

2005

STATE OF THE COUNTY REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

Warren County can be described as a county rich in history. The county was first settled by the Tuscarora Indians and later by English, Spaniards, and Scottish. The Tuscarora Indians first settlement was located in the northwestern part of the county, just south of the Roanoke River. Warren County was named for Joseph Warren, a doctor-soldier who fought and was killed in the Battle of Bunkerhill. The county was incorporated in 1779 from Bute and Granville Counties.

Warren County has provided the state with four governors, nine Attorney Generals, and has encompassed such historical figures as Nathaniel Macon, Francis Scott Key, Robert E. Lee and Horace ("Go West, Young Man!") Griely. The first Black congressman from North Carolina was a Warren County native. During the Civil Rights Movement, Warren County was chosen as the site of an experimental planned community called Soul City. This was an effort to create an improved economic opportunity for Southern Blacks. Most recently a Warren County native was elected as the first Black Congresswoman (Eva Clayton) from North Carolina.

Warren County is located in the northeastern Piedmont section of North Carolina. Warren County is bordered by Virginia to the north, Northampton and Halifax Counties to the east, Franklin and Nash Counties to the south and southeast, and Vance County to the west. The climate of Warren County is an average of 59 degrees Fahrenheit.

Agriculture is a way of life for many county residents. Tobacco was the earliest cash crop grown in Warren County. This crop is still being produced today along with cucumbers, cantaloupes, and grains. Although many Warren County residents make their living from agriculture, there are several industries in the county.

Based on 2000 Census data, Warren County's total population is 19, 972, with 5.4% under age 5, 23.5% under age 18, and 17.4% age 65 and over. The racial breakdown is 0.1% Asian, 1.6% Hispanic or Latino, 4.8% American Indian and Alaska persons, 54.5%, African American or Black, 38.9% White, 0.8% reported some other race, and 0.9% reported 2 or more races. Based on the data results, Warren County's non-white population is above the state average. Females represent 50.9% of the population and males, the remaining 49.1%. Based on 2000 Census data, out of 13,599 residents age 25 and older only 67.5% are graduates of high school or higher, and only 11.6 percent hold bachelor's or higher degrees. In Warren County, the per capita income is \$14,716; which is much lower than the State's average. Unemployment is a major factor in such a low per capita income. When the unemployment rate of Warren County is compared to the State, the county is much higher. Warren County has a 9.9 percent unemployment rate and 19.4 percent of it's' families live in poverty. Total families living in poverty is 28.2%; the rate for Blacks is 39.6% and for Whites is 10.1%.

Morbidity & Mortality

In Warren County, chronic illnesses such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease and blood pressure or stroke is the major causes of illness and death. Lifestyles changes including nutrition education and change, exercise, smoking cessation and limited alcohol use, it is believed that these numbers can be reduced dramatically. Warren County has one of the highest cancer rates in the state and it is believed that the farming culture attributes to this, as tobacco is one of the major sources of income for the county. It is estimated that nearly four in ten North Carolinians will develop cancer during their lives. Cancer is expected to surpass heart disease and become the leading cause of death in North Carolina and the nation by the year 2015.

Our area has its share of chronic respiratory problems including asthma, emphysema and lung cancer. Because of the agriculture-related force, there is a certain amount of injuries and death from farm machinery. The county has a low rate of injury or death from industrial work sites due to little manufacturing in the area and an intense safety program at the counties largest employer. Statistics from the N. C. Center for Health Statistics indicate that deaths are down by 6 percent from 1998 for heart disease, cancer is down by 20 percent for the same period and diabetes deaths are down by better than 5%. There is an intense campaign to vaccinate for flu and pneumonia, and there are no statistics available at this time that would show outcomes that are being impacted, however, we feel sure that the program is effective in the community.

Other Health Concerns for Warren County

Warren County is one of the poorest counties in the state; citizens are often forced to choose between regular healthcare and doctor visits versus things such as groceries, heating fuel or payment of utility bills. With limited staff and budget, the health department addresses as many needs of the people as they possibly can.

