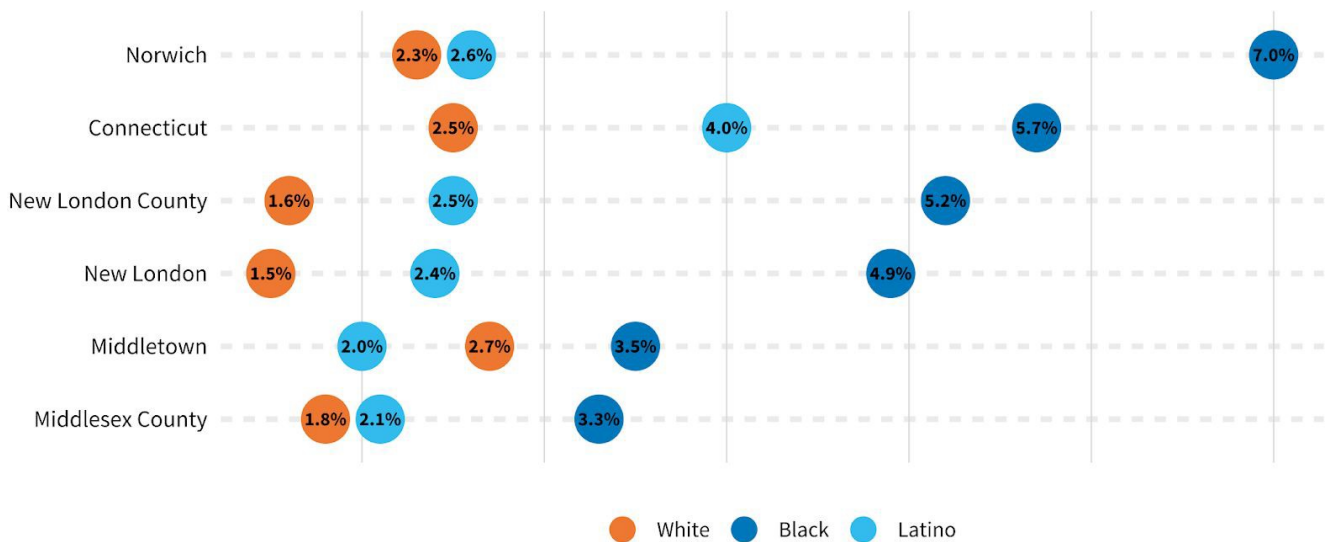
Maternal and Child Health

Pregnancy and birth outcomes also reflect racial disparities for a variety of reasons, including access to care, unequal treatment, and socioeconomic conditions that manifest in more challenging pregnancies. Births to Black parents are more likely to have had prenatal care beginning in the third trimester or no prenatal care at all compared to white and Latino parents. This disparity persists statewide and regionally. In Norwich, this was the case in 7 percent of births to Black parents compared to about 2 percent of births to white parents. Babies born to Black parents are also about twice as likely as babies born to white parents to be underweight.

Infant mortality is also elevated among Black and Latino populations (with the exception of New London where births to white parents have the highest rate, owing to relatively few births there). Likewise, maternal mortality is elevated among Black parents (regardless of ethnicity), whose rate is more than three times higher than the rate for white parents. Parents ages 35–44 also have higher mortality rates three times higher than parents ages 25–34.

Births to Black parents are more likely to have had late or no prenatal care

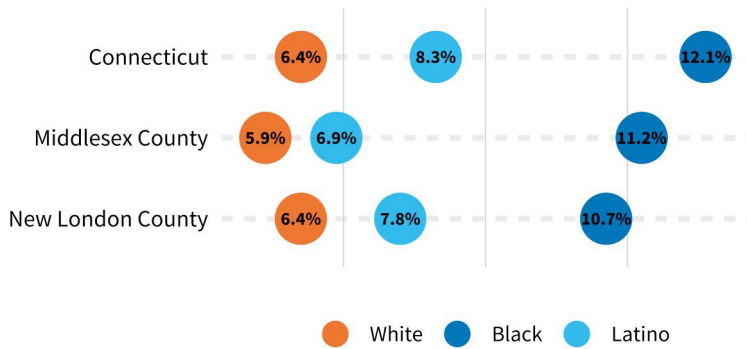
Share of births with prenatal care beginning in third trimester, or no prenatal care at all, by race/ethnicity of parent giving birth, 2016–2018



Source: Connecticut Department of Public Health Vital Statistics, 2016–2018.

