

Eliminating Health Disparities: Our Challenge, Our Charge

January 29, 2007



NC Child Fatality Task Force Perinatal Health Committee

Barbara Pullen-Smith, *MPH*, Director

**N. C. Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (OMHHD)
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services**

History of Blacks in the Health System

- Poorer health since days of slavery
- Post Civil War --Freedmen's Bureau Legislation
 - Soup kitchens, clinics, hospitals, schools
 - Effort lasted less than a decade
- 1960s Civil Rights Movement
 - Healthcare for Blacks and other disadvantaged groups
 - Effort lasted for a decade
- “Automatic Assignment of most Black and poor patients, the least healthy groups in the nation to the under funded, overcrowded, inferior tax supported...tier of the healthcare system predicts serious problems ahead” Dowling 1982
- Since 1970s?

How Did Health Disparities Get on the Public Policy Agenda?

~National Level~
22 Year Journey!



- 1985** US DHHS Secretary of Health Report
- 1985** First State Office of Minority Health (Ohio)
- 1986** National Office of Minority Health
- 1998** US Surgeon General-Eliminate Health Disparities Focus
- 1999** CDC-REACH (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health) 2010
- 2000** AHRQ-EXCEED (Excellence Centers To Eliminate Ethnic/Racial Disparities)
- 2002** IOM Report : Unequal Treatment...In Healthcare
- 2006** 40 State Offices of Minority Health in US



How Did Health Disparities Get on the Public Policy Agenda?

...North Carolina's *20 Year* Journey



- 1987** 1st NC Minority Health Report
- 1988** NC Minority Health Workgroup Recommendations
- 1992** NC OMH & Minority Health Advisory Council (General Assembly)
- 1999** CDC REACH 2010 Project (Mecklenburg & Eastern Band of Cherokee)
- 2000** Center of Excellence on Overcoming Racial Disparities (UNC)
- 2001** NC DHHS Secretary Hooker Odom's Priority - Eliminate Health Disparities
- 2005** NC Health & Wellness Trust Fund Commission (Tobacco Settlement)
\$12 million/3years
- 2005/** NC OMHHD Community Focused Eliminating Health Disparities
- 2006** Initiative (\$2 million)



National Institutes of Health

Defines Disparities as...

“The difference in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of disease and other adverse health conditions that exists among specific population groups in the United States”*

**National Institutes of Health, Addressing Health disparities: The NIH program of Action. What are disparities. Available at <http://healthdisparities.nih.gov/whatare.html>.*