Priority Health Concerns

In 2002, Warren County conducted a community health assessment, which, through use of focus groups, surveys, and study of patterns in the community, gave the Health Department a feel for the needs of the area. Through this assessment, the group was able to determine areas of major concern and make efforts to address the problems in these areas. The efforts of the Healthy Carolinians of Warren County partnership appears to stimulate genuine interest by government officials, private citizens and special interest groups in that problems are being identified and someone is taking the lead in seeking and providing solutions to the population in a reasonable fashion.

Healthy Carolinians of Warren County Goals & Progress

The office of the Healthy Carolinians was established in 1992 upon the recommendation of the Governor's Task Force on Health Objectives for the year 2000. On October 9, 2001 Governor Michael F. Easley signed Executive Order No. 13 appointing the Governor's Task Force for Healthy Carolinians.

With Warren County being one of the poorest counties in the state, it was obvious there were a great need to address health issues here in the county.

In 2002, Warren County conducted a community health assessment, which, through use of focus groups, surveys, and study of patterns in the community, gave the Health Department a feel for the needs of the area. Also, a community-based task force, led by the Warren County Health Department, was convened to identify major health needs in Warren County and to develop key objectives to improve community health. As a natural follow-up, the Healthy Carolinians of Warren County (HCWC) partnership first met in March 2003 to begin the work of turning these objectives into reality.

The vision of Healthy Carolinians of Warren County (HCWC) is children, teens and adults living healthy and safe lives through our goals of:

- ~ Increased citizen participation in physical activities
- ~ Increased citizen commitment to healthy eating
- ~ Decreased use of illegal drugs by children, teens, and adults
- ~ Decreased abuse of alcohol by adults
- ~ Decreased use of alcohol by children and teens
- ~ Increased use of vehicle safety belts
- ~ Increased and proper use of child restraint and booster seats
- ~ Decreased domestic partner abuse
- ~ Increased services for victims of domestic violence

HCWC continues partnering with individuals as well as organizations to address the concerns. There are currently three working groups within the partnership: Fitness and Nutrition (FAN), Substance Abuse, and Injury and Violence Prevention.

Our volunteers assist in our programs, serving on our committees, to improve the health and safety of the county residents by speaking out at home, church, school, civic organizations, and community functions.

Three (3) car seat safety workshop clinics were conducted 2004. The Warren County Sheriff Department with the assistance of the Norlina Town Police Department conducted the Vehicle Traffic Checkpoint which showed a 98% compliance. A total of 135 vehicles were stopped with 3 were noncompliance. The committee plans to work with local law enforcement to conduct traffic stops throughout the year.

We have had the Warrenton's Woman's Club donate books with subjects dealing with various aspects of domestic violence, to the Warren County Library, of which the donors

are partners of HCWC. Through the committee's efforts, more information on domestic violence is now available for county residents. Bookmarks were distributed to appropriate service agencies including the Domestic Violence Center (Helping Hands) The committee designed the Warren County Injury Prevention Guide and distributed it to local agencies.

The HCWC has established a Warren County Caregiver Resource Guide that has been beneficial to other communities as well as Warren County. This guide provides information about Adult Day Care Programs, Advocacy and Information about Nursing Homes or Assisted Living, Case Assistance, and Care Management, Services for Visually Impaired Persons, Education, Emergency/Crisis Services, End of Life Services, Financial Counseling, Food Assistance, Health Care, Home Health Care, Housing Assistance, Insurance/Benefits Information, Legal Services, Dialysis, Mental Health Services, Recreation & Leisure, Transportation, Volunteer Groups Providing Services for Seniors, Prescription Drug Financial Assistance, and Substance Abuse. Other resources within this structure are N.C. Division of Aging, Family Caregiver Alliance and Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments (Area Agency on Aging). This guide consists of contact phone numbers and is strictly for information purposes.

