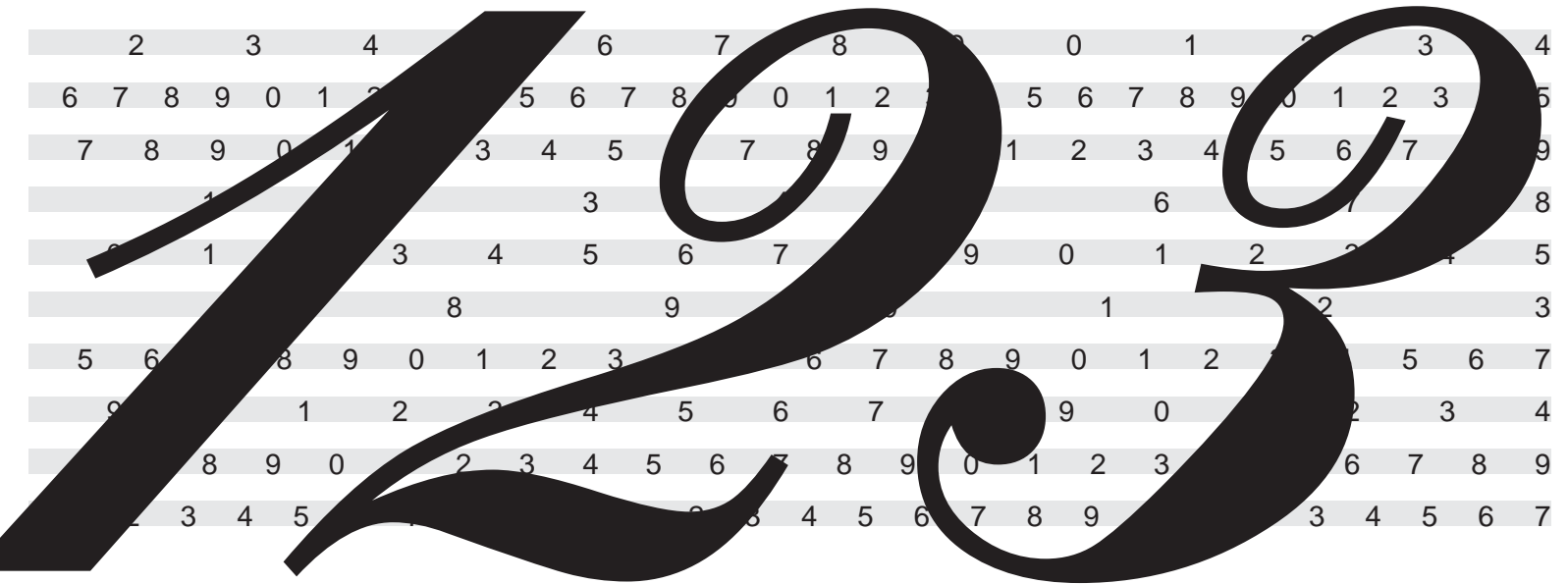


Trends in Vital Events



VITAL STATISTICS INFORMATION BOX

ON A TYPICAL DAY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA IN 2003

110 LIVE BIRTHS OCCURRED IN THE PROVINCE TO B.C. RESIDENTS:

- 56 males and 54 females were born
- 4 were born to teenage mothers
- 22 were born to mothers aged 35 years old or more
- 3 were multiple births
- 31 were cesarean deliveries
- 6 were low birth weight babies
- 8 were pre-term
- 57 live births involved maternal complications
- 37 babies had perinatal complications
- 8 stillbirths every 10 days

80 DEATHS OCCURRED IN THE PROVINCE TO B.C. RESIDENTS:

- 41 males and 39 females died
- 63 deaths were seniors aged 65 years old or more including
 - 38 deaths aged 80 years old or more
- 7 deaths every 10 days were children less than 15 years old including
 - 4 infant deaths every 10 days
- 27 deaths were due to diseases of the circulatory system including
 - 19 from cardiovascular disease
 - 6 from cerebrovascular disease
- 22 deaths were due to malignant neoplasms (cancer) including
 - 6 from malignant neoplasm of trachea and lung
 - 2 from malignant neoplasm of colon and rectum
 - 2 from malignant neoplasm of female breast
- 8 deaths were due to diseases of the respiratory system including
 - 3 from pneumonia and influenza
 - 3 from chronic pulmonary disease
- 3 deaths every 10 days were due to HIV disease
- 4 deaths were from external causes including
 - 1 suicide
 - 1 motor vehicle accident
 - 1 accidental fall
- 5 deaths were alcohol-related:
 - 1 directly due to alcohol
 - 4 indirectly due to alcohol
- 1 death was drug-induced
- 16 deaths were attributed to smoking

60 MARRIAGES WERE SOLEMNIZED IN B.C.:

- 35 were civil ceremonies and 25 were performed by religious representatives
- 37 marriages were to couples where both parties were marrying for the first time
- 2 marriages every 10 days were to couples where both parties were teenagers

2003 in Context

Historical information on the vital statistics of the British Columbia population is presented in this section. This allows readers to examine the changes in annual live birth, stillbirth, death, and marriage rates and to put current year statistics in the larger context. In addition the section highlights certain features of this report that are of special interest.

Since 1950, as the population of British Columbia tripled, demographic and social changes had substantial impacts on vital events. Provincial rates for live births, stillbirths, and marriages in 2003 have fallen to about half the rates seen in 1950, while mortality rates declined by nearly a third. The most striking change was a dramatic decline in infant mortality.