Babies born to Black parents are more likely to be underweight

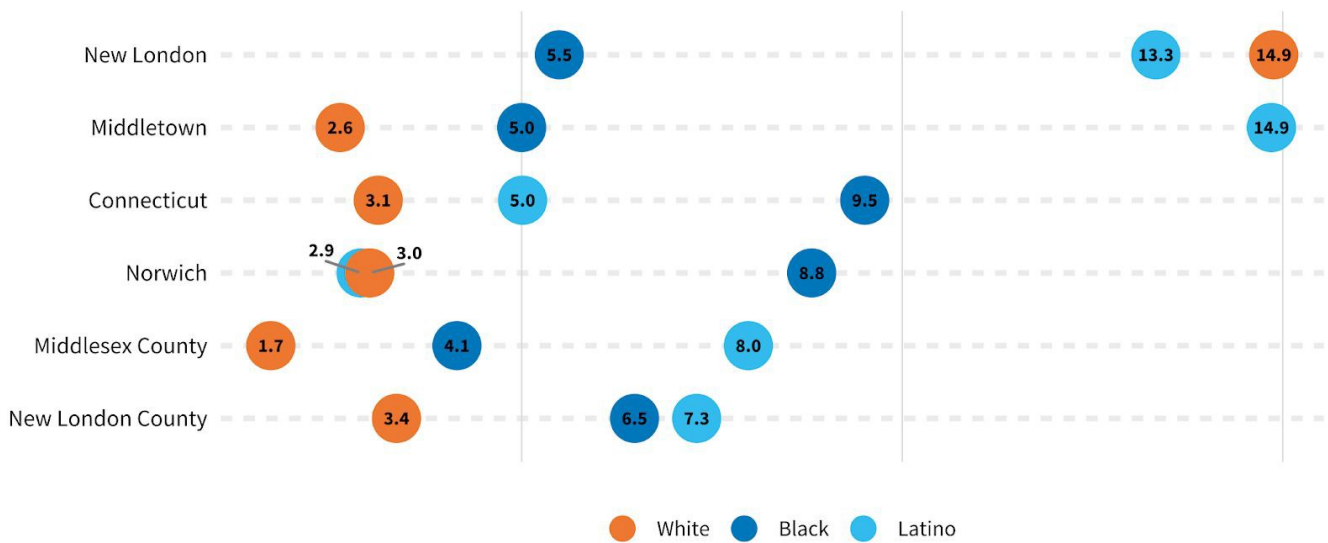
Share of births with infant weight under 2500g, by race/ethnicity of parent giving birth, 2016–2018



Source: Connecticut Department of Public Health Vital Statistics, 2016–2018.

Infant mortality is elevated among Black and Latino populations

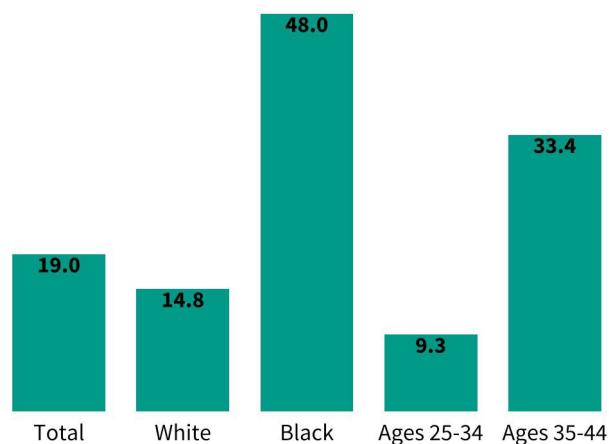
Infant deaths per 1,000 live births, by race, 2016–2018



Source: Connecticut Department of Public Health Vital Statistics, 2016–2018.