Health Disparities Defined

By

NC Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities

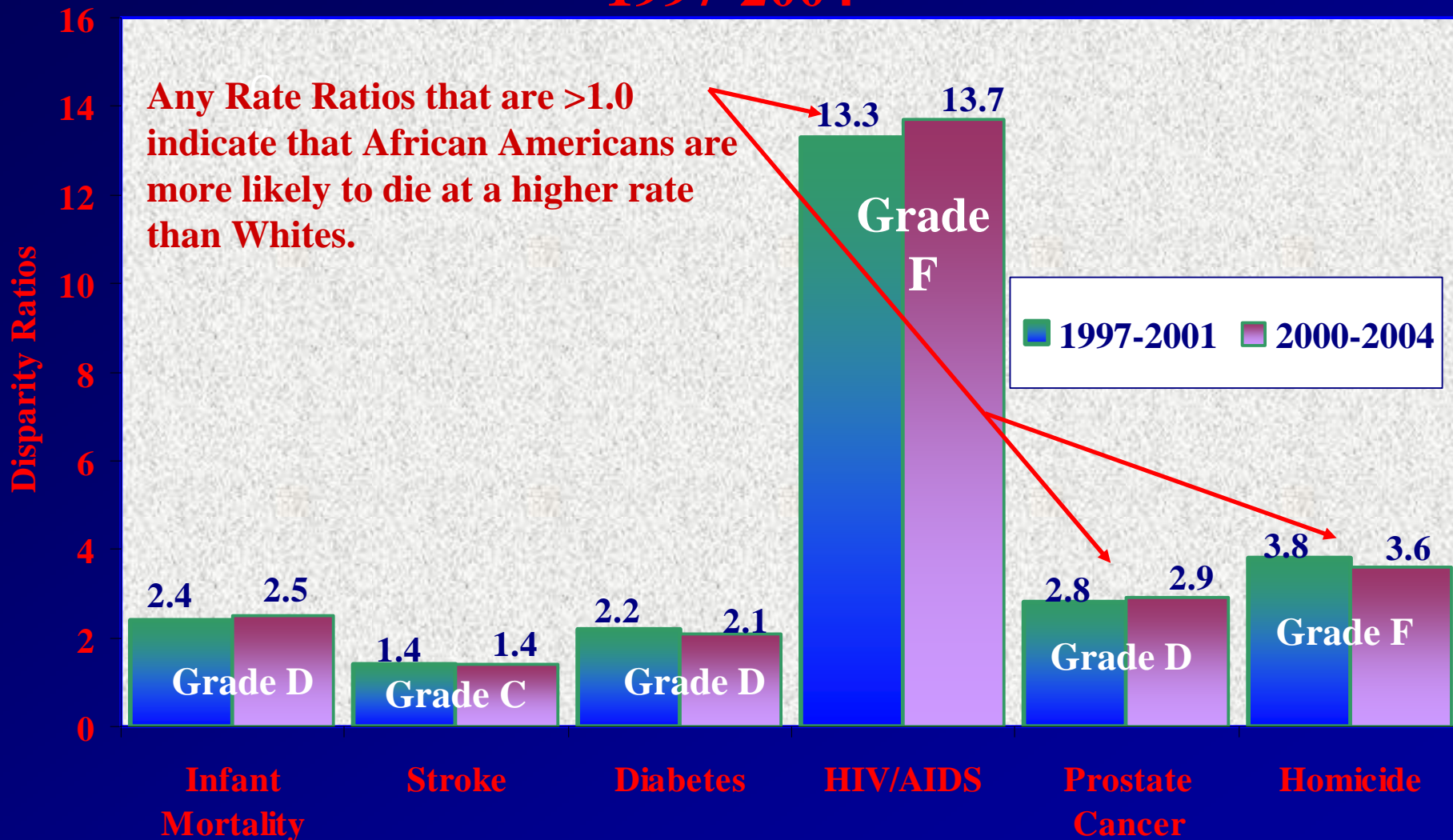


A Working Definition:

Significant differences or inequalities in health that exist between whites and racial/ethnic minorities.



African Americans - vs- White Population Death Rate Ratios Over 7 Year Period 1997-2004