The Fitness and Nutrition (FAN) committee has established a walking trail at two (2) elementary schools in the county. This committee painted footprints at the schools for the purpose of students, teachers and other school employees. There is an ongoing effort to focus on promoting exercise programs for the county. The committee produced a walking trails guide promoting walking trails established in three areas of the county, Macon, Warrenton and Norlina. The committee also posted three large billboards on major access roads to the town promoting the Warren Walkers, Healthy Carolinians, and the Warren County Health Department's Exerstyle program.

HCWC is partnering with the Students Against Violence Everywhere/Students Against Drunk Driving (S.A.V.E./S.A.D.D) organization at the local high school. This collaboration has enabled us to address the teen population regarding the issue of substance abuse, tobacco usage, negative behavior and prevention. Permission has been granted to administer a Youth Behavioral Survey to all ninth graders by the December which will be followed for four years.

In January 2004, HCWC presented a Diabetes Support Group Meeting at the Warren County Health Department with the topic being "Become a Part". **In March 2004**, the committee along with the student groups, co-sponsored an anti-drug forum that focused on substance abuse prevention and anti-violence. **In September 2004** HCWC to show appreciation to the partners, sponsored a Celebration/Appreciation Luncheon. The keynote speaker was the Director of Healthy Carolinians/Health Education and certificates were given to the partners. Also, The Governor declared September Healthy North Carolina Month. To address the chronic diseases and importance of exercise, **September 2004** HCWC sponsored a Health Education Workshop with the seniors at the area senior center in the community to address heart disease, diabetes, exercise and nutrition. Area merchants, food chains and businesses sponsored door prizes, lunch, and supplies for the seniors. **September 2004**, was declared Toothbrush

Month. HCWC partnered with the Public Health Dental Hygienist and conducted toothbrush education at the Warren Place Apartment complex with both adults and children participating at the event. In **October 2004**, the committee painted footprints at one of the area elementary schools participating in the fitness part of the partnership. In the following months, HCWC will be sponsoring fingerprinting to area youths through the local law enforcement. In **February 2005**, the Injury Prevention Committee had a Paramedic from Warren County and the Healthy Carolinians Coordinator was trained as a National Child Passenger Safety technician. In **April/May 2005** the FAN committee painted 3 more walking trails in various areas in the county to promote physical activity to students and adults. In **September 2005** the HCWC participated with ZONE Health, a pilot program focusing on education that will target the causes of childhood obesity for the school year 2005-2006 at Northside Elementary School, Warren County Middle School and Warren County High School. Students will receive 30 minutes of physical activity each day through recess, classroom energizers, footprint walks and or physical education classes. In **September 2005** the Substance Abuse Committee completed a survey of 9th graders at the high school on alcohol, tobacco and drinking establishing a baseline to track for the next 3 years with the same students. In **October 2005**, Winner Circle, a healthy eating program was implemented in all Warren County Schools for students and staff.

The Healthy Carolinians of Warren County has been successful in reaching out to a diverse population for participation in the partnership. We have reached out to the American Indians, Hispanics, churches, civic organizations, county agencies. Government officials, politicians and county residents in the community to create cross culture participation. The HCWC was granted the KB Reynolds funding for the second year as well as funding from the American Lung Association in the form of two mini-grants to purchase incentive items on implementing smoke free policy in Warren County Schools. The HCWC received additional funding from VGFW Area Authority System of Care Proposal Grant.

Early Preventive Health

The Warren County Health Department has several programs in place to address the area of preventive health. Those programs (Exerstyle and High Risk Exerstyle) include promotion of the wellness center with treadmills, stationary bikes, rowing machines, and low impact aerobics. There is also prostate cancer support, diabetes support, regular blood pressure screenings, cholesterol checks and regular distribution of printed materials and samples. Cooperative training's of "Color Me Healthy" (Day Care Training) between Health Promotion and Cooperative Extension. Also walking trails have been marked, along with health fairs are been held at the local industries.

The Warren County Schools are addressing health-related issues. Staff and volunteers offer programs in activities such as student walking, jump rope for the Heart, Hoops for the Heart, Diabetes training for all school staff, School Health Advisory Council (with a Fitness & Nutrition representative), The Lions Quest Program Training for Middle School children (substance abuse), and red ribbon activities (substance abuse prevention).

The Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health was awarded funding from the Health and Wellness Trust Fund to implement a youth tobacco prevention program in 11 of the partnership's 19 counties. Warren County is one of the counties where the youth tobacco prevention program exists. Warren County and Northampton county share a full time youth tobacco prevention coordinator who will address four main broad goals in each county: prevent youth initiation of tobacco use, reduce youth exposure to environmental (second hand) smoke, provide support for youth who want to quit and reduce health disparities among minority youth attributable to tobacco use. More specifically, the coordinator will work with the school system to implement a "Gold Standard" policy of the school system becoming 100% tobacco free, starting TATU (Teens Against Tobacco Use) clubs in the middle and high schools, implementing cessation programs for the youth and provide trainings to educate and empower youth to become tobacco prevention advocates. Warren County is excited about this new project. The project will be in place for two years. This smoke free policy became effective July 1, 2005 at all schools in Warren County. Our future endeavor is to implement **Not On Tobacco (NOT)**, which is a youth smoking cessation program to prevent youth from the use of any tobacco products, and training will be in January 2006.

New & Emerging Issues-In Warren County, the area of controlled substance has increased from 18 cases 2001 to 32 cases 2003 according to the Warren County Sheriff's Office Communication 2003 Statistical Data Tally. The controlled substance has decreased from 32 cases 2003 to 11 cases 2004. The Healthy Carolinians of Warren County is addressing this issue in their Action Plans. The economic situation has always limited a certain group of the population from receiving the services that they not only desire but also desperately need. With most of the work force being either farm or log wood laborers, many are not afforded the luxury of health care insurance. The three main industries within the county provide very little stimulus as far as competitive wages, employee insurance benefits, or preventive healthcare programs for it's' workforce. Even those persons that consider themselves self-employed often are not afforded health or dental insurance because of the high cost and their small amounts of working capital. The Health Department continuously seeks funding sources to provide as many services as possible to that population of the county.

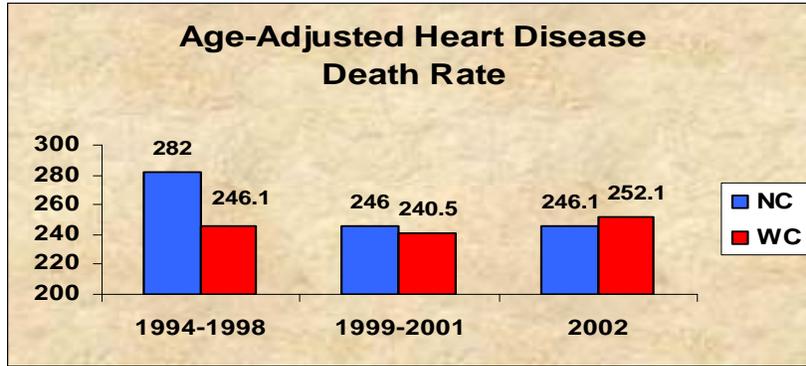
Community Involvement-The Healthy Carolinians of Warren County has pursued and solicited interest from all areas of the county. This goal has been reached by visiting areas of high traffic such as grocery stores, chamber of commerce offices, convenience stores, government facilities and healthcare provider agencies. This, in addition to placing printed materials such as brochures and posters, has been a large part of their initial campaign and efforts towards the healthy lifestyles campaign initiative.

In conclusion, a continuous collaborative effort has begun between Healthy Carolinians of Warren County (116 partners), health department, local government officials, county agencies, the school system, and civic organizations in pursuing every opportunity to address, reduce and/or eliminate the health concerns of the county residents.