Maternal mortality is highest among Black parents

Rate per 100,000 live births, Connecticut, 2013–2017



Source: America's Health Rankings analysis of CDC WONDER data, 2013–2017. For race groups above, ethnicity is not separated. Black and white groups may include Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.

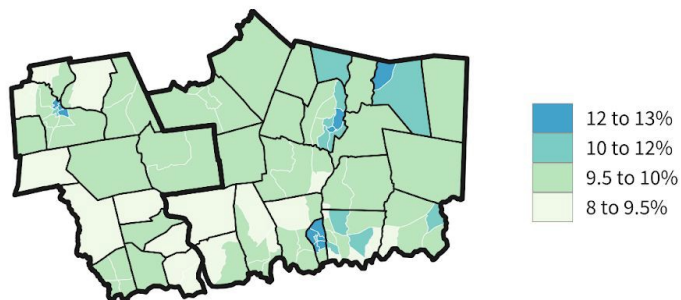
Adult Health Risk Factors

Some underlying conditions and behaviors play a role in overall good health. Among adults, rates of asthma are fairly consistent in the region, but elevated in Middletown, Norwich, and New London, due in part to proximity to highways and other sources of pollution. Rates of smoking are higher among adults in New London County compared to Middlesex County, and are much higher in New London and Norwich, where rates reach about 20 to 25 percent of adults. Adults in New London County report sleeping fewer than seven hours a night more often than adults in Middlesex County, although these rates are also elevated in the cities of Middletown, Norwich, and New London. While more than 60 percent of adults reported exercising three or more days per week, these rates were slightly lower in New London County than Middlesex County. Most adults reported getting an annual checkup and dental visit in the past year, but these rates are somewhat lower in the region's larger cities.

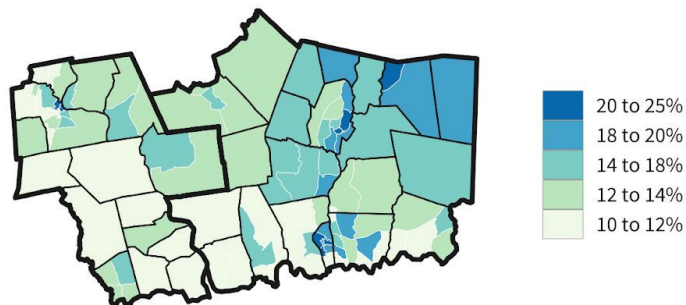
Some health risk factors are concentrated in Middletown, Norwich, and New London

Estimated share of adults, 2018

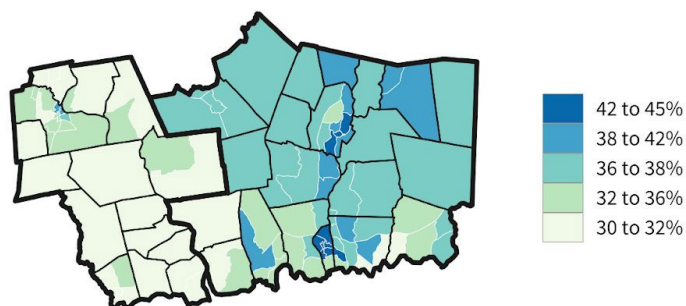
Current asthma



Current smoking



Sleep less than 7 hours on average



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PLACES Project
Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Levels of reported exercise are similar to statewide averages

Percent of adults who report that they exercise 3 or more days per week, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	60%	62%	53%	54%	56%	63%
Middlesex County	64%	65%	66%	62%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	58%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	62%	61%	60%	51%	65%	74%
Norwich	60%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	61%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

