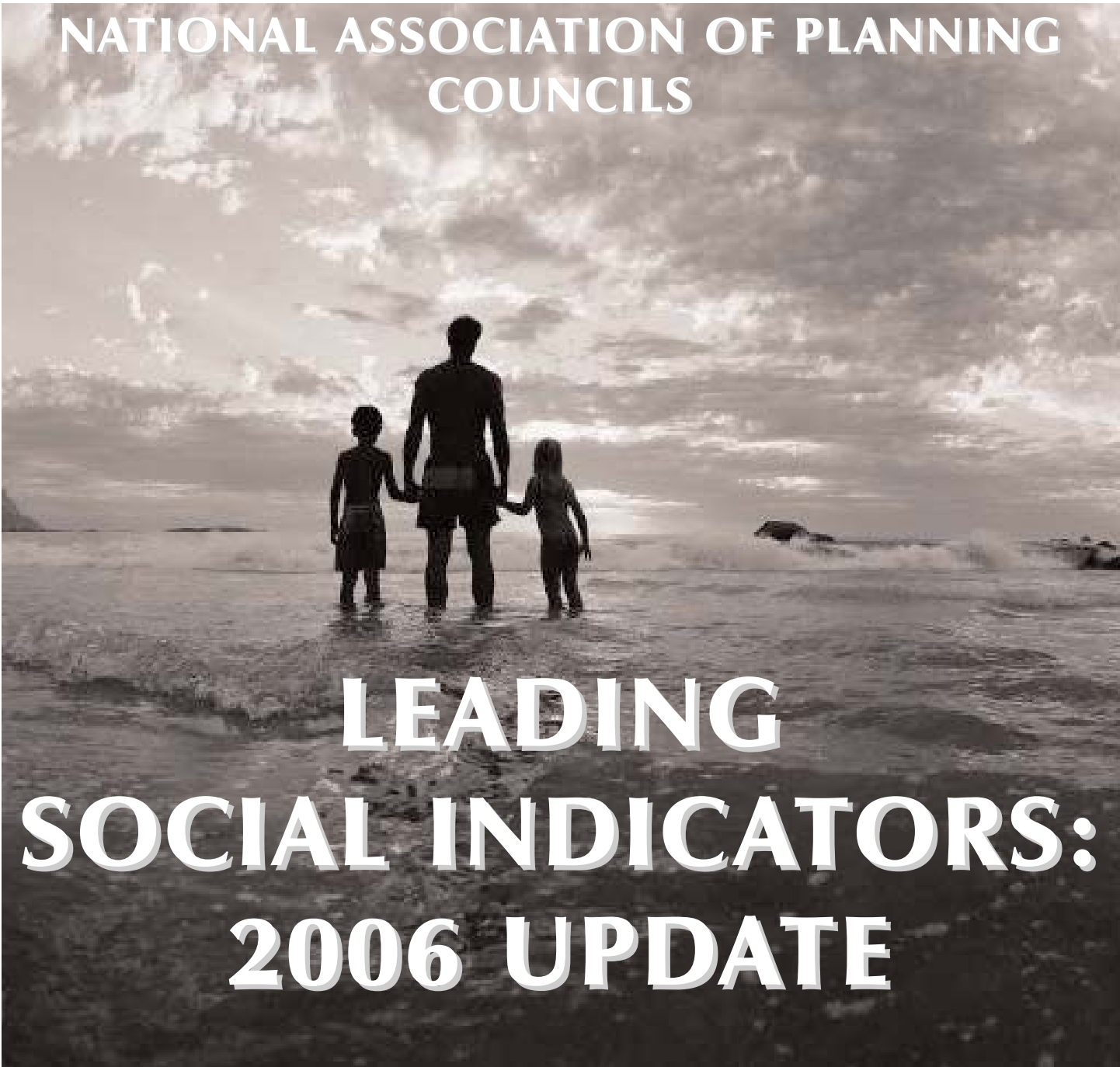




**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING
COUNCILS**

A black and white photograph of a family of three—two children and an adult—standing on a beach at sunset. They are silhouetted against a bright, cloudy sky. The adult is in the center, holding the hands of two children on either side. They are standing in the shallow water of the ocean. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

**LEADING
SOCIAL INDICATORS:
2006 UPDATE**

**MEASURING WHAT'S IMPORTANT
MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING COUNCILS AND SOCIAL INDICATORS: A BRIEF HISTORY

Planning councils have always used social and health indicators as tools for community research, planning, and action to:

- address issues affecting their communities;
- assess the impact of community initiatives;
- shape policy and resource decisions affecting human services; and
- raise community awareness about problems, trends, and how to work together to create solutions.