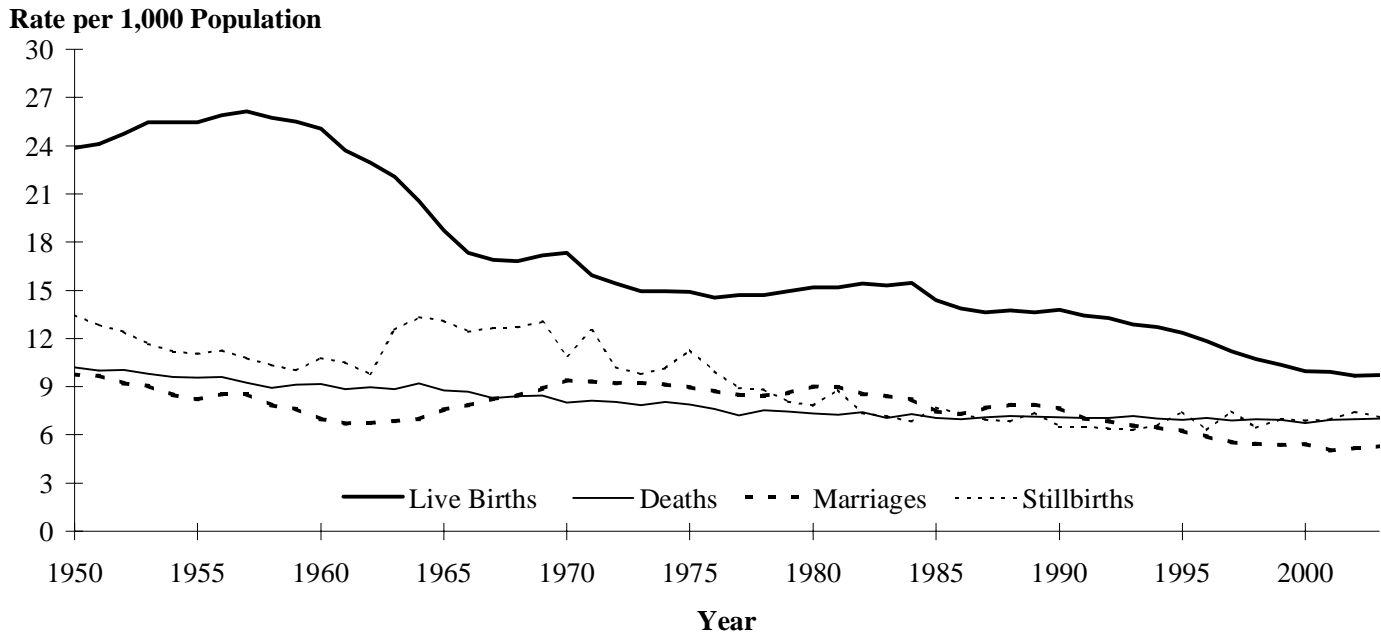
- In 2003, there were 40,285 live births in the province to B.C. residents. The number of live births increased by 385 births from 39,900 in 2002. The 2003 birth rate was 9.72 live births per 1,000 population, almost the same as the 2002 rate of 9.70. Live birth rates in 2002 and 2003 were the lowest to date.
- There were 29,108 deaths of British Columbia residents in the province in 2003, up 401 from the previous year (28,707). The crude death rate was 7.02 deaths per 1,000 population in 2003 and 6.98 in 2002.
- A total of 21,975 marriages were solemnized in the province in 2003, an increase from 21,261 marriages in 2002. The marriage rate increased in 2003 to 5.30 per 1,000 population, up from 5.17 in 2002. The number of marriages decreased each year from 1994 to 1999; marriage rates showed a downward trend from 1988 to 1999.
- There were 289 stillbirths to B.C. residents in 2003, a decrease from 299 in 2002. The stillbirth rate was 7.12 per 1,000 total births (live births and stillbirths) in 2003. Stillbirth rates have fluctuated between 6.31 and 7.49 in the last decade.
- In 2003, the 40,285 live births and 29,108 deaths in the province produced a rate of natural population growth of 2.7 per 1,000 population, unchanged from 2002. The 2002 and 2003 rates of natural population growth for B.C. were the first below 3.0 per 1,000 population and the lowest since 1950.
- The Total Fertility Rate for B.C. was 1,388 births per 1,000 women of child bearing age (15 to 44 years of age), up slightly from 1,369 in 2002.
- In 2003, there were 163 infant deaths (age at death less than one year) in the province, for an infant mortality rate of 4.05 per 1,000 live births. This is a decrease from 178 infant deaths and an infant mortality rate of 4.46 per 1,000 live births in 2002. The smallest numbers and lowest rates of infant mortality occurred in 1999 to 2000.
- The average age of people getting married has climbed steadily since 1977. The average age of males who got married in B.C. in 2003 was 35.6 years old, females averaged 32.9 years old.

TABLE 1
LIVE BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES AND STILLBIRTHS
BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1950–2003

Year	Mid-year Population	Live Births		Deaths		Marriages		Stillbirths	
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
1950	1,137,000	27,116	23.85	11,581	10.19	11,110	9.77	369	13.43
1951	1,165,210	28,077	24.10	11,638	9.99	11,272	9.67	365	12.83
1952	1,205,000	29,827	24.75	12,080	10.02	11,081	9.20	375	12.42
1953	1,248,000	31,746	25.44	12,218	9.79	11,298	9.05	375	11.67
1954	1,295,000	32,946	25.44	12,414	9.59	10,991	8.49	373	11.19
1955	1,342,000	34,138	25.44	12,816	9.55	11,011	8.20	381	11.04
1956	1,398,464	36,241	25.91	13,415	9.59	11,950	8.55	413	11.27
1957	1,482,000	38,744	26.14	13,711	9.25	12,620	8.52	422	10.77
1958	1,538,000	39,577	25.73	13,741	8.93	12,094	7.86	414	10.35
1959	1,567,000	39,971	25.51	14,336	9.15	11,910	7.60	404	10.01
1960	1,602,000	40,116	25.04	14,696	9.17	11,203	6.99	437	10.78
1961	1,629,100	38,591	23.69	14,403	8.84	10,935	6.71	410	10.51
1962	1,660,000	38,128	22.97	14,912	8.98	11,196	6.74	377	9.79
1963	1,699,000	37,478	22.06	15,029	8.85	11,677	6.87	476	12.54
1964	1,745,000	35,897	20.57	16,051	9.20	12,158	6.97	485	13.33
1965	1,797,000	33,669	18.74	15,784	8.78	13,639	7.59	447	13.10
1966	1,873,674	32,502	17.35	16,290	8.69	14,682	7.84	409	12.43
1967	1,945,000	32,899	16.91	16,170	8.31	16,026	8.24	422	12.66
1968	2,003,000	33,687	16.82	16,828	8.40	16,914	8.44	433	12.69
1969	2,060,000	35,383	17.18	17,377	8.44	18,284	8.88	468	13.05
1970	2,128,000	36,861	17.32	17,020	8.00	20,020	9.41	407	10.92
1971	2,184,620	34,852	15.95	17,783	8.14	20,389	9.33	442	12.52
1972	2,241,400	34,563	15.42	18,021	8.04	20,659	9.22	356	10.20
1973	2,302,400	34,352	14.92	18,095	7.86	21,303	9.25	339	9.77
1974	2,375,700	35,450	14.92	19,177	8.07	21,734	9.15	364	10.16
1975	2,433,200	36,281	14.91	19,151	7.87	21,824	8.97	414	11.28
1976	2,466,610	35,848	14.53	18,788	7.62	21,536	8.73	361	9.97
1977	2,493,800	36,691	14.71	18,021	7.23	21,156	8.48	330	8.91
1978	2,530,100	37,231	14.72	19,057	7.53	21,388	8.45	331	8.81
1979	2,571,200	38,432	14.95	19,204	7.47	22,087	8.59	313	8.08
1980	2,640,100	40,104	15.19	19,371	7.34	23,830	9.03	316	7.82
1981	2,744,470	41,679	15.19	19,857	7.24	24,694	9.00	371	8.82
1982	2,787,700	42,942	15.40	20,704	7.43	23,831	8.55	317	7.33
1983	2,813,800	43,047	15.30	19,895	7.07	23,692	8.42	310	7.15
1984	2,847,700	44,040	15.47	20,781	7.30	23,394	8.22	303	6.83
1985	2,990,000	42,989	14.38	21,131	7.07	22,270	7.45	333	7.69
1986	3,004,074	41,711	13.88	21,007	6.99	21,843	7.27	308	7.33
1987	3,050,141	41,610	13.64	21,615	7.09	23,417	7.68	291	6.94
1988	3,115,665	42,854	13.75	22,357	7.18	24,514	7.87	295	6.84
1989	3,198,547	43,591	13.63	22,781	7.12	25,177	7.87	324	7.38
1990	3,291,379	45,344	13.78	23,414	7.11	25,226	7.66	298	6.53
1991	3,373,399	45,344	13.44	23,816	7.06	23,665	7.02	298	6.53
1992	3,470,307	46,038	13.27	24,454	7.05	23,762	6.85	297	6.41
1993	3,571,525	45,956	12.87	25,602	7.17	23,478	6.57	292	6.31
1994	3,681,750	46,830	12.72	25,829	7.02	23,772	6.46	311	6.60
1995	3,784,008	46,697	12.34	26,224	6.93	23,632	6.25	350	7.44
1996	3,882,043	45,956	11.84	27,389	7.06	22,882	5.89	292	6.31
1997	3,959,698	44,397	11.21	27,258	6.88	21,883	5.53	335	7.49
1998	3,997,113	42,866	10.72	27,805	6.96	21,778	5.45	278	6.44
1999	4,028,280	41,747	10.36	27,862	6.92	21,628	5.37	294	6.99
2000	4,060,133	40,492	9.97	27,311	6.73	22,099	5.44	281	6.89
2001	4,078,447	40,392	9.90	28,231	6.92	20,571	5.04	283	6.96
2002	4,114,981	39,900	9.70	28,707	6.98	21,261	5.17	299	7.44
2003	4,146,580	40,285	9.72	29,108	7.02	21,975	5.30	289	7.12

