

Forsyth County 2009 State of the County Health Report

December 2009



Forsyth County
Department of Public Health



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2009 SOTCH Report

Forsyth County Healthy Community Coalition and the Forsyth County Department of Public Health are pleased to present the 2009 State-of-the-County Health (SOTCH) Report. The report describes the latest data for key measures of community health and well being in Forsyth County, North Carolina.

The SOTCH Report is designed to inform about Forsyth County's progress over the last year. It is also designed to influence the development of policies that further improve community

health and recruit community members interested in participating in future activities. If you would like to get involved with the Forsyth County Healthy Community Coalition, please contact the Coordinator at (336) 703-3175 and visit our website at www.healthycommunity.ws/.

This report is available in electronic form at www.forsyth.cc/publichealth. For more information on NC 2010 and Healthy People 2010, please visit www.healthycarolinians.org/healthobj2010.htm and www.healthypeople.gov/.

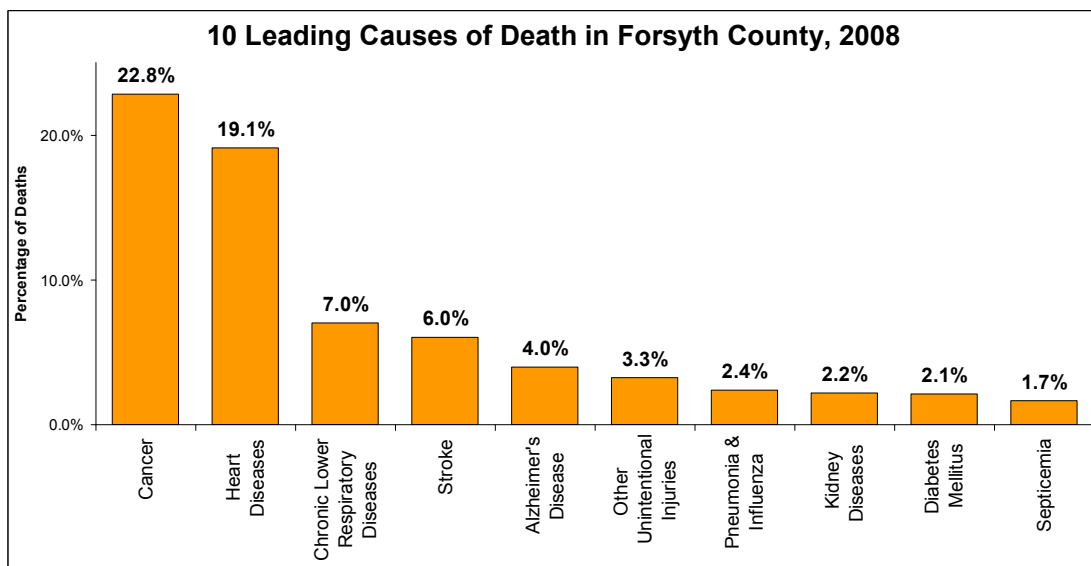
In Forsyth Co....

- There are an estimated 343,704 residents.
- Estimated median income is \$46, 912.
- As of Sept. 2009, 9.5% of residents are unemployed.
- About 14.1% of people live below the poverty line (less than \$20,650 for a family of 4).
- 70.8%* of students graduated high school in the 07-08 school year.

* Represents the percentage of students who entered the 9th grade for the first time during the 04-05 school year and earned a diploma by spring 2008. Data Sources: NC State Office of Budget & Management. US Census Bureau. US Bureau of Labor Statistics. US Dept. of Health & Human Services. NC Dept. of Public Instruction.

Leading causes of death in Forsyth Co.

Cancer, heart diseases, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and stroke were the leading causes of death in Forsyth County in 2008. These diseases accounted for 54.9% percent of all 2,920 county deaths for 2008. These conditions were also the leading causes of death in 2007, accounting for about 54% of deaths in the county.



Data Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics—Leading causes of death in Forsyth Co., 2008.

Addressing infant death in Forsyth Co.



IMRC Volunteers Bishop John Huntley and wife Deloris of Alpha and Omega Family Institute and Judy Atkinson of Association of University Women, helped AHEC sign in 147 participants .



Keynote speakers included Robert Dillard, M.D., NICU Medical Director at Forsyth Medical Center (above, left), and Darryl Owens, MDiv and Grief Counselor for UNC Hospital Women's Services (above, right).