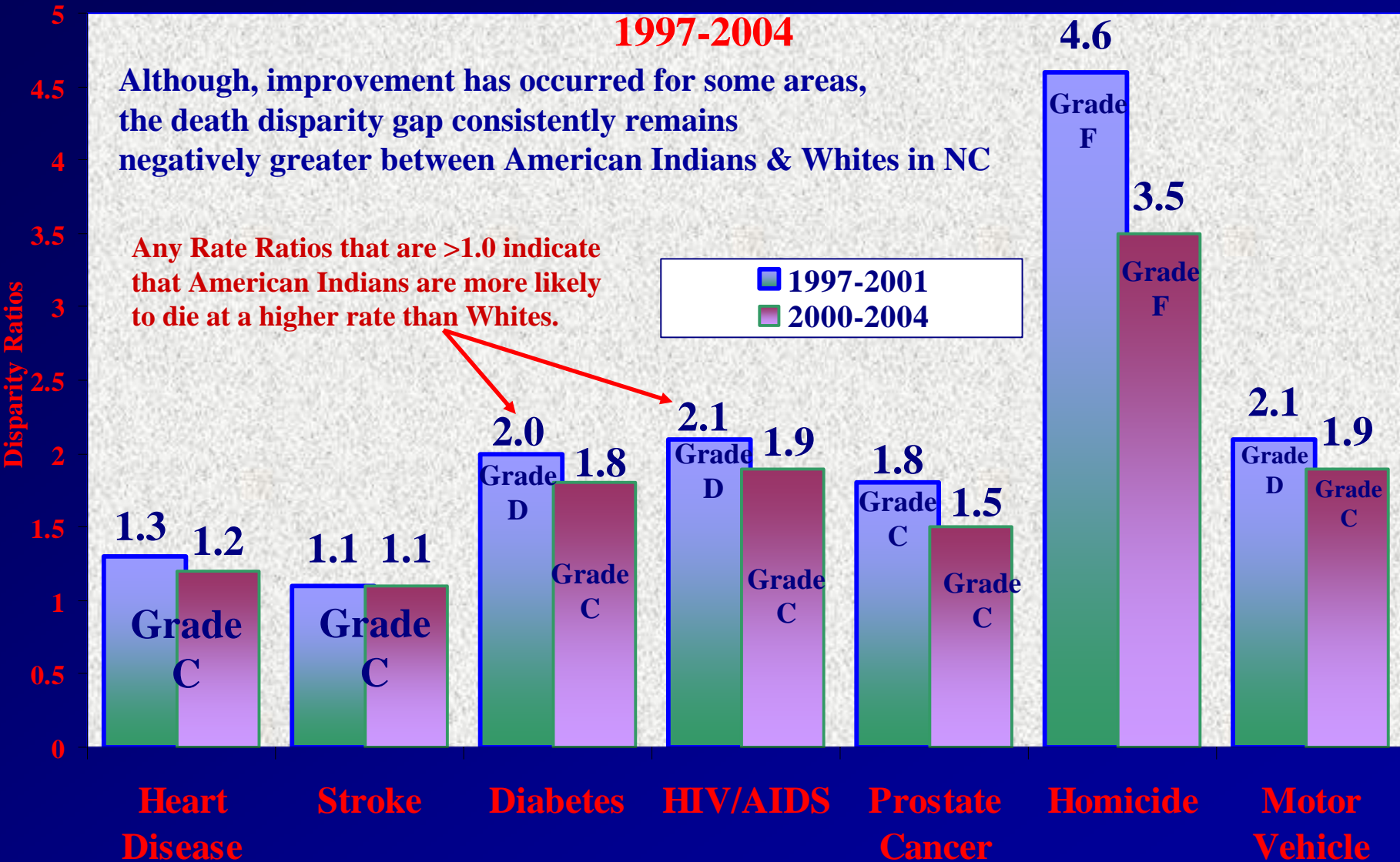


American Indian -vs- White Population Death Rate Ratios Over 7 Year Period

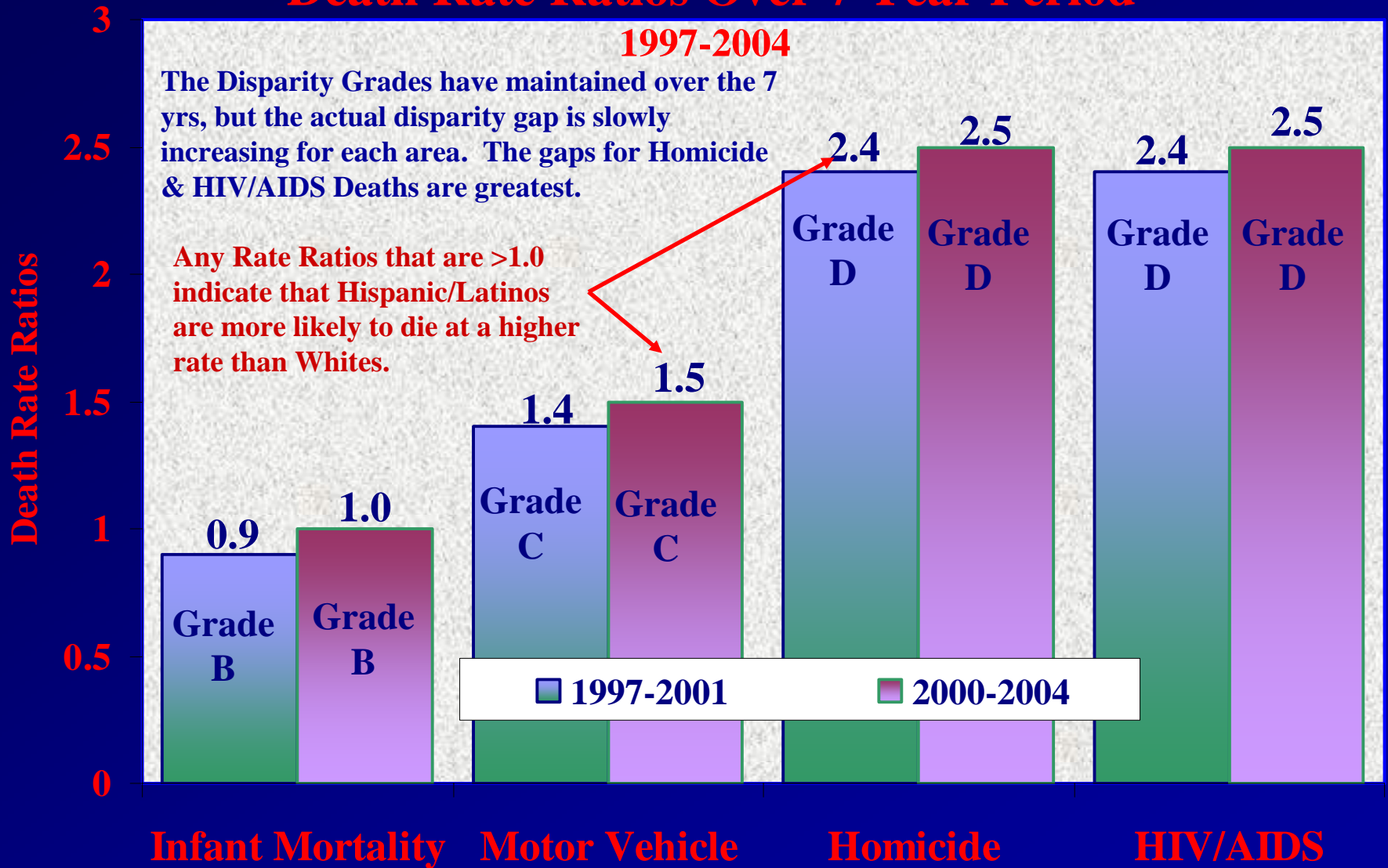
1997-2004

Although, improvement has occurred for some areas, the death disparity gap consistently remains negatively greater between American Indians & Whites in NC