Note: Rates shown for live brths, deaths and marriages are crude rates per 1,000 population. Stillbirth rate is per 1,000 total births (live births plus stillbirths). The definition of a stillbirth was revised in 1963 and 1986 (see Glossary). Population information from BC STATS, Ministry of Management Services. Above information includes late registrations and amendments. Gender unknown included. Non-residents are excluded from all data except marriages.

FIGURE 3
**CRUDE RATES OF LIVE BIRTHS, DEATHS,
 MARRIAGES AND STILLBIRTHS**
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1950–2003



Note: Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total births

HIGHLIGHTS TO TABLE 1/FIGURE 3

Since 1950, as the population of British Columbia tripled, demographic and social changes had substantial impacts on vital events. Provincial rates for live births, stillbirths, and marriages in 2003 have fallen to about half the rates seen in 1950, while mortality rates declined by nearly a third. The most striking change was a dramatic decline in infant mortality.

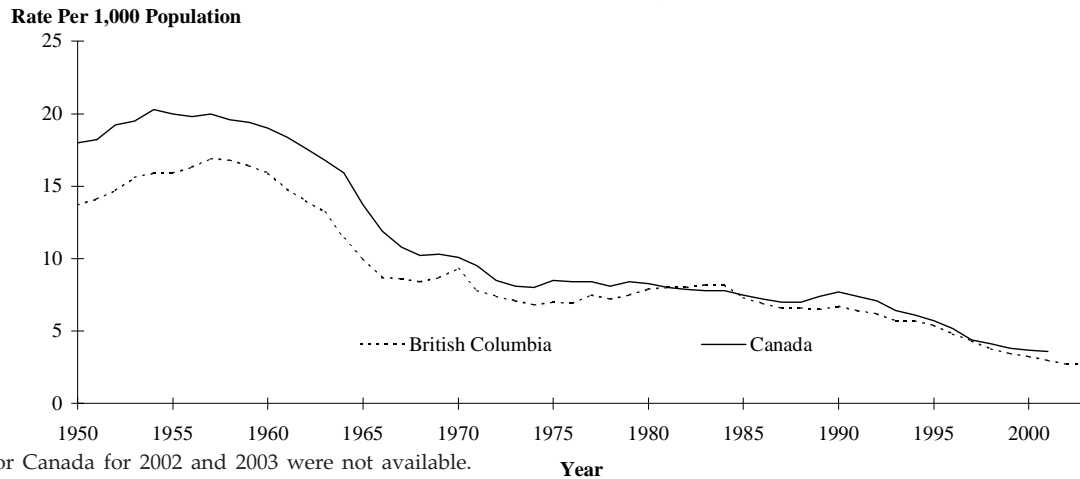
- In 2003, there were 40,285 live births in the province to B.C. residents. The number of live births increased by 385 births from 39,900 in 2002. The 2003 birth rate was 9.72 live births per 1,000 population, almost the same as the 2002 rate of 9.70. Live birth rates in 2002 and 2003 were the lowest to date.
- There were 29,108 deaths of British Columbia residents in the province in 2003, up 401 from the previous year (28,707). The crude death rate was 7.02 deaths per 1,000 population in 2003 and 6.98 in 2002.
- A total of 21,975 marriages were solemnized in the province in 2003, an increase from 21,261 marriages in 2002. The marriage rate increased in 2003 to 5.30 per 1,000 population, up from 5.17 in 2002. The number of marriages decreased each year from 1994 to 1999; marriage rates showed a downward trend from 1988 to 1999. Marriage statistics in this report include all marriages that took place in the province, including those where one or both parties were non-B.C. residents.
- There were 289 stillbirths to B.C. residents in 2003, a decrease from 299 in 2002. The stillbirth rate was 7.12 per 1,000 total births (live births and stillbirths) in 2003. Stillbirth rates have fluctuated between 6.31 and 7.49 in the last decade.

TABLE 2
NATURAL POPULATION INCREASES
 BRITISH COLUMBIA AND CANADA, 1950–2003

Year	Rate		Year	Rate	
	B.C.	Canada		B.C.	Canada
1950	13.7	18.0	1977	7.5	8.4
1951	14.1	18.2	1978	7.2	8.1
1952	14.7	19.2	1979	7.5	8.4
1953	15.6	19.5	1980	7.9	8.3
1954	15.9	20.3	1981	8.0	8.0
1955	15.9	20.0	1982	8.0	7.9
1956	16.3	19.8	1983	8.2	7.8
1957	16.9	20.0	1984	8.2	7.8
1958	16.8	19.6	1985	7.3	7.5
1959	16.4	19.4	1986	6.9	7.2
1960	15.9	19.0	1987	6.6	7.0
1961	14.8	18.4	1988	6.6	7.0
1962	14.0	17.6	1989	6.5	7.4
1963	13.2	16.8	1990	6.7	7.7
1964	11.4	15.9	1991	6.4	7.4
1965	10.0	13.7	1992	6.2	7.1
1966	8.7	11.9	1993	5.7	6.4
1967	8.6	10.8	1994	5.7	6.1
1968	8.4	10.2	1995	5.4	5.7
1969	8.7	10.3	1996	4.8	5.2
1970	9.3	10.1	1997	4.3	4.4
1971	7.8	9.5	1998	3.8	4.1
1972	7.4	8.5	1999	3.5	3.8
1973	7.1	8.1	2000	3.2	3.7
1974	6.8	8.0	2001	3.0	3.6
1975	7.0	8.5	2002	2.7	*
1976	6.9	8.4	2003	2.7	*

Note: Rates shown are rates of natural population increase per 1,000 population. Canadian rates from Statistics Canada. *Rates for Canada were not available. Non-residents are excluded.