In 2000, the National Association of Planning Councils (NAPC) decided to bring the experience and expertise of its member councils together to create a national NAPC Social Indicators Initiative. This Initiative would accomplish the following:

- provide information and tools to assist planning councils in their efforts to address issues affecting their communities;
- share the impact of community initiatives in improving conditions in communities around the country;
- shape national policy and resource decisions affecting human services from a unique local-to-national perspective; and
- raise community awareness about the need for more standardized and better data.

This report started at the community level, as planning councils joined together to discuss how they used social indicators to create change in their communities, and how these same indicators could be used to generate conversation and action at the national level. The social indicators in this report represent the breadth of issues that planning councils are addressing. They do not tell the whole story of community needs assessments, program designs, evaluation, and community improvement that occurs every day in communities. No single indicator or set of indicators could do that, and this project was self-limited to a sample of 12 indicators. But this report does seek to expand the national debate beyond the gross domestic product and the trade deficit. The social strength of the nation is at least as important as its economic health.

This update represents the latest in a series of efforts from NAPC's Social Indicators Initiative. The 2002 and 2005 reports highlight the work that planning councils around the country are doing to bend trend lines and address issues affecting their communities. To find out more information about the Initiative or to assist in the effort, visit www.communityplanning.org.

**National Association of Planning Councils (NAPC)
11118 Ferndale Road
Dallas, TX 75238
800-795-9834**

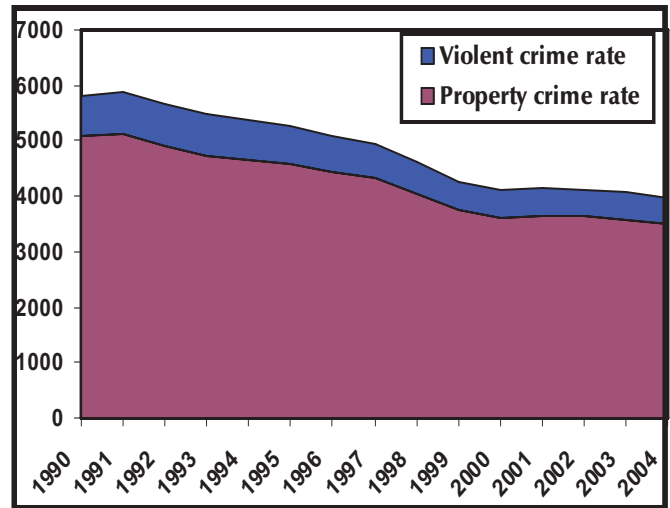
**Email: napc@communityplanning.org
Online: www.communityplanning.org
www.socialindicators.com**

WELLNESS AND SAFETY

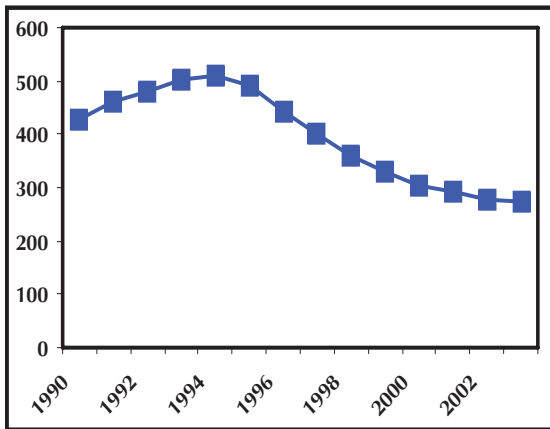
INDEX CRIME RATE:

In 2004, the national rate of Index Crimes per 100,000 people was 3,983 (466 violent crimes, 3,517 property crimes), down from 5,803 in 1990 (when the violent crime rate was 730 and the property crime rate was 5,073).

The Index Crime Rate ranged from a high of 5,845 in Arizona to a low of 1,996 in North Dakota in 2004. The highest violent crime rate was in South Carolina, at 784 violent crimes per 100,000, and the lowest violent crime rate was North Dakota, with 79. Within each state, crime rates varied significantly, and across the country, crime rates were different in urban v. rural settings.