Prematurity and low birth weight are the leading causes of infant death in Forsyth County. Women who have already had a premature baby are at a higher risk for having another premature infant. 17P, Alpha Hydroxyprogesterone Caproate, can lower the risk prematurity by as much as one-third. The 17P Campaign to Prevent Repeat Preterm Birth is the current initiative of the Forsyth County Infant Mortality Reduction Coalition (IMRC).

On February 19th, we hosted a statewide conference called "Hope for the Future: Building Community Support for Families Who Have Lost an Infant" as part of the campaign. The event brought together faith communities and medical providers to improve grief counseling skills for those working with families who have lost an infant. The sessions raised awareness about infant death in our community and the extreme importance of preventing prematurity and low birth weight.

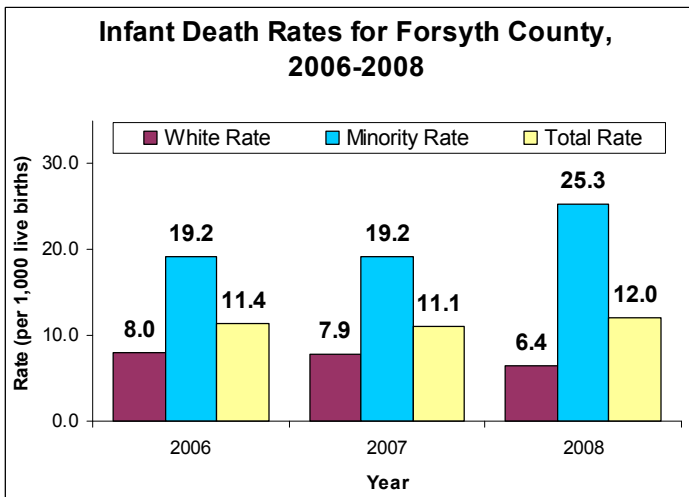
The IMRC and partners created a mom-to-mom educational DVD Footprints of Hope. The DVD was created for providers to educate

women who may be candidates for 17P. The DVD was shown and distributed to providers attending the conference along with toolkits of local resources for mothers and fathers in need of services, counseling, or infant loss resources.

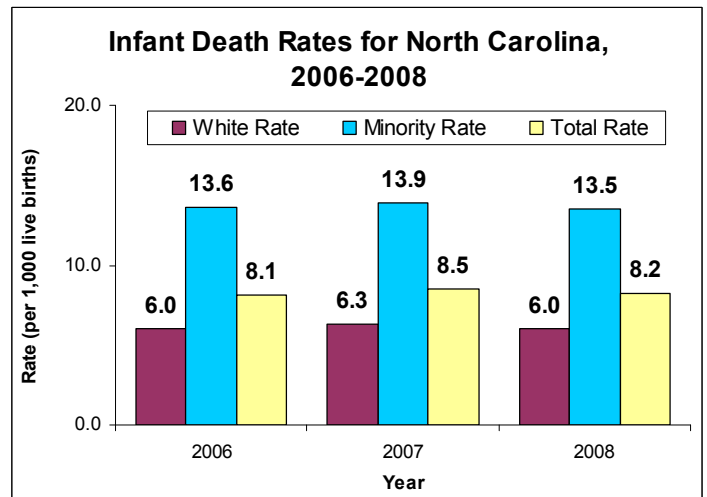
A four-parent panel shared personal stories of infant and pregnancy loss. One participant commented "Darryl Owens was a great speaker, very knowledgeable. I left here feeling like I can support families. It helped me reflect on my own loss. My feelings of loss were validated." Over 95 percent of participants said they would attend another infant loss conference if it is offered.

We are currently evaluating increased physician usage of 17P in Forsyth County. We are also reviewing Preconception Health Best Practices that are becoming available through state and national sources to address prematurity and low birth weight in Forsyth County.

For more information, please visit our website at www.HelpOurBabies.org.



Data Source: 2006, 2007, and 2008 NC State Center for Health Statistics Infant Mortality Reports.



Data Source: 2006, 2007, and 2008 NC State Center for Health Statistics Infant Mortality Reports.