FIGURE 4
NATURAL POPULATION INCREASES
 BRITISH COLUMBIA AND CANADA, 1950–2003



Note: Rates for Canada for 2002 and 2003 were not available.

HIGHLIGHTS TO TABLE 2/FIGURE 4

The rate of natural population growth is the birth rate minus the death rate.

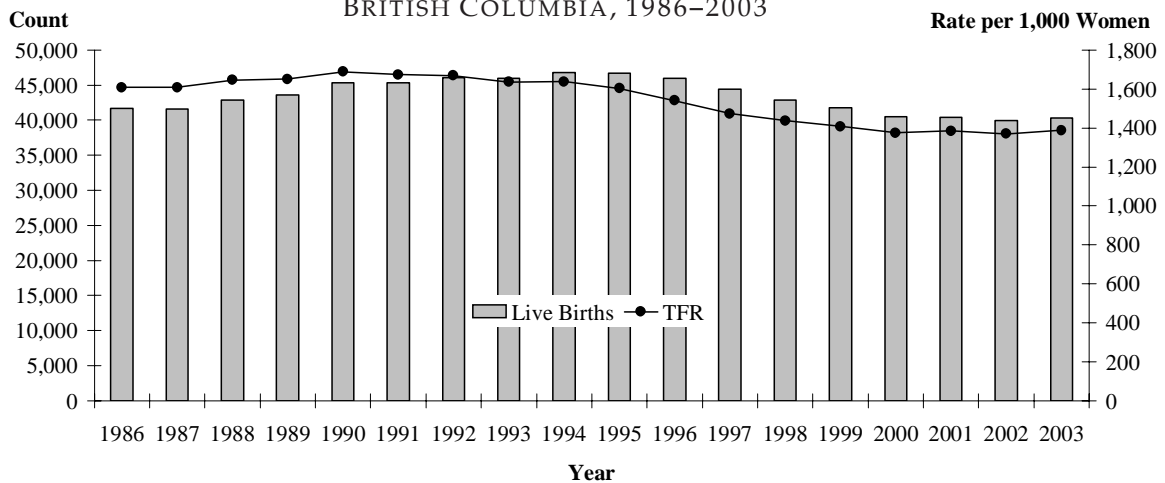
- In 2003, the 40,285 live births and 29,108 deaths in the province produced a rate of natural population growth of 2.7 per 1,000 population, unchanged from 2002.
- The pattern of natural population growth rates follows the trends seen in the live birth rates. After high rates in the 1950s, natural population growth rates decreased rapidly in the 1960s as birth and death rates both declined. Since the mid 1980s, the small but steady decline in the natural population growth rate resulted from declining birth rates and relatively stable death rates. The 2002 and 2003 rates of natural population growth for B.C. were the first below 3.0 per 1,000 population and the lowest since 1950.
- Except for four years from 1981 to 1984, the B.C. rate of natural population growth has been consistently below the Canadian rate each year.

TABLE 3
TOTAL FERTILITY RATES
BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1950–2003

Year	Total Fertility		Year	Total Fertility	
	Rate	Live Births		Rate	Live Births
1950	3,074	27,116	1977	1,636	36,691
1951	3,201	28,077	1978	1,620	37,231
1952	3,327	29,827	1979	1,721	38,432
1953	3,542	31,746	1980	1,716	40,104
1954	3,656	32,946	1981	1,718	41,679
1955	3,748	34,138	1982	1,749	42,942
1956	3,875	36,241	1983	1,751	43,047
1957	3,921	38,744	1984	1,781	44,040
1958	3,900	39,577	1985	1,642	42,989
1959	3,958	39,971	1986	1,608	41,711
1960	3,949	40,116	1987	1,608	41,610
1961	3,785	38,591	1988	1,646	42,854
1962	3,709	38,128	1989	1,651	43,591
1963	3,564	37,478	1990	1,688	45,344
1964	3,284	35,897	1991	1,673	45,344
1965	2,710	33,669	1992	1,669	46,038
1966	2,442	32,502	1993	1,636	45,956
1967	2,307	32,899	1994	1,637	46,830
1968	2,228	33,687	1995	1,603	46,697
1969	2,223	35,383	1996	1,540	45,956
1970	2,185	36,861	1997	1,473	44,397
1971	1,994	34,852	1998	1,437	42,866
1972	1,890	34,563	1999	1,408	41,747
1973	1,751	34,352	2000	1,374	40,492
1974	1,735	35,450	2001	1,385	40,392
1975	1,682	36,281	2002	1,369	39,900
1976	1,618	35,848	2003	1,388	40,285

Note: Total Fertility Rate – Sum of age-specific fertility rates multiplied by the number of years in each age group (see Glossary for definition). Rates per 1,000 women age 15 to 44. Non-residents are excluded.

FIGURE 5
TOTAL FERTILITY RATES AND NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS
BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986–2003