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm



Source: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Statistical Briefing Book ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/

JUVENILE ARREST RATE:

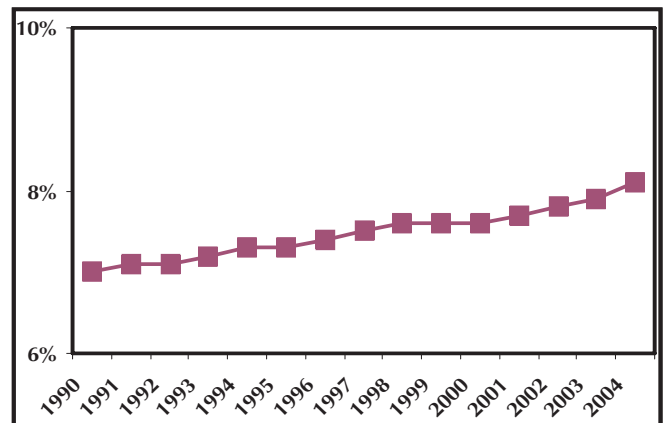
In 2003, the rate of juvenile (10-17) arrests for violent crime was 273 per 100,000 youth ages 10-17, down from 509 in 1994.

By state in 2002, the arrest rate for juvenile violent crimes varied significantly, from a low of 49 per 100,000 in Vermont to a high of 898 in Illinois.

LOW BIRTHWEIGHT INFANTS:

In 2004, 8.1 percent of all infants in America were born weighing less than 2,500 grams (5 lbs. 8 oz.), continuing to rise from 7.1 percent in 1992.

The percentages of low-birthweight infants varied from state to state, from 11.4 percent in Mississippi to 6.0 percent in Alaska and Washington. Within each state, the percentages of low birthweight infants differed substantially.



Source: Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Health Statistics <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm>



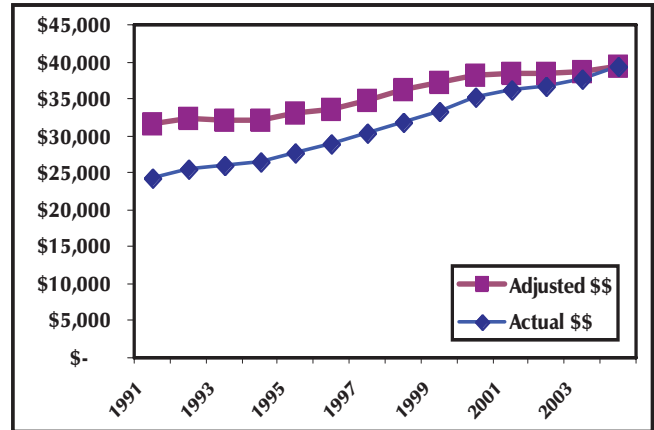
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ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

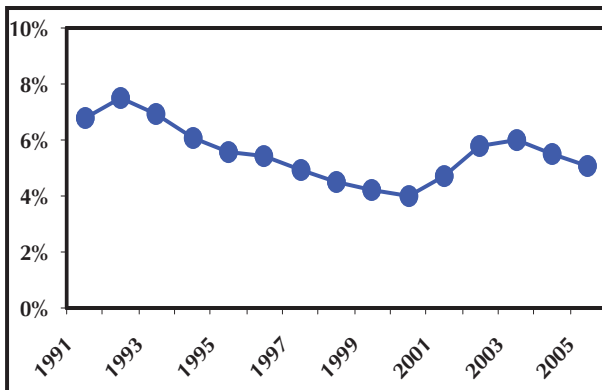
AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGE:

In 2004, the average annual wage across America was \$39,354, representing only moderate gains from an inflation-adjusted \$38,126 in 2000, but improved from an adjusted \$31,550 in 1991.

