Birth, marriage, death, disease, and accidents are among the vital statistics collected to help measure the health and well-being of the population. Miami County had 430 births in 1996, a change of -190 births from five years earlier in 1992 (-30.6 percent decrease). Of those live births, 74 were to teen mothers under age 20 — or 17.2 percent of all births in the county. Most births occurred to women between the ages of 20 to 29 (60.7 percent) and 30 to 39 (21.9 percent). There was 1 birth to women age 40 and older in 1996, and 4 in 1992. The number of teen pregnancies in 1995 was 85, compared to 107 (16.0 percent) in 1990. There were 293 marriages in 1996, and 382 in 1990.

Among Miami County two-year old children in 1996, 86 percent had been fully immunized. Miami County had 315 deaths in 1996. Of those deaths, 88 (27.9 percent) were due to heart disease and 88 (27.9 percent) due to cancer. Motor vehicle accidents claimed 10 lives in 1996.

Sadly, in fiscal year 1997, 90 Miami County children were reported abused and 118 neglected; of those, 20 were substantiated as physical abuse, 8 as sexual abuse, and 31 as neglect. The percent of cases substantiated was 31.1 percent for abuse and 26.3 percent for neglect. The rate of abuse and neglect per 1,000 children under age 18 in Miami County was 5.6 in 1997, compared to 11.0 in 1996.

Questions to ponder...
Are low-cost health services such as immunization for children available to the working poor? What programs can help children and teens at risk? Are services available to help mothers of newborns? Do schools or other organizations provide education to children on drug and alcohol abuse? Is there a safety-net available to abuse victims?