Continuing efforts to keep youth tobacco-free

The Forsyth County Healthy Community Coalition, Youth Tobacco Prevention Program, Coalition for Drug Abuse Prevention, and Infant Mortality Reduction Coalition continue working together to prevent and reduce tobacco use among students and adults in our community.

Youth volunteers have been promoting TRU in Forsyth County by circulating information through presentations and Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools open-house booths. They have also held 100% Tobacco Free School Compliance booths at several Friday night football games.

TRU, which stands for “Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered.” is a state initiative funded by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund. It is designed for teens and by teens to encourage them to stay tobacco-free. In 2009, youth volunteers led 21 activities to promote teen tobacco prevention and visited 12 tobacco merchants to educate them on the sale of tobacco to minors. For more information about TRU and how you can be involved, visit www.realityunfiltered.com/.

In spring 2009, youth volunteers held a Kick Butts Day Carnival where they educated over 40 people on the dangers of tobacco and second-hand smoke. To mark this “tobacco holiday,” they distributed an original rap music video called “The TRUth” to all the middle and high schools to encourage students to come out and learn more about the dangers of tobacco. The youth have been spreading the message with this rap video since its filming in 2007, and it has reached people and youth in other counties and states. They also performed the rap live at the Health and Wellness Trust Fund Annual Meeting in October.

Over the past several years adult and youth volunteers have helped to promote smoke-free policies in restaurants in Forsyth County, and as a result on January 2, 2010 all restaurants and bars in North Carolina will be smoke-free. To learn more about House Bill 2 go to www.smokefree.nc.gov.

For more information about youth tobacco prevention, visit www.smokefreeforsyth.org or contact the Youth Tobacco Prevention Coordinator at (336) 703-3147.



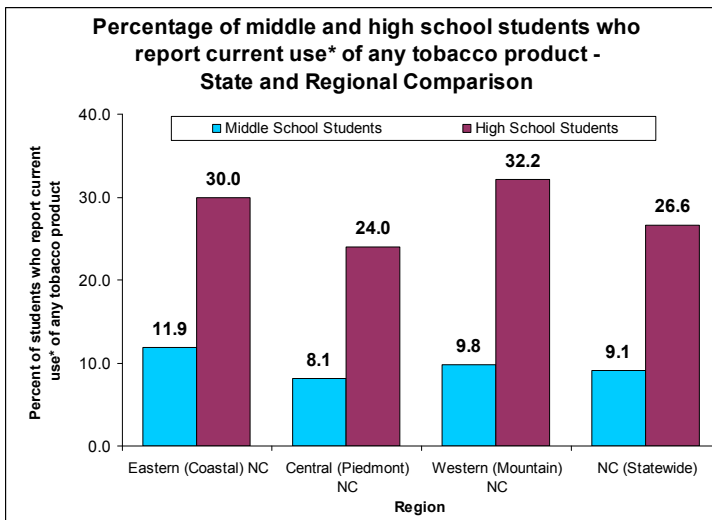
Youth at HWTF Annual Meeting with Vice President of Program Development for the American Legacy Foundation.



Youth at Kick Butts Day Carnival, 2009.



Youth volunteers at Hanes Middle School open house, 2009.



* “Current use any tobacco product” refers to use of cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, pipes, bidis, or kreteks on 1 of the 30 days preceding the survey. Data Source: 2007 Youth Tobacco Survey, Detailed Summary Tables—Regional and Statewide. NCDHHS

In Central NC...

- 97.9% of middle and 95.8% of high school students have never smoked and will not try a cigarette soon.
- 10.5% of middle and 11.6% of high school students think cigarettes make young people look cool or fit in.

Data Source: 2007 Youth Tobacco Survey-Central Region.



An illegal dumping site in Forsyth Co.



An illegal dumping site in Forsyth Co.

Raising awareness of illegal dumping

The Environmental Health Team continues to work on the unlawful dumping awareness project. Littering and dumping any type of waste in unauthorized areas is against the law. Charges for illegal dumping can range from misdemeanor to felony along with hefty fines. In 2007, Forsyth County agencies and government offices received about 13,000 citizen complaints, many reporting unlawful dumping. Our goal is to raise community awareness about illegal dumping and its effects and to encourage more citizens to report problem sites.