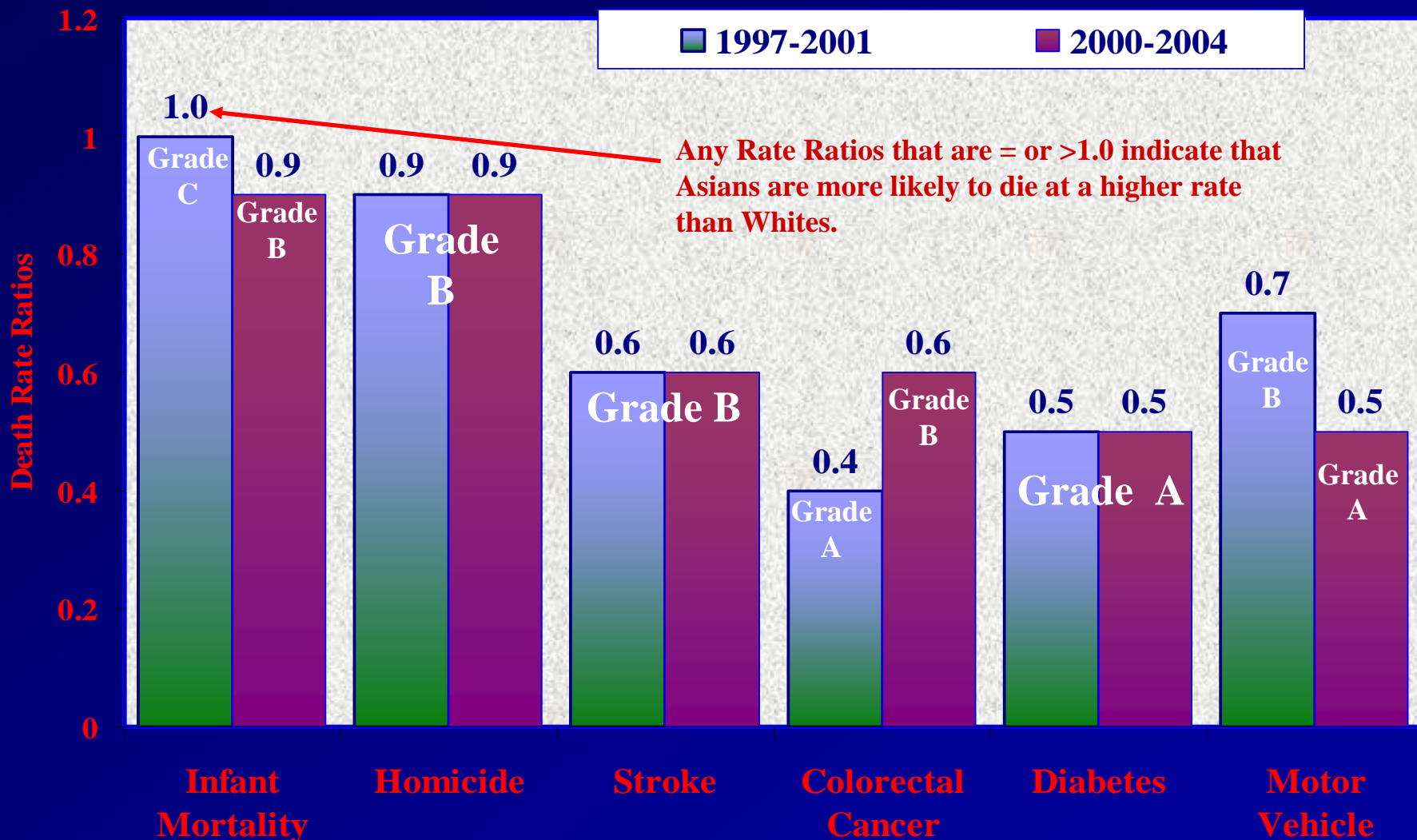
Any Rate Ratios that are >1.0 indicate that American Indians are more likely to die at a higher rate than Whites.