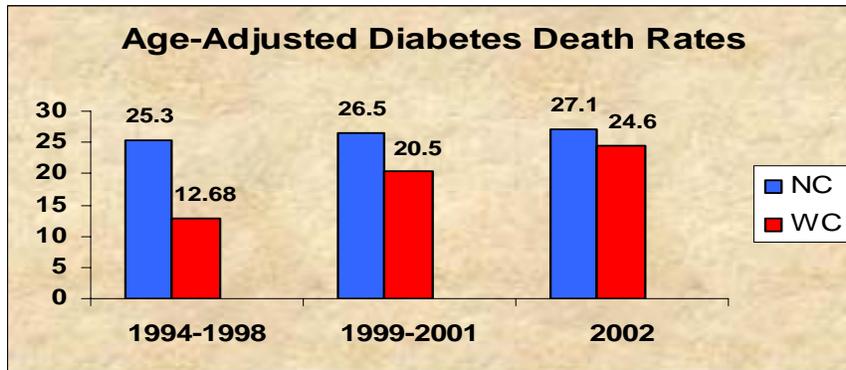
The areas of concern that are being addressed by the partners include:

1. Chronic Diseases (diabetes, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure)

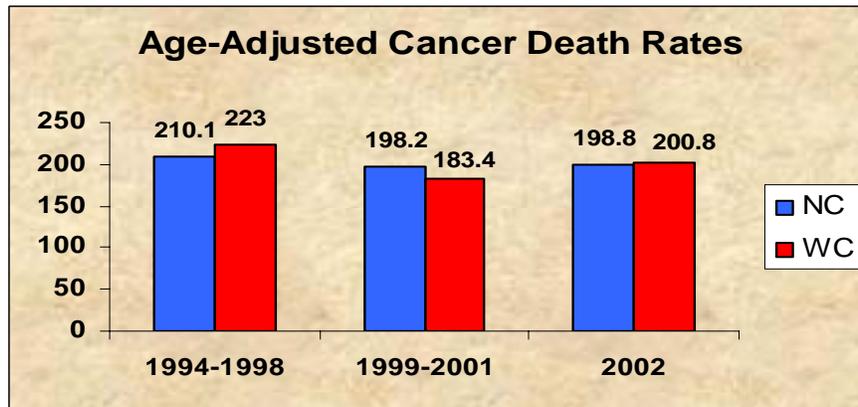
AGE ADJUSTED DEATH RATES GRAPHS AT A GLANCE