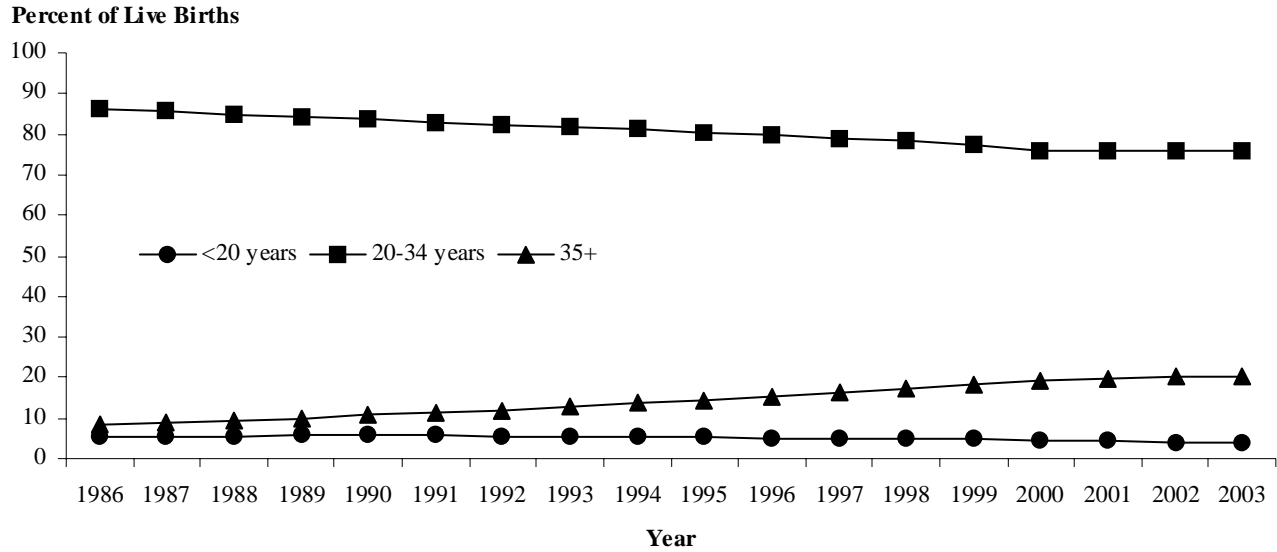


HIGHLIGHTS TO TABLE 3/FIGURE 5

The total fertility rate (TFR) is the number of births 1,000 women can expect over their childbearing years, based on current age specific fertility.

- The Total Fertility Rate for B.C. was 1,388 births per 1,000 women of child bearing age (15 to 44 years of age), up slightly from 1,369 in 2002.
- The average woman in 2003 would have 1.4 live births in her lifetime, based on the TFR.
- The total fertility rate is on a long term downward trend (statistically significant at the 95% level).

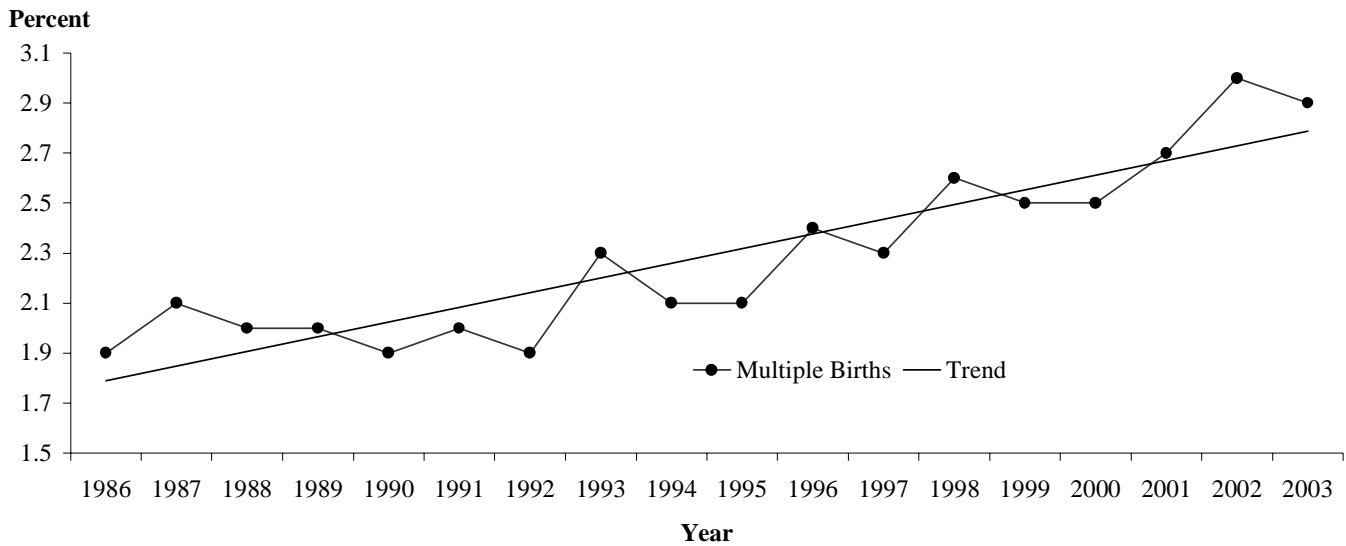
FIGURE 6
LIVE BIRTHS BY AGE OF MOTHER
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986–2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 6

- Mothers in B.C. are getting older. Mothers over the age of 35 (elderly gravida) comprised 20.3% of all mothers in 2003, the highest percentage ever for this group. In contrast teen mothers made up 3.7 per cent of all mothers, the lowest percentage ever for this group.
- The long term trend is for a higher percentage of elderly gravida and a lower percentage for teen mothers. Both trends are statistically significant at the 95% level.

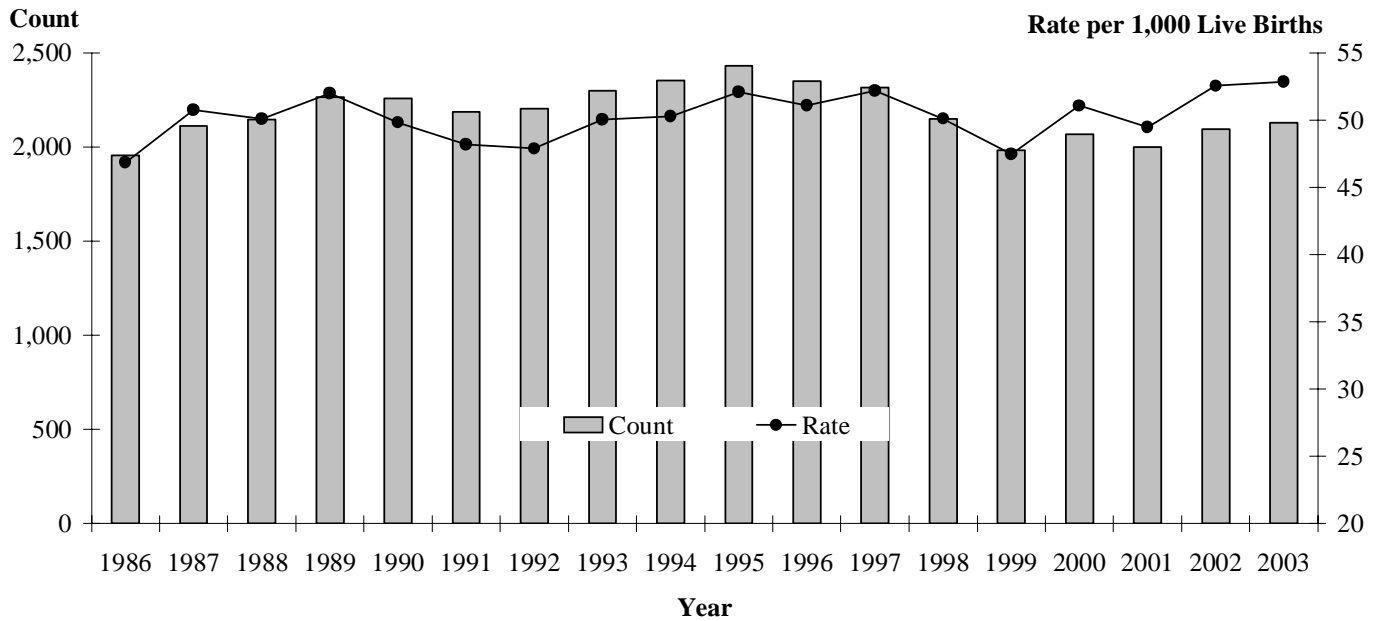
FIGURE 7
MULTIPLE BIRTHS AS A PERCENTAGE OF LIVE BIRTHS
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986–2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 7

- Multiple births as a percentage of total live births have increased from 1.9% in 1986 to 2.9% in 2003. The upward trend is statistically significant at the 95% level.