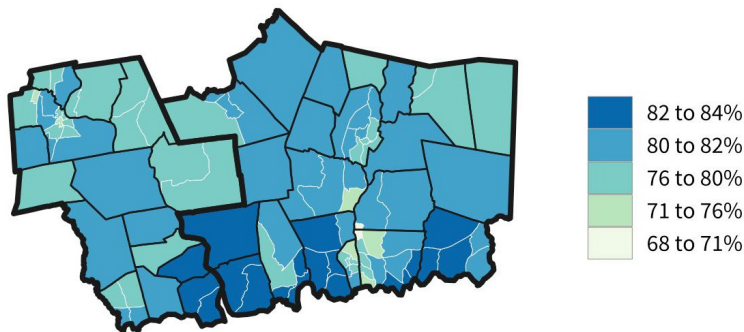
Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Most adults access preventive care regularly, but dental visits are less frequent in central areas of Middletown, Norwich, and New London

Estimated share of adults, 2018

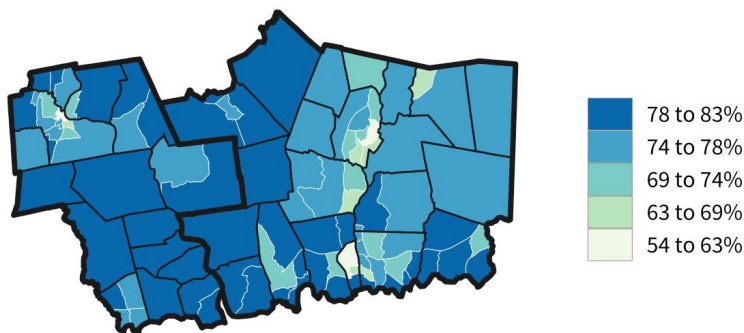
Annual checkup

Share of adults, 2018



Dental visit in past year

Share of adults, 2018



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PLACES Project, 2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Adult Health Outcomes

Reports such as the Connecticut Cardiovascular Disease Statistics Report² document striking differences in health outcomes by race and ethnicity and gender across the state, which are associated with inequalities in economic and social opportunity as well as other health risk factors.

Current data on self-reported health, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, mental health, and substance abuse show that these differences are found within Middlesex and New London Counties as well. It is important to note that local chronic disease rates may vary significantly due to differences in age structure as well. For example, while statewide diabetes prevalence is similar between white and Latino adults of all ages, stratifying by age group shows that diabetes risks are significantly higher among Latinos after age is taken into account.³

Drug overdose deaths in 2019 jumped 20 percent over the number in 2018 to reach an all-time high of 1,200 deaths. These deaths are largely attributable to fatal opioid overdoses. Between 2014 and 2019, opioid overdose fatality rates doubled among white individuals, doubled among Latino individuals, and increased six-fold for Black individuals. Although 2020 data are still preliminary, fatal drug overdoses statewide are on track to be more numerous than in 2019.

Self-rated health is lower among adults in Norwich and New London

Percent of adults who report that they are in excellent or very good health, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	60%	62%	53%	55%	67%	49%
Middlesex County	62%	62%	60%	57%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	55%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	57%	58%	51%	49%	63%	54%
Norwich	48%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	50%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Hypertension is elevated among Black and Native American adults

Percent of adults who have been told by a doctor that they have high blood pressure, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	29%	30%	36%	22%	15%	36%
Middlesex County	30%	31%	39%	40%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	31%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	32%	33%	36%	23%	13%	49%
Norwich	37%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	40%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

² Poulin, S. M. (2017). Connecticut Cardiovascular Disease Statistics Report. Hartford, CT: CT Department of Public Health. <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/Health-Information-Systems--Reporting/Hisrhome/Heart-Disease--Stroke-Surveillance-System>.