In 2009, we visited all of the incorporated municipalities of Forsyth County to discuss unlawful dumping and other solid waste issues and to plan a brochure. We developed and distributed 500 brochures in English and Spanish to local municipalities and county libraries. The brochure highlights health risks, economic burdens,

and environmental threats of illegal dumping and includes phone numbers and instructions on how to report a dump site.

The Environmental Health Team also continues efforts to monitor and expand the “No Idling” air quality enhancement campaign at Winston-Salem/Forsyth County elementary schools and some daycare centers. The no-idling campaign focuses on the 10 schools with the worst before- and after-school traffic problems. “No-idling” signs have been posted at most of the schools, and parents dropping off and picking up their children from school are encouraged to turnoff their car engines while waiting.

For more information about the Environmental Health Team or to get involved, please visit www.healthycommunity.ws/environmental.aspx.



The Health and Wellness Action Team of CHANGE received the 1st Annual Health Policy Achievement Award for their work in advocating for a Board of Health Rule on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention.

Tackling health inequity in Forsyth Co.

Over 200 individuals attended Heath Equity Day on April 30, 2009, an event held by the Health Equity Action Team (HEAT) of the Forsyth County Healthy Community Coalition and the FCDPH. Healthy Equity Day celebrated the work of HEAT and other organizations in raising awareness of health inequalities in our community and of their causes.

The event began with watching “In Sickness and In Wealth,” a segment from the award-winning documentary “Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?” A lively group conversation followed the showing. One participant said, “It is a topic that affects all of us and everyone should get involved. We need to all learn this and share it with others.”

Dr. Monroe, Director of the Forsyth County Department of Public Health, gave an overview of health inequality in our county. One of the slides from his presentation shows that an Afri-

can-American baby born in North Carolina is almost 2.5 times more likely to die in his/her first year of life than a Caucasian baby.

A reception followed the program and participants enjoyed music and song from the Healing Force and original poetry by the Winston-Salem Youth Arts Institute. Mayor Allen Joines and County Commission Chair Dave Plyler both proclaimed April 30, 2009 as Health Equity Day in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. In addition, the Health and Wellness Action Team of CHANGE (Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment) received the 1st Annual Health Policy Achievement Award for their work in advocating for a Board of Health Rule on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention.

Visit www.healthycommunity.ws/racial.aspx for more information about HEAT activities or contact the coordinator at (336) 703-3175 to host a showing of the Unnatural Causes DVD series.



(L to R) Rev. Willard Bass, Dr. Sylvia Flack, and Dr. David Mount were panel participants who shared information about what their organizations are doing and what the community can do to eliminate health inequities.

Highlighting needs of homeless and mentally ill individuals

The Mental Health and Homelessness Committee's goal is to build awareness of the needs of homeless individuals, especially those with severe and persistent mental illness. Each year, the Mental Health Association of Forsyth County (MHA) attends many community events to raise awareness of the needs of people with mental illness. The MHA also produces and updates a manual that lists resources in the community. We have been involved in several outreach activities throughout 2009.

In April, United Way collaborated with agencies who serve the homeless population in organizing the third annual Project Connect, where individuals were invited for free haircuts, showers, food, hygiene products, and other necessities, and to attend presentations addressing issues related to the needs of homeless individuals.

In May, the Stokes County MHA, CenterPoint, and seven other sponsors hosted the third annual Community FUNday at Central Park in King. The free, all-day event offered live music, face painting, a petting zoo, Karaoke, a dunking booth, fishing and hot dogs. The event provided the community and people in the areas of mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse with a day to have fun and break down barriers. There was no talk of providers or the services they offer at FUNday, only opportunities to have fun!

In August, CenterPoint and Northwest AHEC organized a two-day professional development conference that addressed issues related to today's adolescents. Topics included: Cyberbullying, AH/HD, Substance Abuse, Risky Behaviors, Self Harm, Suicide, LGBTQ Youth, and more.

In September, Northwest AHEC and CenterPoint partnered with eight state entities for the first annual NC One Community in Recovery Conference, held on September 11 at the MC Benton Convention Center. The conference highlighted

recovery programs around the state that are changing the way providers and consumers approach recovery. There were over 300 participants for the conference which featured nationally renowned keynote speakers Dori Hutchinson and Daniel Fisher and 16 breakout sessions.