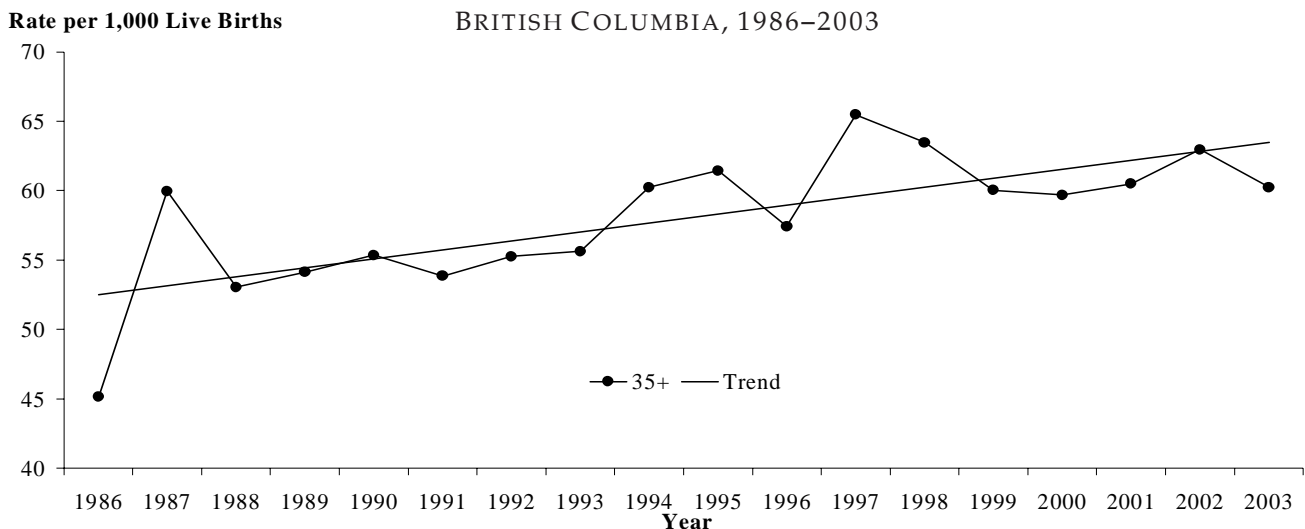
FIGURE 8
LOW BIRTH WEIGHT LIVE BIRTHS
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986–2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 8

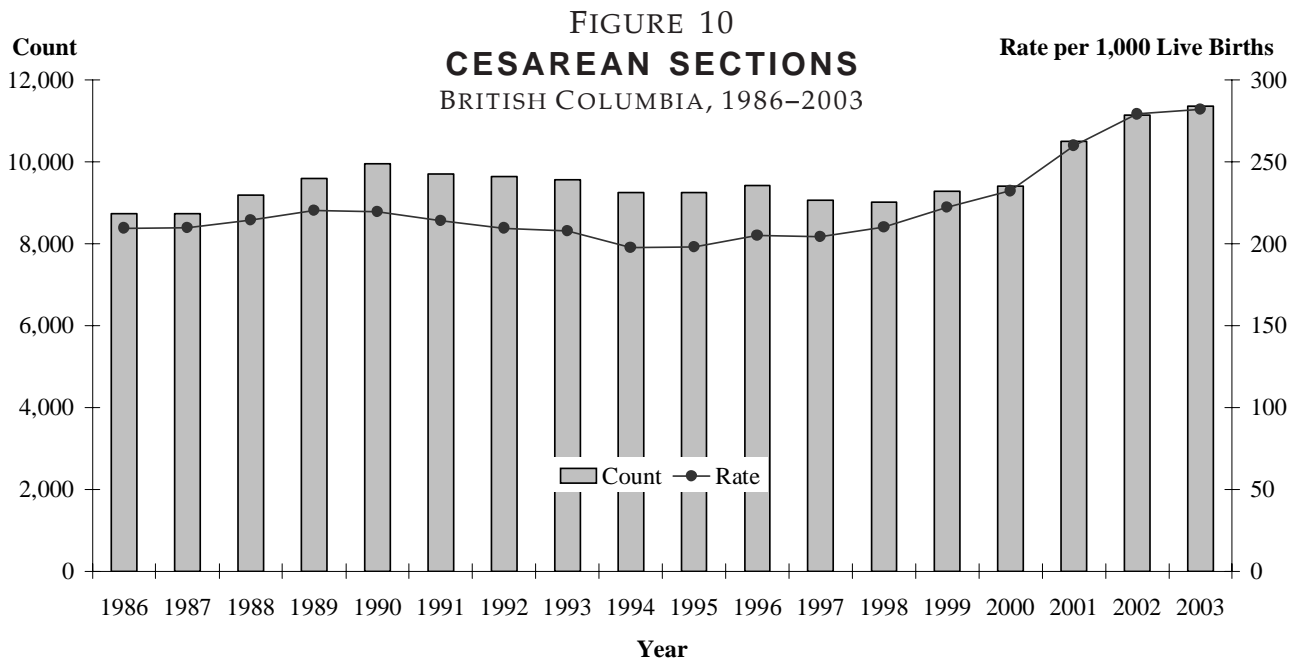
- There were 2,129 babies born weighing less than 2,500 grams in 2003 compared to 2,096 in 2002. The rate increased to 52.85 per 1,000 live births in 2003 from 52.53 per 1,000 live births in 2002.
- There is no statistically significant trend in the rate of low birth weight babies over the period 1986-2003.