Davila, K., Abraham, M., & Seaberry, C. (2020). Towards Health Equity in Connecticut: The Role of Social Inequality and the Impact of COVID-19. New Haven, CT: DataHaven. <https://www.ctdatahaven.org/reports/towards-health-equity-connecticut>.

Diabetes prevalence is higher in Norwich and New London, and among Black and Native American adults

Percent of adults who have been told by a doctor that they have diabetes, 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	10%	9%	14%	10%	5%	15%
Middlesex County	9%	9%	10%	13%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	13%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	12%	11%	19%	11%	11%	25%
Norwich	16%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	16%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Obesity prevalence is higher among Black, Latino, and Native American adults

Adult obesity rate (BMI of 30 or higher, based on self-reported height and weight), 2015–2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	28%	26%	36%	33%	15%	40%
Middlesex County	22%	22%	24%	27%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	26%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	29%	28%	39%	41%	7%	49%
Norwich	35%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	34%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2015–2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

Opioid overdoses have increased significantly since 2014, especially among people of color

Fatal opioid overdoses per 100,000 residents, by race/ethnicity, Connecticut, 2014 and 2019

Race / Ethnicity	Rate, 2014	Rate, 2019
White	16	34
Black	5	31
Latino	10	30

Source: Ungemack, Jane. (2020). Director, Center for Prevention Evaluation and Statistics, UCONN Health. Presentation to State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW), April 29, 2020.

Prevalence of depression is similar to the statewide average, but higher in Norwich and New London

Percent of adults feeling down, depressed, or hopeless more than half the days in the past 2 weeks, 2018

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Connecticut	11%	9%	13%	17%	9%	21%
Middlesex County	9%	9%	15%	19%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	11%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London County	11%	9%	14%	10%	17%	39%
Norwich	14%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New London	20%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

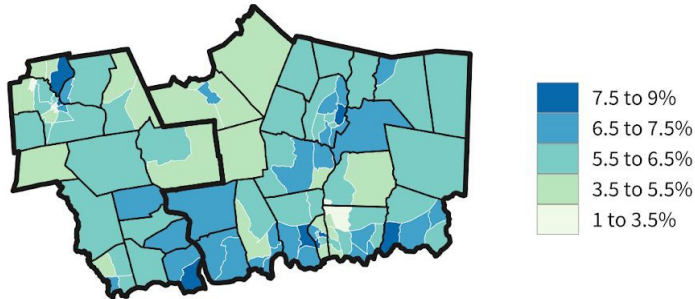
Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2018.

Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

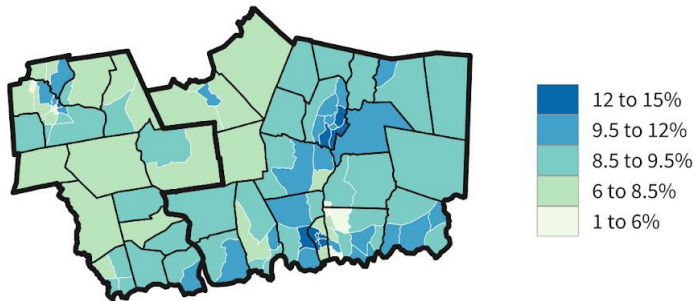
Burdens of chronic disease are spread throughout the region, with higher rates in some urban centers as well as in areas with large populations of senior citizens

Estimated share of adults, 2017 (high blood pressure) and 2018 (heart disease and diabetes)

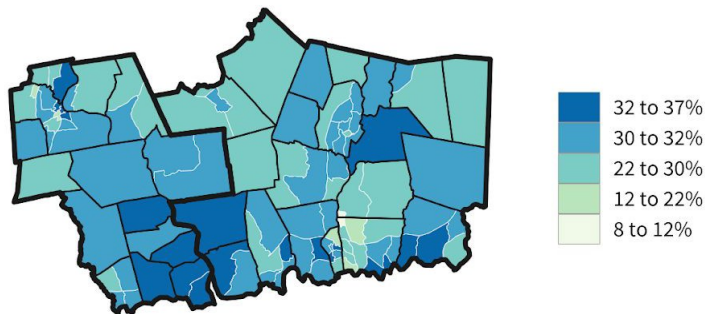
Coronary heart disease



Diabetes



High blood pressure



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PLACES Project, 2017 and 2018.
Note: These estimates do not capture outcomes due to COVID in 2020.

