

Overview

[The Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University](#) (GHELI) supports interdisciplinary education about world health through the production, curation, and dissemination of educational public goods. This exemplar work was a final project for “World Health: Challenges and Opportunities,” a General Education course at Harvard College taught by GHELI Faculty Director Sue J. Goldie. For this creative assessment designed with support from GHELI, students systematically analyze a societal health challenge they care about and create a “real world” product intended to influence policy or motivate change.

Abstract

An infographic highlighting the disproportionate maternal mortality among pregnant Black women in the U.S.

Artist

Aimee Ramirez (2022)

Caption

Maternal mortality is the death of a mother that occurs during pregnancy, during labor, or within a year postpartum. The maternal mortality rate (MMR) in the U.S. relatively high for a developed country, with 26.4 deaths per every 100,000 live births. However, the most shocking data comes from a comparison between the MMR of Black women compared to that of White women. The MMR for Black women in America is 59.3 (per 100,000 live births), more than double that of White women, who have an MMR of 24.2 (per 100,000 live births).

Artist Lens

This infographic is meant to bring awareness to a health problem plaguing women of color. Pregnant women of color suffer higher rates of complications and maternal mortality, especially Black women. Facing the intersection between racism and sexism, expectant Black mothers experience the most risk during their pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum. By providing specific data, and corresponding visuals, the reader can understand the magnitude of the problem. Expectant Black women are in a disproportionate amount of peril compared to their White counterparts. Multiple factors contribute to this dilemma, but before those are tackled, the problem itself must be recognized. No woman should have to be fearful of what should be a particular moment in their life.

[Watch Aimee Ramirez Reflection](#)

Media

Digital

Biased Maternal Mortality

Despite being a developed country, the U.S is experiencing increasing rates of maternal mortality with the majority of these deaths being among Black women.

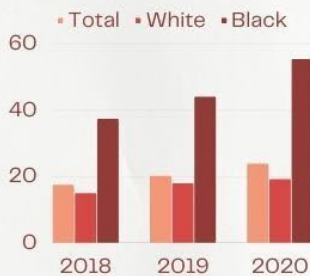
3 OUT OF 5 PREGNANCY-RELATED DEATHS ARE PREVENTABLE...



Yet Black women are 4 times more likely to have a pregnancy-related death.

DEATH DISPARITY

Black women have a maternal mortality rate that is 2.5 times higher than that of their white counterparts



Maternal deaths per 100,000 live births

According to the CDC, 2020

It starts before pregnancy

Black women report higher rates of mistreatment by healthcare providers compared to White women.

According to the Population Research and Policy Review, 2022

Comparing Population and Treatment

75%
Percentage of Black women treated in the same hospitals

25%
Percentage of hospitals treating the majority of pregnant Black women

TOP CAUSES OF DEATH IN BLACK MOTHERS

1. Preeclampsia/eclampsia
2. Postpartum cardiomyopathy
3. Embolism
4. Hemorrhage
5. Ectopic pregnancy