FIGURE 9
LOW BIRTH WEIGHT LIVE BIRTHS FOR MOTHERS AGED 35+
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986–2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 9

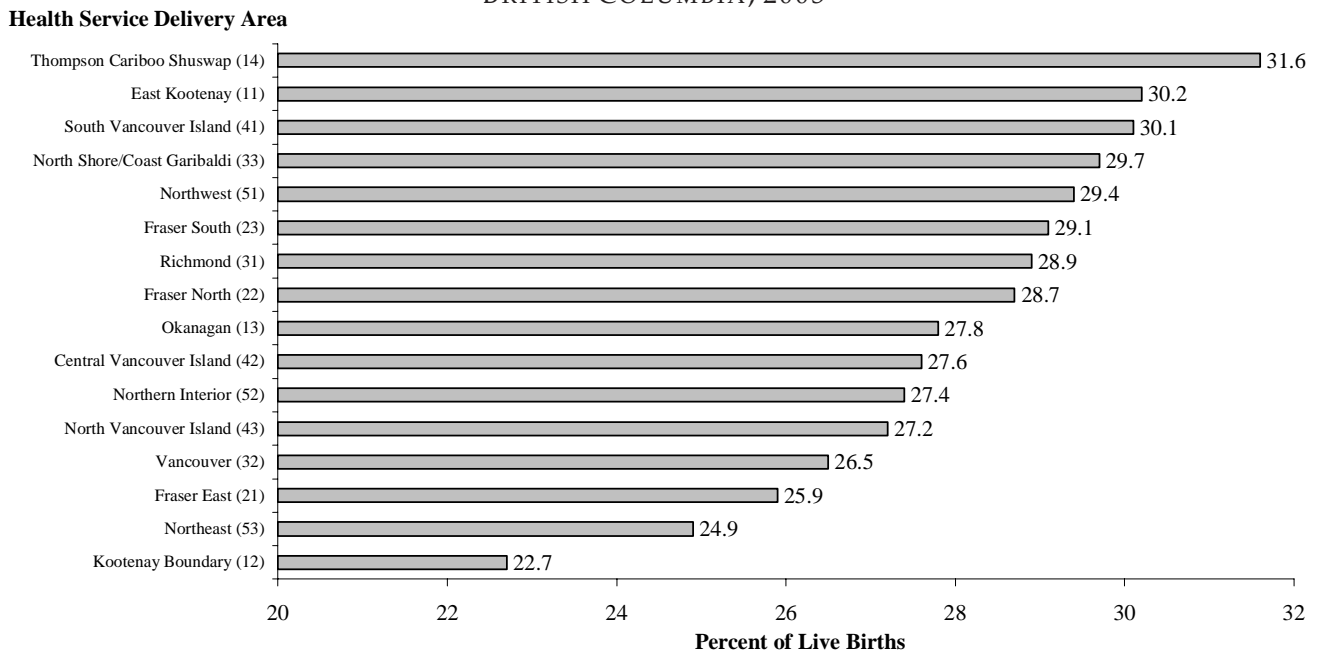
- In 2003 there were 60.23 low birth weight babies born for every 1,000 live births by an older mother, down slightly from 62.96 in 2002.
- There is an upward trend in the percentage of low birth weight babies born to older mothers (statistically significant at the 95% level).



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 10

- There were 11,367 live births delivered by cesarean section in 2003, up from 11,143 in 2002. The rate of c-sections increased from 279.27 per 1,000 live births in 2002 to 282.16 per 1,000 live births to 2003.
- The upward trend in the rate of c-sections since 1986 is statistically significant (at the 95% level).

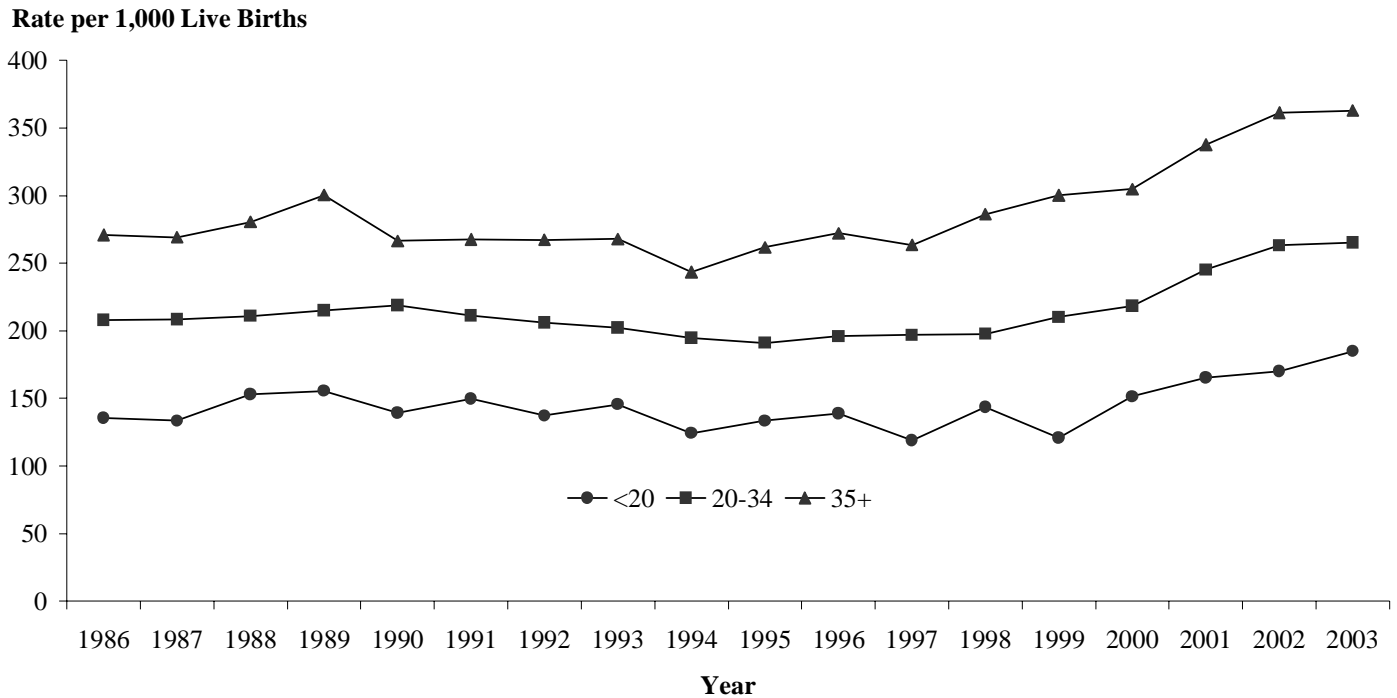
FIGURE 11
CESAREAN SECTIONS BY HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY AREA
BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 11

- The rate of c-section deliveries varies considerably across the province, ranging from a low of 22.7 per cent of live births in B.C. for mothers whose usual residence is HSDA 12 East Kootenay to a high of 31.6 per cent of live births for mothers whose usual residence is in 14 Thompson Cariboo Shuswap. B.C. residents, especially those living in East Kootenay and Northeast, may give birth in Alberta hospitals, resulting in an undercount of live births and c-section rates for these HSDAs.

FIGURE 12
CESAREAN SECTIONS BY AGE OF MOTHER
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986–2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 12

- Province wide, the rate of c-section births is much higher for mothers aged 35 or older (362.86 per 1,000 live births in 2003) than for other age groups (184.89 per 1,000 and 265.15 per 1,000 live births for the <20 and 20-34 mothers respectively). The rate for teen mothers is the lowest of the three categories considered.
- The upward trend is statistically significant (at the 95% level) for mothers aged 20-34 and mothers aged 35 or older only. All ages show some evidence that c-section rates are accelerating in recent years.