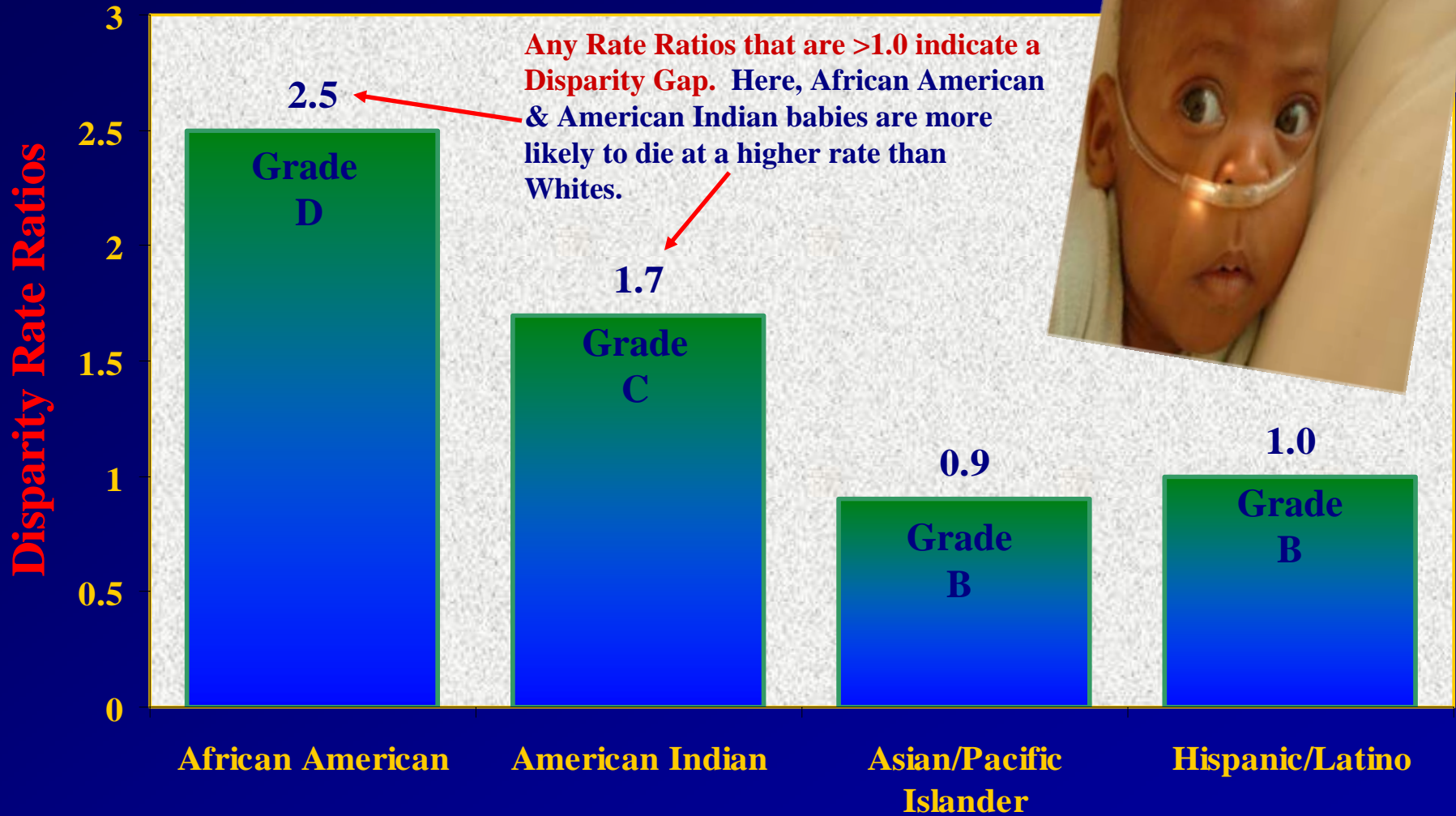
Hispanic/Latinos -vs- White Population Death Rate Ratios Over 7 Year Period



Asian/Pacific Islander -vs- White Population Death Rate Ratios Over 7 Year Period



NC Infant Mortality Disparity Ratios by Race/Ethnicity 2004



Health Status Contributing Factors...