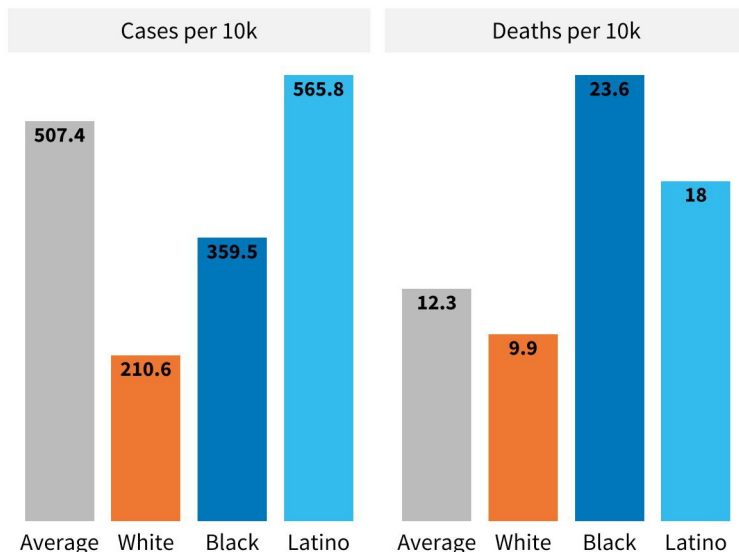
COVID-19 Impacts

Case Counts and Rates

Although comprehensive, locally-specific data by race/ethnicity are not yet available, it is clear that people of color throughout Connecticut have been disproportionately impacted by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. According to data from the Connecticut Department of Public Health, cumulative rates of detected COVID-19 cases have been significantly higher in the larger and more racially-diverse towns of Middletown, Norwich, and New London than in most of the surrounding towns in Middlesex and New London Counties. As of late December 2020, rates of detected cases were between 500 and 610 cases per 10,000 residents in these three larger towns. Most of the smaller towns in the area had rates of between 150 and 350 cases per 10,000 residents. Statewide, the age-adjusted rates of COVID-19-related deaths per 10,000 residents were 9.9 for white, 18.0 for Latino, and 23.6 for Black residents.

COVID-19 has taken a heavy toll on Black and Latino residents

Statewide age-adjusted rates of COVID-19 cases and COVID-19-related deaths per 10,000 residents by race/ethnicity, as of 12/19/2020



Source: Connecticut Department of Public Health. COVID-19 Data Tracker. Retrieved 12/30/2020 from <https://portal.ct.gov>

Social and Economic Impacts

A statewide survey of over 1,100 randomly-selected adults conducted by DataHaven and the Siena College Research Institute in August 2020 provides additional insight into the social and economic impacts of the pandemic.⁴ These adults were asked how various aspects of their lives had been affected by COVID-19 since February of 2020.

Latino adults (37 percent) were more likely than Black (22 percent) or white adults (18 percent) to say someone in their household lost their job or was laid off. Latino adults were also more than twice as likely as white adults to

⁴DataHaven and Siena College Research Institute. (2020). 2020 Connecticut Statewide Data Crosstabs - DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey COVID-19 Response Wave. <https://www.ctdatahaven.org/blog/new-datahaven-survey-provides-reliable-information-help-connecticut-communities-understand>.

say someone in their household lost their health insurance (11 percent of Latino adults compared to 4 percent of white and 8 percent of Black adults).