Across the country, average annual wages ranged from \$51,012 in Connecticut to \$27,820 in Montana.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics www.bls.gov



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics www.bls.gov

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE:

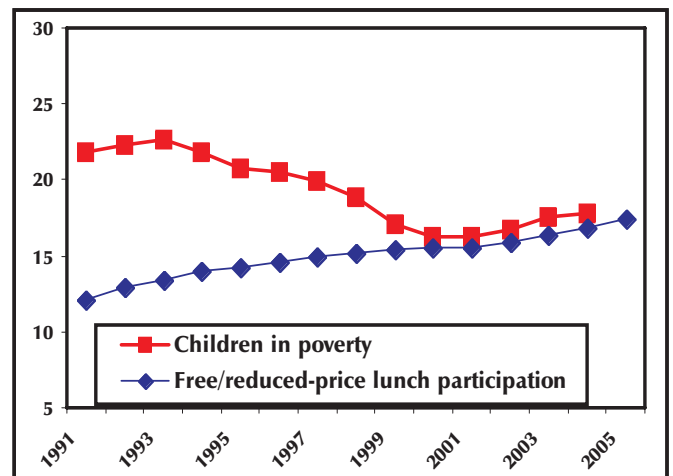
The unemployment rate in 2005 was 5.1 percent, better than the previous two years but still up from the low of 4.0 percent in 2000.

The unemployment rate varied from state to state, from a low of 2.8 percent in Hawaii to a high of 7.9 percent in Mississippi.

CHILD POVERTY:

In 2004, 17.8 percent of all children lived in households where income fell below the federal poverty line, up from 16.2 percent in 2000 but down from 20.6 percent in 1990.

The percentages of children in poverty varied greatly from state to state in 2003, with a low of 7.8 percent in New Hampshire to a high of 26.8 percent in Mississippi.



Source: U.S. Census and USDA's Food and Nutrition Services www.census.gov www.fns.usda.gov

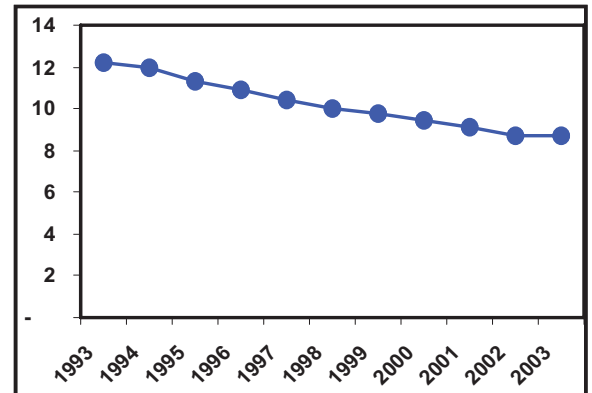


National Association of Planning Councils

NURTURING ENVIRONMENT

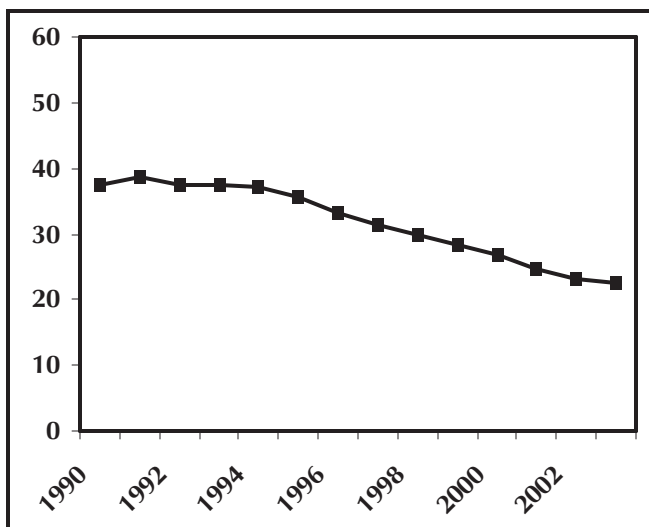
CHILD INJURY:

No single definition for child safety adequately captures both the physical health/safety and social/emotional development of children. Child abuse data, which serve some communities as indicators of child safety, are not comparable between jurisdictions, nor necessarily consistent over time. One measure that does allow comparisons is child deaths due to injuries. In 2003, the rate of child deaths due to unintentional injuries was 8.69 deaths per 100,000 children ages 0-14, down from 12.18 deaths per 100,000 children in 1993.



Source: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control www.cdc.gov/ncipc/

The rates of child deaths due to unintentional injuries varied by state, ranging from a high of 20.67 deaths per 100,000 children in Wyoming to a low of 2.69 in Massachusetts. Children in rural areas and children in homes with limited economic resources have higher rates of injury.



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>

TEEN BIRTH RATE:

In 2004, the birth rate to teen girls ages 15-17 was 22.1 births per 1,000 population, down from 37.5 births per 1,000 in 1990.

