

Tulane report shows health disparities facing women, girls in Greater N.O.

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A Tulane University report highlights social factors including race, age and gender that contribute to stark disparities in health and economic outcomes for women and girls in Orleans and Jefferson parishes.

The [report](#) finds that African-American women lag behind in numerous health indicators with higher rates of sexually transmitted infections than white women, higher breast cancer mortality rates as well as higher infant mortality rates in spite of fairly similar rates of prenatal care. Other findings reveal poor progress regardless of race. All women have substantially lower earning power across all industry types compared to men, and 40 percent of girls under 18 live below the federal poverty level.

“The report highlights continuing gaps between white and black women and girls across numerous indicators and points to the urgent need to address the underlying causes of such inequalities in health and social conditions,” said study author Katherine Theall, director of the Amelia Douglas-Whited Women's Center at Tulane University.

The report also details issues like infectious disease, drug use, reproductive health, and domestic violence. Broken down to reflect gender as well as differences in age, race, and education, the data shows disparities across groups and limited data for many demographic groups. The report is available at: www.gnowomenandgirls.org.

Theall and staff led the project with support from the Newcomb College Institute, the City of New Orleans Health Department, and the Louisiana Public Health Institute.

Though the nation's attention is focused on changes to the health insurance system,

Theall said the true picture is more complicated.

“While health care access and insurance coverage are important, our goal is also to highlight the fact that many of these health outcomes are driven by social factors. Health is much broader than just health care. To really produce healthy communities, we need to start long before folks need care, ” Theall said.