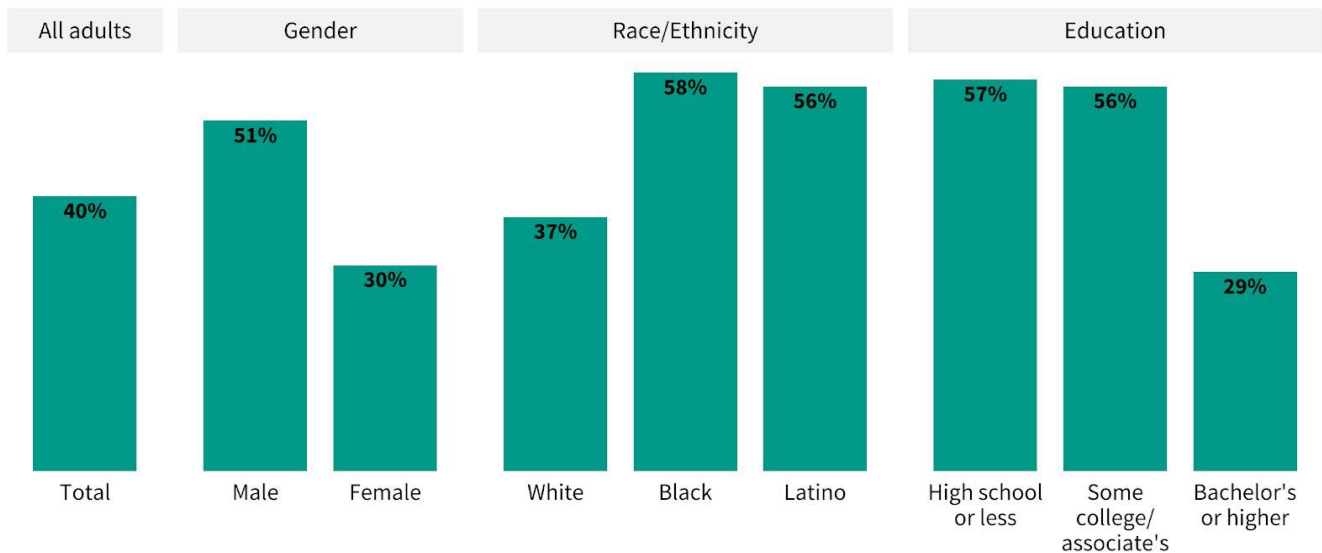
Nationwide, access to COVID testing has not been uniformly equitable. While only 6 percent of adults statewide said they could not get tested when they attempted to, 20 percent of Latino adults reported not being able to access a test when they attempted to. However, statewide access to testing has increased greatly and now exceeds 200,000 tests per week, on average. Ninety percent of adults are confident that they and their family members would be able to get the care they needed if they contracted COVID-19. Confidence in being able to access needed care is lower among Black adults in Connecticut, however; compared to white adults, they are three times more likely to say that they are not very or not at all confident that they will be able to get the care they need.

While mask usage is generally high in Connecticut, some adults reported being concerned about being viewed suspiciously if they wore a mask while in a store or business. This was particularly true for Asian adults in the state, 52 percent of whom were concerned about this, compared to just 12 percent of adults overall.

Black and Latino adults, males regardless of race or ethnicity, and adults with less than a Bachelor’s degree are more likely than white adults, females, and adults with a Bachelor’s degree or higher to leave home for work. This circumstance may significantly increase these workers’ exposure to the virus. Among working adults who leave the home at least on occasion, 60 percent are somewhat or very concerned about exposing themselves or their family to the coronavirus. Fifty-six percent of white workers, 68 percent of Latino workers, and 82 percent of Black workers who leave the home for work are somewhat or very concerned about exposure.

Workers who are female, white, or have a college degree are less likely to leave home for work

Share of working adults who report needing to leave home for work very often, Connecticut, 2020



Source: DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey, 2020