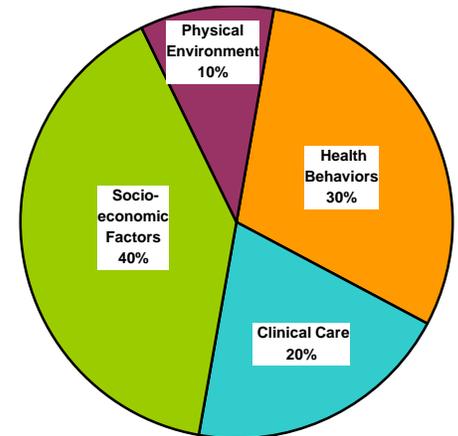


INTRODUCTION

Every two years, the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency, Public Health Division, publishes data and analysis to portray and inform residents, providers, and policymakers about the state of the county's health. This report helps to fulfill Essential Service #1 of the ten core public health essential services: To monitor the health of the community.

This year, our report is structured to reflect the *County Health Rankings* report, published for the first time this February. The *County Health Rankings* is a key component of the MATCH (Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health) project, a collaboration between the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The *County Health Rankings* will be an annual report on the nation's 3,016 counties, state-by-state. On an ongoing basis, the report will show us rankings of all the counties within a state on a set of 28 key factors that influence health and health outcomes such as morbidity and mortality. The categories of health factors and their relative weights used in determining the overall rankings are:

- Health behaviors 30%
- Clinical care 20%
- Socioeconomic factors 40%
- Physical environment 10%



The *County Health Rankings* allow us to compare ourselves with other counties in California in a standardized, weighted methodology that shows that where we live matters. Where we live, learn, work, and play influences how healthy we are and how long we will live.

Fortunately, we live in a wonderful county, graced with natural beauty, resources, and a diverse population of good will. The *County Health Rankings* report shows Santa Cruz County to be the 8th healthiest county in California overall.

This report, the *Health of Santa Cruz County 2010*, is a far richer document, delving deeply into the same outcomes and factors with greater analysis by race/ethnicity, gender, age, and geographic location. Health inequities and disparities become evident, as well as the effect of place within the county. The data we present is annotated and referenced and can be used to study critical issues and trends, and can uncover hopeful avenues for prevention and population health improvement. Good data is fundamental to good governance, not only because it informs decision-making and thoughtful use of scarce resources, but also because it helps people understand their own conditions and the contributions they can make towards improving their health and the health of the community.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the staff of HSA who wrote and contributed to this report, and our director, Dr. Rama Khalsa, for her interest and steadfast support. I am also grateful for the dedicated efforts made every day on behalf of the people of Santa Cruz County by the Members of the Board of Supervisors: John Leopold (First District), Ellen Pirie (Second District), Neal Coonerty (Third District), Tony Campos (Fourth District), and Mark Stone (Fifth District).

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