Deaths per 100,000 Populations
Source: State Center for Health Statistics

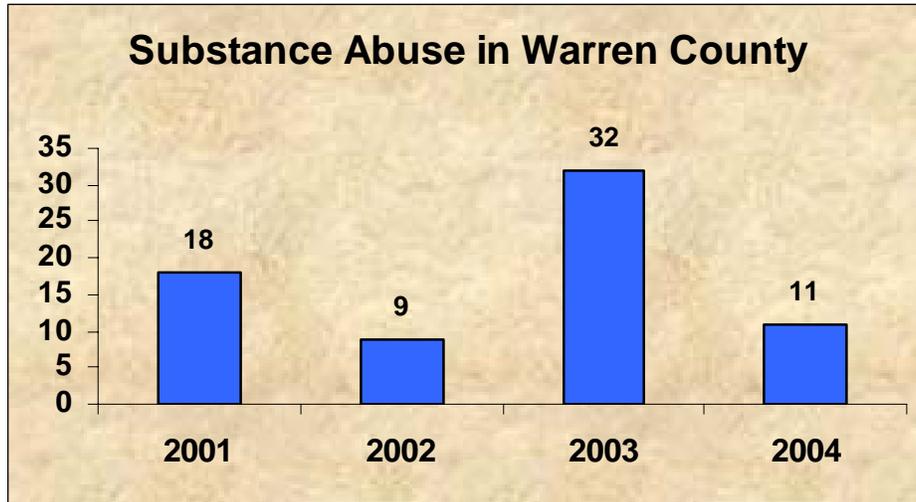


Deaths per 100,000 Populations
Source: State Center for Health Statistics



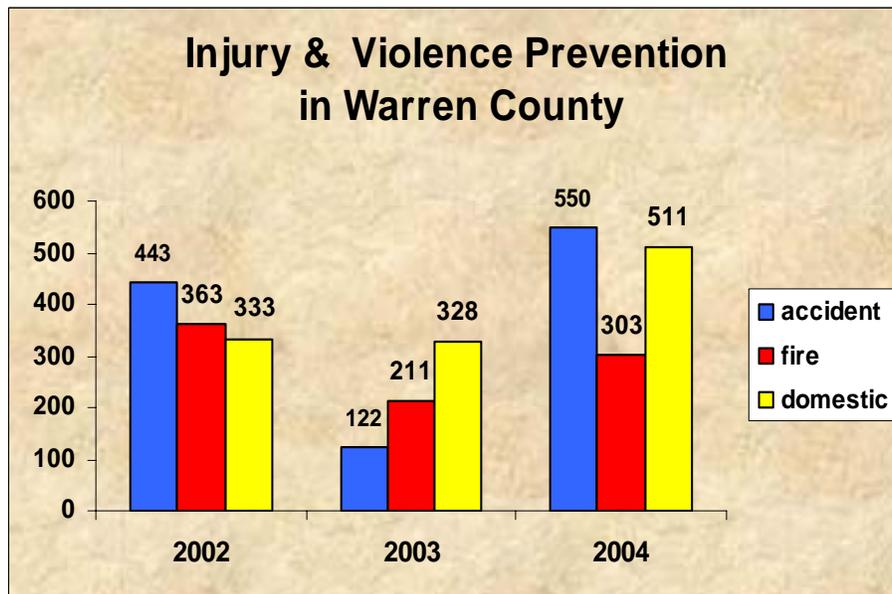
Deaths per 100,000 Populations
Source: State Center for Health Statistics

2. Health Promotion (Substance Abuse)



Shows the actual numbers of calls in Warren County for the years 2001-2004.
Source: Warren County's Sheriff's Office Communication Report

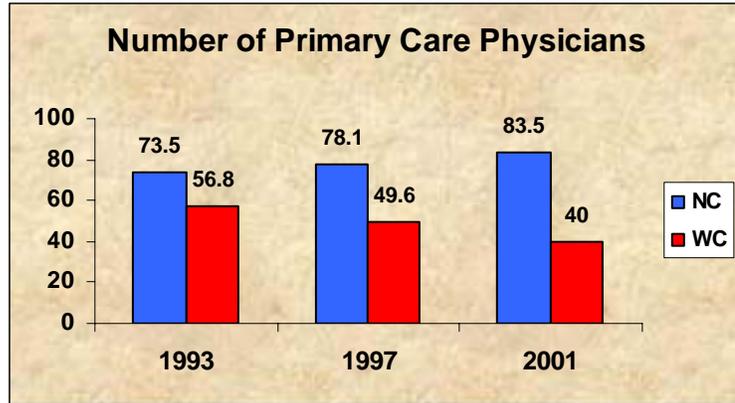
3. Injury & Violence Prevention (Motor Vehicle, fires, domestic violence)



Shows the actual numbers of calls in Warren County for the years 2002-2004.
Source: Warren County's Sheriff's Office Communication Report

4. Community Health
A. Access to Quality Health Care Services

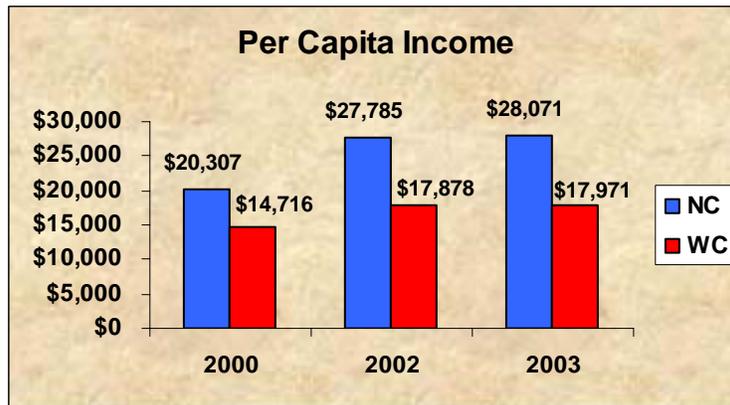
**Number of Primary Care Physicians
 Per 100,000 Population**