In November, the second annual Fall Provider Fair took place at the Gateway YWCA. The fair highlighted over 60 Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse agencies and other community partners. About 300 people visited booths, learned more about resources in the community, and attended the six break-out sessions.

During 2010, we will present information at the Mental Health Fair at WFU Baptist Medical Center about local mental health and homelessness resources including community agencies, shelters, and services.

We will partner with Sara Lee Center for Women's Health to organize the Child & Family Mental Health Workshop to share information and the Women's Mental Health Workshop to discuss myths and facts about women's mental wellbeing.

During the winter, we will coordinate "The Day in the Life of..." that simulates a typical day lived by a homeless person in Forsyth County. The event includes a walking tour of four shelters and serving lunch at the Samaritan Ministries. The Committee will also sponsor seminars at ARCA that address Substance Abuse and Dual Diagnosis treatment, and plans to work with Northwest AHEC to offer a professional development workshop addressing the treatment needs of homeless people with severe and persistent mental illness.

For more information, please contact Laura Gorycki at (336) 714-9136 or Andy Hagler at (336) 768-3880.

In Forsyth Co....

- There are currently 119 people who are chronically homeless, meaning they have been without a home for more than a year.
- In 2008, there were over 3,000 people supported by the homeless network system.
- On any given day, there are more than 500 people without permanent housing.

Data source: Mental Health and Homelessness Committee data, 2009.



If you or a family member seeks services, call our ACCESS line. You will reach a qualified professional who will listen to your needs and refer you to the right source. CenterPoint also offers an ACCESS TTY line for persons who are hearing impaired at 1-866-625-0230.



BeHealthy helps Forsyth Co. residents get active

In Forsyth Co...

- 21.5% of residents surveyed reported being physically inactive.
- 42.0% of residents surveyed were overweight.
- 22.4% of residents were obese.

In NC...

- 24.6% of residents surveyed reported being physically inactive.
- 36.2% of residents surveyed were overweight.
- 29.5% of residents were obese.

Data Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics - 2008 Forsyth Co. and NC BRFSS results.

The BeHealthy Coalition continues to be a place for people interested in health and wellness to meet for education on local health/wellness issues, to share ideas, to foster collaborative relationships, and to promote healthy lifestyle behaviors. There were several BeHealthy events during 2009.

Downtown Winston-Salem was the location of the first-ever Cycling Sunday event in October 2009. About 150 people, including 50 children, participated in the event. Cycling Sunday promotes cycling in a bike-friendly environment. This event was sponsored by the BeHealthy Coalition in collaboration with the Winston-Salem Department of Transportation. Look for more downtown cycling events next year!

One of the goals of BeHealthy is to make certain that everyone in our community has access to quality, affordable, healthy foods. BeHealthy members worked with Wake Forest University Public Health Sciences (WFUPHS) on a project to measure the availability of healthy foods in specific areas. BeHealthy Coalition members were trained by WFUPHS staff on a standardized survey, developed a list of stores and businesses that sell food to the public, and visited those stores to gather information using the surveys. WFUPHS is

currently reviewing the data. BeHealthy will use the results of this project to support our work on food access in the community.

Step Up Forsyth! developed a new logo in 2009 to reflect the broad range of physical activities included in this community-wide physical activity program. Although it began as a walking program, the 2009 Step Up Forsyth! program celebrated all types of physical activity – as depicted in our new logo. As part of the Step Up Forsyth! program, we were pleased to introduce a downtown Scavenger Hunt contest in 2009. This contest was developed to encourage people to walk downtown and explore the streets of Winston-Salem. As in the previous five years, prizes were randomly awarded to participants and people that completed the Scavenger Hunt contest.

Step Up Forsyth! 2009 results are being tabulated. Please check the health department website for the final results.

For more information, please visit our website at www.co.forsyth.nc.us/PublicHealth/stepup_home.aspx. You can also visit www.healthycommunity.ws for information about BeHealthy.



Kids and adults enjoyed fun and safe biking during Cycling Sunday in Downtown Winston-Salem. Streets were closed to traffic so cyclists of all ages could pedal in a bike-friendly area.



A parent helped a child balance on her bicycle at Cycling Sunday.



(L to R) Judi Wallace, Matthew Burczyk, and Greg Errett introduced the Scavenger Hunt contest at the Step Up Forsyth! kickoff event.