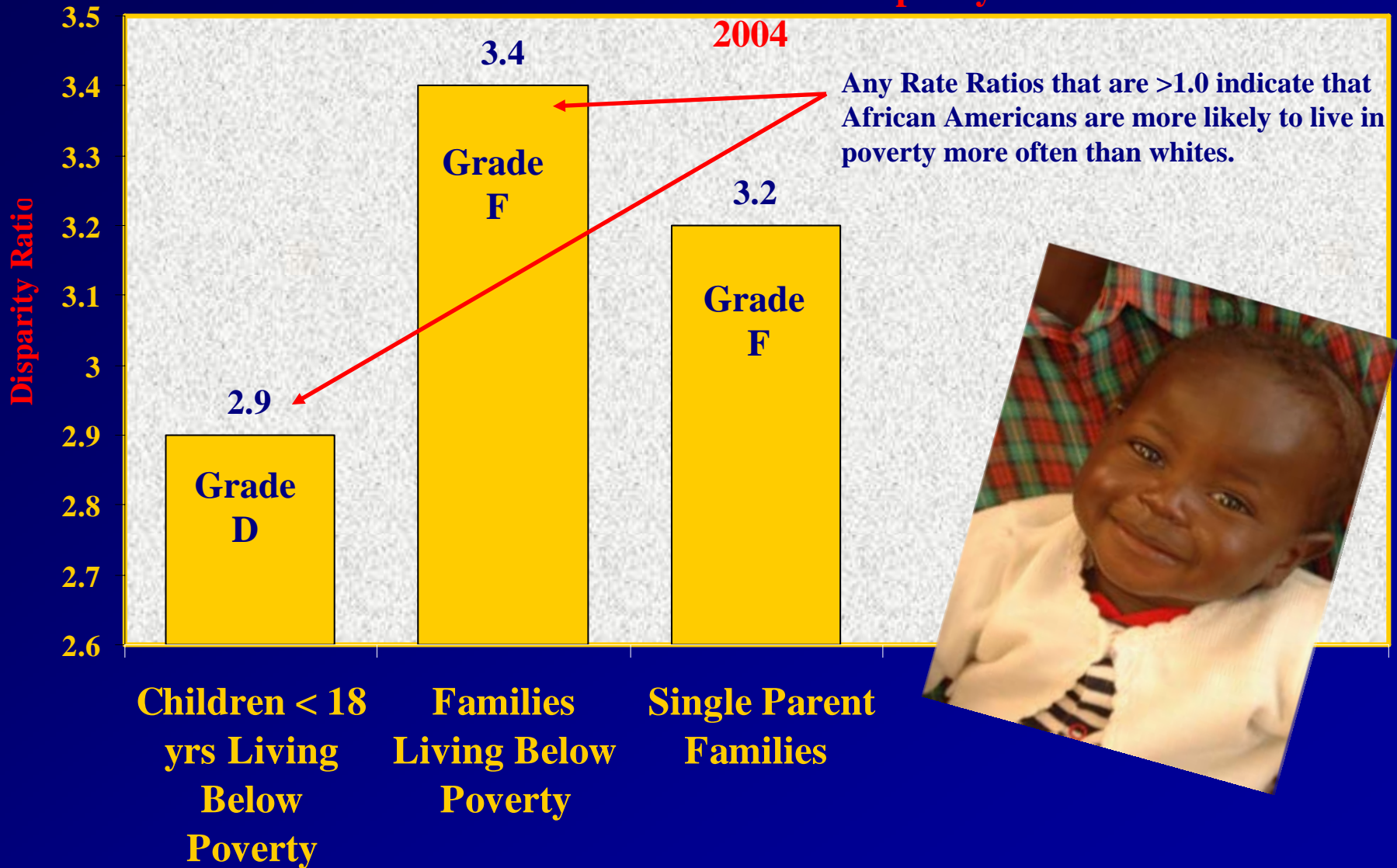


- ➔ Lifestyle Behaviors
- ➔ Socio-Cultural
- ➔ System Influences



Socioeconomic Indicators: Poverty Status & Family Structure

African American vs White Disparity Ratios



1 in 9 North Carolina Children Still Lack Health Insurance

**Insurance is critical to ensuring
Children have a healthy start in life**

2006 North Carolina Children's Index





“It is easier to raise a strong child than to repair broken men”
-Frederick Douglass-

Minority Health Advisory Council Legislative Priorities 2007-09

- Community Focused Eliminating Health Disparities Initiatives (CFEHDI)- \$3m/year
- Funds for Harm Reduction - \$550,000/year
- Funds for Interpreter Services -\$5m/year
- Funds for Diabetes Prevention- \$1m/year
- Diabetes Education Umbrella - \$165,000/year

Minority Health Advisory Council Legislative Priorities 2007-09

- \$.75 Increase in Cigarette Tax
- Issues Tabled for Feb 14th Meeting
 - Local Medicaid Match
 - Medicaid Reimbursement for Dentists
 - Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention
 - Infant Mortality

*On Behalf of the OMHHD Thank You for
Being a Partner in the Fight to
Eliminate Health Disparities!*



Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities

NC Department of Health and Human Services

1110 Navaho Drive

1906 Mail Service Center

(919) 431-1613

www.ncminorityhealth.org