

II- Race in America Today : FACT FILE

1. Racial discrimination

In a 2024 Pew Research Center survey, **75% of Black adults said they had personally experienced racial discrimination**, either regularly or from time to time.

2. Perceptions differ

In a 2025 Pew survey, **70% of Black Americans** said Black people face *a lot* of discrimination in the US. The figure was **28% among White Americans**.

3. Wealth

According to the Federal Reserve's 2022 Survey of Consumer Finances, median wealth was approximately:

- White families: **\$285,000**
- Black families: **\$44,900**
- Hispanic families: **\$61,600**

The Federal Reserve stresses that these figures describe substantial racial disparities in wealth, while wealth differences had narrowed somewhat between 2019 and 2022.

4. The criminal justice system

At midyear 2024, the incarceration rate in local jails was **566 per 100,000 for Black residents**, compared with **149 per 100,000 for White residents**.

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Childbirth Is Deadlier for Black Families Even When They're Rich, Expansive Study Finds

By Claire Cain Miller, Sarah Kliff and Larry Buchanan Produced by Larry Buchanan and Shannon Lin, Feb. 12, 2023, *The New York Times*

In the United States, the richest mothers and their newborns are the most likely to survive the year after childbirth — except when the family is Black, according to a groundbreaking new study of two million California births. The richest Black mothers and their babies are twice as likely to die as the richest white mothers and their babies.

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Research has repeatedly shown that Black mothers and babies have the worst childbirth outcomes in the United States. But this study is novel because it's the first of its size to show how the risks of

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childbirth vary by both race and parental income, and how Black families, regardless of their socioeconomic status, are disproportionately affected.(...)

- 10 “It suggests that the well-documented Black-white gap in infant and maternal health that’s been discussed a lot in recent years is not just explained by differences in economic circumstances,” said Maya Rossin-Slater, an economist studying health policy at Stanford and an author of the study. “It suggests it’s much more structural.” (...)

- 15 The babies born to the richest Black women (the top tenth of earners) tended to have more risk factors, including being born premature or underweight, than those born to the richest white mothers — and more than those born to the poorest white mothers. It’s evidence that the harm to Black mothers and their babies, regardless of socioeconomic status, begins before childbirth.

“As a Black infant, you’re starting off with worse health, even those born into these wealthy families,” said Sarah Miller, a health economist at the University of Michigan.

- 20 There is clear evidence that Black patients experience racism in health care settings. In childbirth, mothers are treated differently and given different access to interventions. Black infants are more likely to survive if their doctors are Black. The experience of the tennis star Serena Williams — she had a pulmonary embolism after giving birth, yet said health care professionals did not address it at first — drew attention to how not even the most famous and wealthy Black women escape this
- 25 pattern.

But this data shows how the effects of racism on childbirth start long before people arrive at the hospital, researchers across disciplines say, and continue after they leave. The stress of experiencing racism; air pollution in Black communities; and inequitable access to paid family leave, for example, have all been found to affect the health of mothers and babies.

- 30 “Even when it’s not about the direct disrespect that’s going on between the patient and the care provider, there are many ways systemic racism makes its way into the well-being of a pregnant or birthing person,” said Dr. Amanda P. Williams, the clinical innovation adviser at the California Maternal Quality Care Collaborative.

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