Source: State Center for Health Statistics

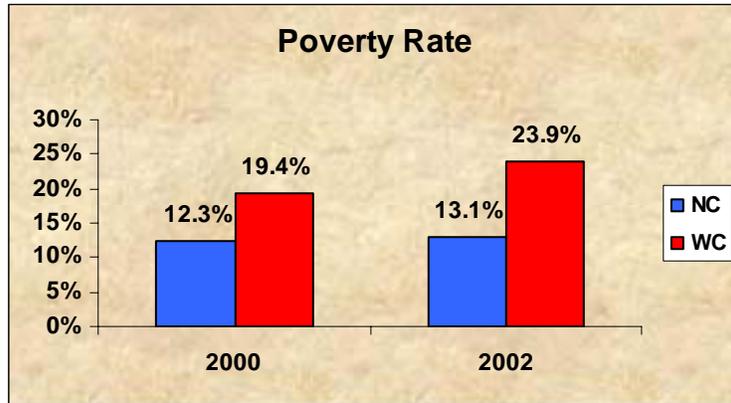
Health Care Services still remains an issue due to the lost of 2 Family Practitioners in the county during 2004.

B. Quality of Life(Capita Income)

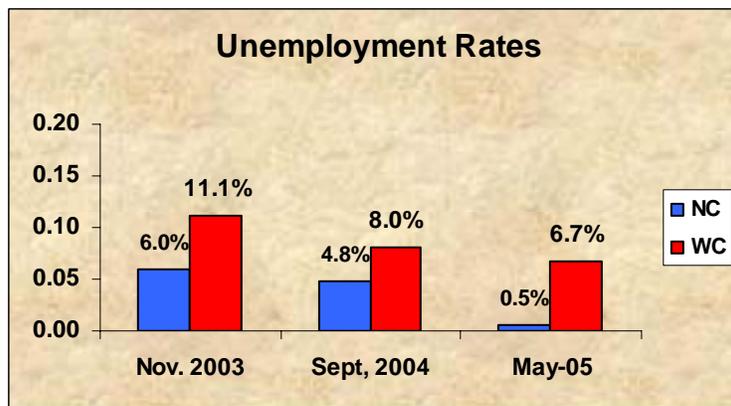


Source: Quick Facts from the US Census Bureau. (2000)
 Source: cmedis.commerce.state.nc.us (2003)

C. Quality of Life (Poverty, Unemployment)

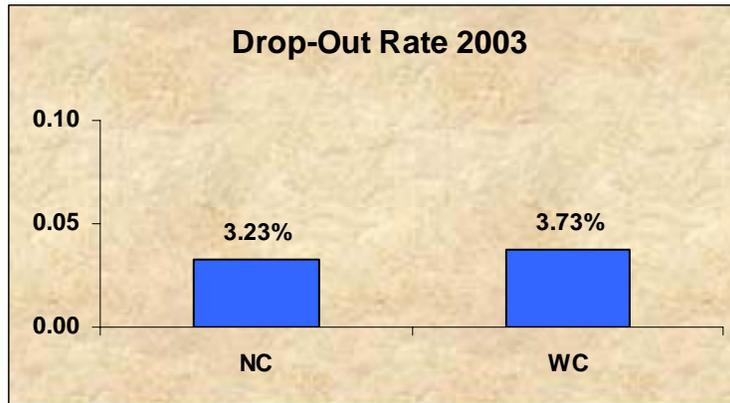


Source: Quick Facts from the US Census Bureau. (2000)
Source: cmedis.commerce.state.nc.us (2002)



Source: Employment Security Commission-Warren
Source: cmedis.commerce.state.nc.us (2005)

D. Quality of Life (Education/ Dropout)



Though the dropout rate has decreased by from a high of 8.55 percent in 2000-2001, there is still concern. Indicators show that of the 3.73 percent 27 enrolled in community college and 6 completed the GED program.
Source: Warren County Board of Education