Local events address domestic violence

Many organizations and individuals work to prevent domestic violence and help survivors by offering valuable tools, information and assistance. During Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October 2009, Family Services held a Survivor's Panel for the community to hear about the challenges of domestic violence from survivors. The event allowed service providers to better understand the challenges of domestic violence issues. The Domestic Violence Community Council (DVCC), an organization with representatives from several diverse agencies, organizations, and service providers, continues to grow and develop. After more than a decade, the DVCC continues to work toward increasing victim safety and holding abusers accountable.

Training and community education events continue to be a large part of domestic violence work. Over 2000 people received training and community education on how to recognize domestic violence, improve screening and evaluation tools, appropriately respond to survivors and how refer to services, programs and related resources. Organizations that participated include WFU School of Medicine Physician's Assistant Program, WFU Baptist Medical Center Social Work Department, Cook Medical, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools social Workers and nurses, and the Forsyth County District Attorney's Office.

The event, Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, received media attention as men literally walked a mile in women's high heels as a symbolic way to bring attention to domestic and sexual violence issues. Over 150 men participated in honor of women in their lives. Tony Porter, co-founder of A Call to Men, led a workshop to increase understanding of the social issues that support violence against women and to suggest how men and women can work together to end intimate partner violence and build healthy relationships.

Teens-4-Change, a social change/volunteer-based group of female high school students

committed to teaching peers about teen-related issues, including dating violence and date rape, planned and held a workshop called P.L.A.Y.—Positive Learning About Yourself. Local experts taught sessions and college students shared their real life experiences with workshop participants. Participants reported increased understanding of ways to reduce their risk of becoming a victim of crime, how to stay safe and what it takes to have a healthy relationship.

The shooting of two WSPD officers during a domestic violence-related incident prompted the President and CEO of Family Services, Inc., to send a letter to the Winston-Salem Journal calling for continued commitment to eliminating domestic violence in our community. Local media coverage of this unfortunate incident raised awareness of how violence impacts people beyond the victim and the abuser and showed how domestic violence affects the health and well being of all.

Please visit www.fsifamily.org or call (336) 722-8173 for more information about services.

In Forsyth Co....

- During the 08-09 fiscal year, Family Services provided 2804 nights of care for women and children fleeing domestic violence situations at Family Services Shelter.
- *Safe on Seven: Forsyth Co. Domestic Violence Center* reported a 44% increase in the number of clients requesting services from Jan. through Sept. 2009 compared to 2008.

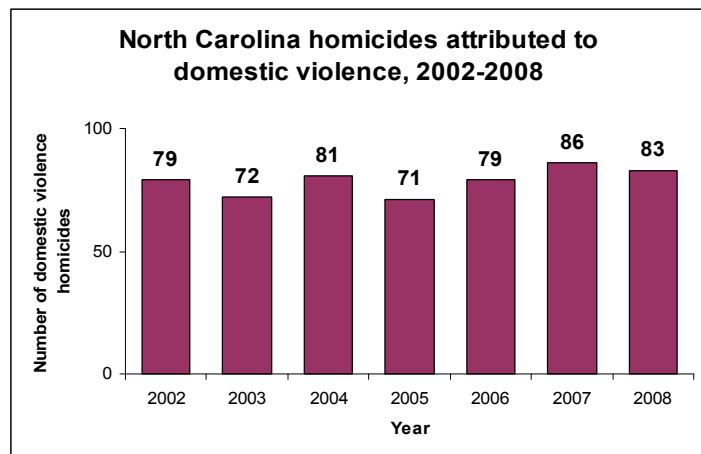
Where to call

These lines are open 24 hours a day:

Domestic Violence Crisis Line: (336) 723-8125.

Sexual Assault Crisis Line: (336) 722-4457.

Data Source: Domestic Violence Community Council data, 2009.



Data source: 2002-2008 Domestic Violence Homicides. NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

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We would like to express our thanks to the Forsyth County Healthy Community Coalition and its action teams, community members, leaders, agencies, and volunteers. It is because of their excellent work and their support that we are able to complete this report. We thank them for their efforts in improving our community over the years.

We also thank the Board of Health, the Board of Commissioners, and the taxpayers of Forsyth County. The Forsyth County Healthy Community Coalition and its action teams are able to continue working for a healthier county through their ongoing support.

— *Forsyth County Department of Public Health*