The teen birth rate varied from state to state, with a low of 6.7 births per 1,000 in Vermont to a high of 37.4 births per 1,000 in New Mexico (2003).

ELDER WELL-BEING:

Despite being of significant concern, no reliable national measures of elder abuse exist. The Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics in its report, *Older Americans 2004: Key Indicators of Well-Being*, calls for a national study of elder abuse and neglect, pointing out “the growing number of older people, increasing public awareness of the problem, new legal requirements for reporting abuse, and advances in questionnaire design” which should help in creating a national indicator set.



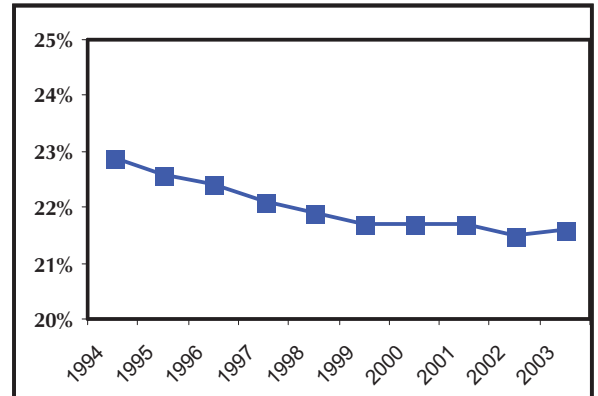
National Association of Planning Councils

EDUCATIONAL PREPAREDNESS

MOTHER'S EDUCATION:

In 2003, 21.6 percent of all births were to mothers with less than a high school education, down from 22.9 percent in 1994.

The percentages of children born in 2002 to mothers with less than a high school education ranged from a low of 8.8 percent in North Dakota to a high of 32.6 percent in Texas.



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm



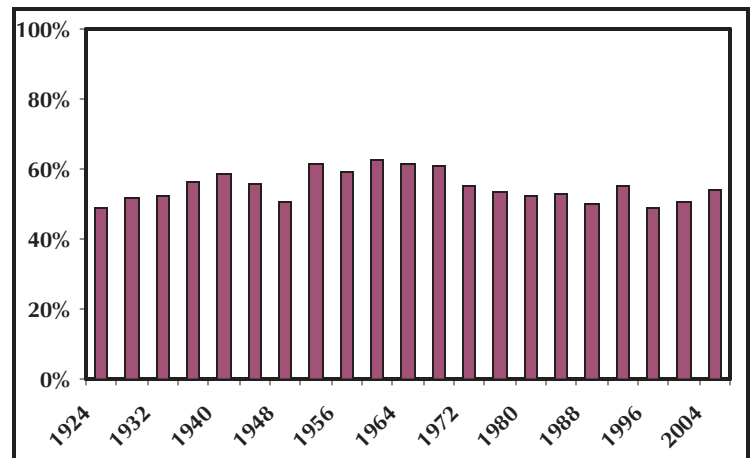
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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

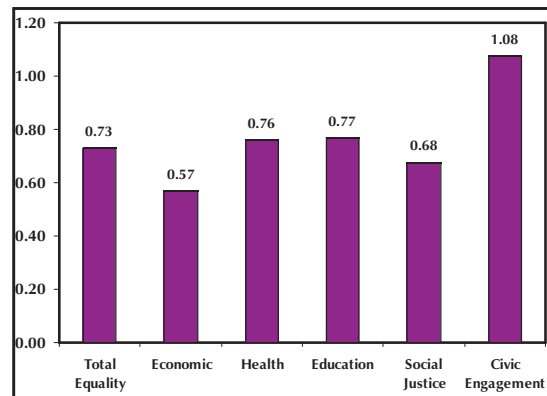
VOTER TURNOUT:

In 2004, 54.5 percent of the voting-age (18 and over) population voted in the presidential election, up from 49.0 percent in 1996 but down from 55.2 percent in 1992 and a high of 62.8 percent in 1960.

Voter turnout by state in 2004 ranged from 73.0 percent of the voting-age population in Minnesota to 43.8 percent of the voting age population in Hawaii.



Source: Federal Election Commission and U.S.Census, www.fec.gov www.census.gov



Source: National Urban League's Equality Index www.nul.org

RACIAL JUSTICE:

In 2005, the National Urban League issued its annual State of Black America report, containing its second annual Equality Index measure of progress towards racial equality. The Equality Index remained unchanged from 2004, with the overall status of blacks measured at 73 percent of whites.