



chapter 13

MORTALITY



Key Messages

- Childhood mortality is rare.
- Most deaths that occur within the first year of life are the result of conditions that are present at birth.
- Childhood mortality has declined over time.
- Most childhood deaths after the first year of life are due to injuries.

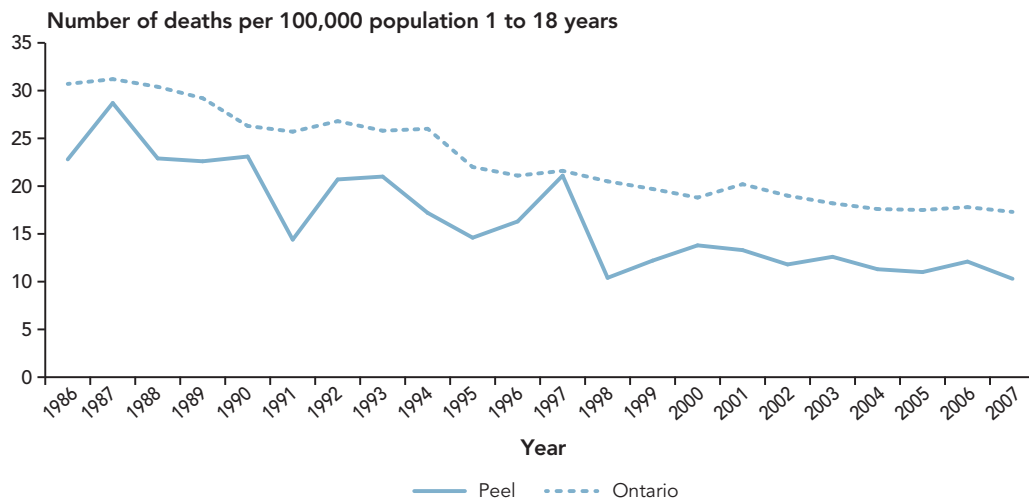
Fortunately, mortality is now a very rare occurrence during childhood. Rates of infant and child mortality have dramatically declined in Canada over the past 100 years due to improvements in prenatal and postnatal health care, the health status of mothers, living conditions, medical treatment and the determinants of health (e.g., income, education), as well as declines in injuries and incidence of infectious diseases.

The first year of life is the time when most deaths occur among children, usually as a

result of conditions which are present at birth or develop during the prenatal period. Infant mortality accounted for 76% of all deaths among children 18 years of age and younger in 2007.^c For more information about infant mortality, see *Born in Peel: Examining Maternal and Infant Health* (2010).

As seen nationally, over the past two decades there has been a decline in the mortality rate for children and youth in Peel and Ontario (Figure 13.1).

Figure 13.1
All-Cause Mortality Rate among Children,
Peel and Ontario, 1986-2007



Sources: Ontario Mortality Database 1986-2007, IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
Population Estimates 1986-2007, IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.



Perinatal and congenital factors are the most common cause of death among children aged one to nine years (Table 13.1). Deaths among youth are most commonly the result of motor vehicle collisions and intentional injuries (e.g., suicide, assault).

Table 13.1
Leading Causes of Death among Children by Age Group,
Peel, 2003-2007 Combined

Age Group (years)	Leading Causes of Death	Number of Deaths	Age-specific Rate per 100,000 population
1 to 9	Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	7	1.0
	Cancer of the meninges, brain and other parts of the central nervous system	6	0.8
	Remaining leading causes not releasable due to small numbers	NR	NR
	All causes 1 to 9 years	64	8.9
10 to 19	Motor vehicle collisions	32	3.7
	Assault	13	1.5
	Suicide	12	1.4
	Cancer of the lymphoid, haematophoietic and related tissues	9	1.0
	Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	7	0.8
	All causes 10 to 19 years	137	15.9

NR- not releasable due to small numbers.

Sources: Ontario Mortality Database 2003-2007, IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
Population Estimates 2003-2007, IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.