Birth, marriage, death, disease, and accidents are among the vital statistics collected to help measure the health and well-being of the population. Vanderburgh County had 2,245 births in 1996, a change of -81 births from five years earlier in 1992 (-3.5 percent decrease). Of those live births, 355 were to teen mothers under age 20 — or 15.8 percent of all births in the county. Most births occurred to women between the ages of 20 to 29 (56.1 percent) and 30 to 39 (26.2 percent). There were 27 births to women age 40 and older in 1996, and 20 in 1992. The number of teen pregnancies in 1995 was 409, compared to 397 (15.1 percent) in 1990. There were 994 marriages in 1996, and 1,260 in 1990.

Among Vanderburgh County two-year old children in 1996, 69 percent had been fully immunized. Vanderburgh County had 1,886 deaths in 1996. Of those deaths, 600 (31.8 percent) were due to heart disease and 442 (23.4 percent) due to cancer. Motor vehicle accidents claimed 20 lives in 1996.

Sadly, in fiscal year 1997, 720 Vanderburgh County children were reported abused and 1,164 neglected; of those, 130 were substantiated as physical abuse, 126 as sexual abuse, and 512 as neglect. The percent of cases substantiated was 35.6 percent for abuse and 44.0 percent for neglect. The rate of abuse and neglect per 1,000 children under age 18 in Vanderburgh County was 19.5 in 1997, compared to 26.2 in 1996.

Births by Age of Mother

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?