TABLE 4
INFANT MORTALITY
BRITISH COLUMBIA AND CANADA, 1965–2003

Year	British Columbia Age at Death (in Days)								Canada	
	0–6 Days		0–27 Days		28–364 Days		N.S.	Total		Rate
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate		Number	Rate	
1965	415	12.33	453	13.45	227	6.74	3	683	20.29	24.0
1966	435	13.38	494	15.20	263	8.09	4	761	23.41	23.1
1967	429	13.04	470	14.29	218	6.63	1	689	20.94	22.0
1968	375	11.13	438	13.00	214	6.35	4	656	19.47	21.0
1969	329	9.30	374	10.57	199	5.62	-	573	16.19	19.0
1970	369	10.01	416	11.29	193	5.24	2	611	16.58	19.0
1971	409	11.74	450	12.91	185	5.31	-	635	18.22	17.5
1972	322	9.32	373	10.79	195	5.64	1	569	16.46	17.0
1973	317	9.23	363	10.57	185	5.39	3	551	16.04	16.0
1974	310	8.74	348	9.82	196	5.53	2	546	15.40	15.0
1975	278	7.66	321	8.85	169	4.66	1	491	13.53	14.3
1976	292	8.15	324	9.04	152	4.24	2	478	13.33	13.5
1977	246	6.70	276	7.52	200	5.45	-	476	12.97	12.4
1978	245	6.58	286	7.68	178	4.78	-	464	12.46	12.0
1979	196	5.10	239	6.22	167	4.35	-	406	10.56	10.9
1980	188	4.69	235	5.86	186	4.64	-	421	10.50	10.4
1981	232	5.57	259	6.21	140	3.36	3	402	9.65	9.6
1982	217	5.05	251	5.85	150	3.49	-	401	9.34	9.1
1983	193	4.48	212	4.92	145	3.37	2	359	8.34	8.5
1984	184	4.18	205	4.65	150	3.41	1	356	8.08	8.1
1985	180	4.19	198	4.61	133	3.09	-	331	7.70	8.0
1986	164	3.93	195	4.68	147	3.52	-	342	8.20	7.9
1987	157	3.77	193	4.64	160	3.85	-	353	8.48	7.3
1988	191	4.46	220	5.13	136	3.17	-	356	8.31	7.2
1989	186	4.27	215	4.93	138	3.17	-	353	8.10	7.3
1990	182	4.01	220	4.85	112	2.47	-	332	7.32	6.8
1991	140	3.09	164	3.62	126	2.78	-	290	6.40	6.4
1992	150	3.26	170	3.69	104	2.26	-	274	5.95	6.1
1993	117	2.55	135	2.94	110	2.39	-	245	5.33	6.3
1994	163	3.48	186	3.97	90	1.92	-	276	5.89	6.3
1995	157	3.36	180	3.85	94	2.01	-	274	5.87	6.1
1996	131	2.85	158	3.44	68	1.48	-	226	4.92	5.6
1997	125	2.82	146	3.29	56	1.26	-	202	4.55	5.5
1998	94	2.19	114	2.66	60	1.40	-	174	4.06	5.3
1999	86	2.06	107	2.56	51	1.22	-	158	3.78	5.3
2000	84	2.07	105	2.59	45	1.11	-	150	3.70	5.3
2001	103	2.55	126	3.12	36	0.89	-	162	4.01	5.2
2002	97	2.43	124	3.11	54	1.35	-	178	4.46	*
2003	102	2.53	118	2.93	45	1.12	-	163	4.05	*

Note: Rates per 1,000 live births in the specified year.

N.S. – Not stated.

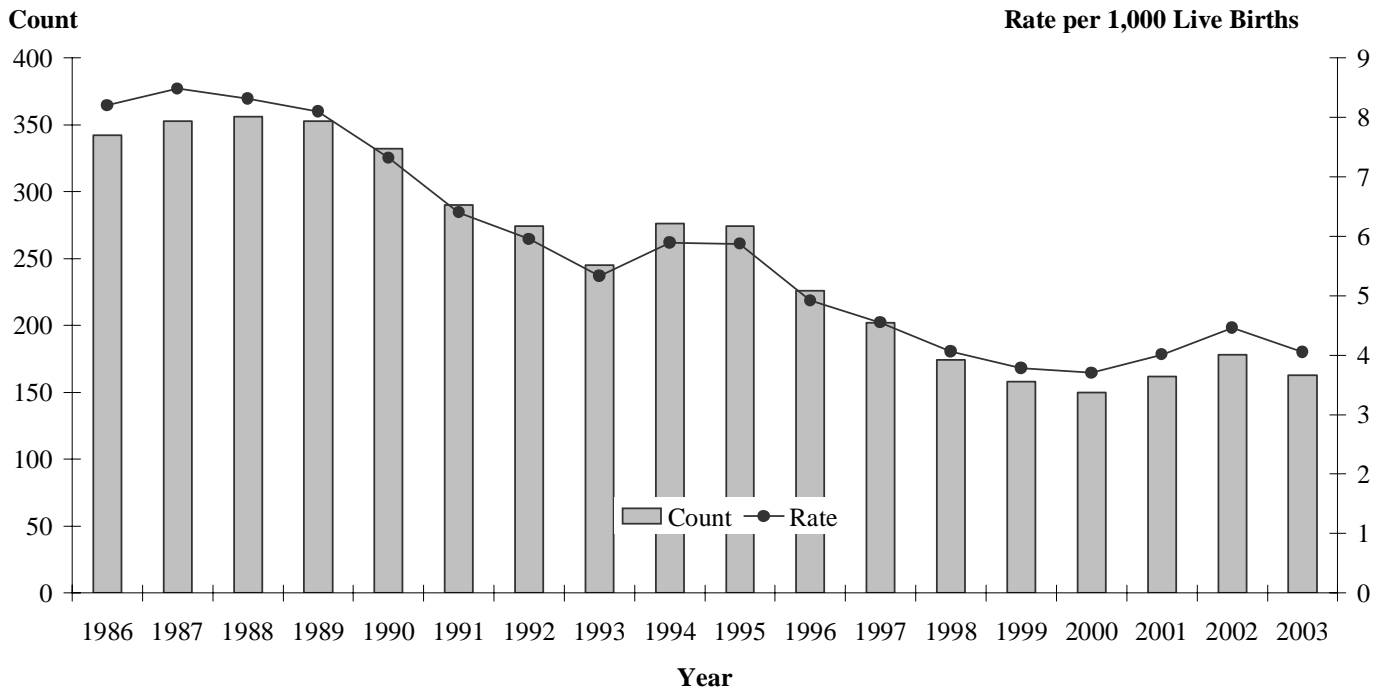
Above information includes late registrations and amendments.

Canadian rates from Statistics Canada.

*Rates were not available.

Non-residents are excluded.

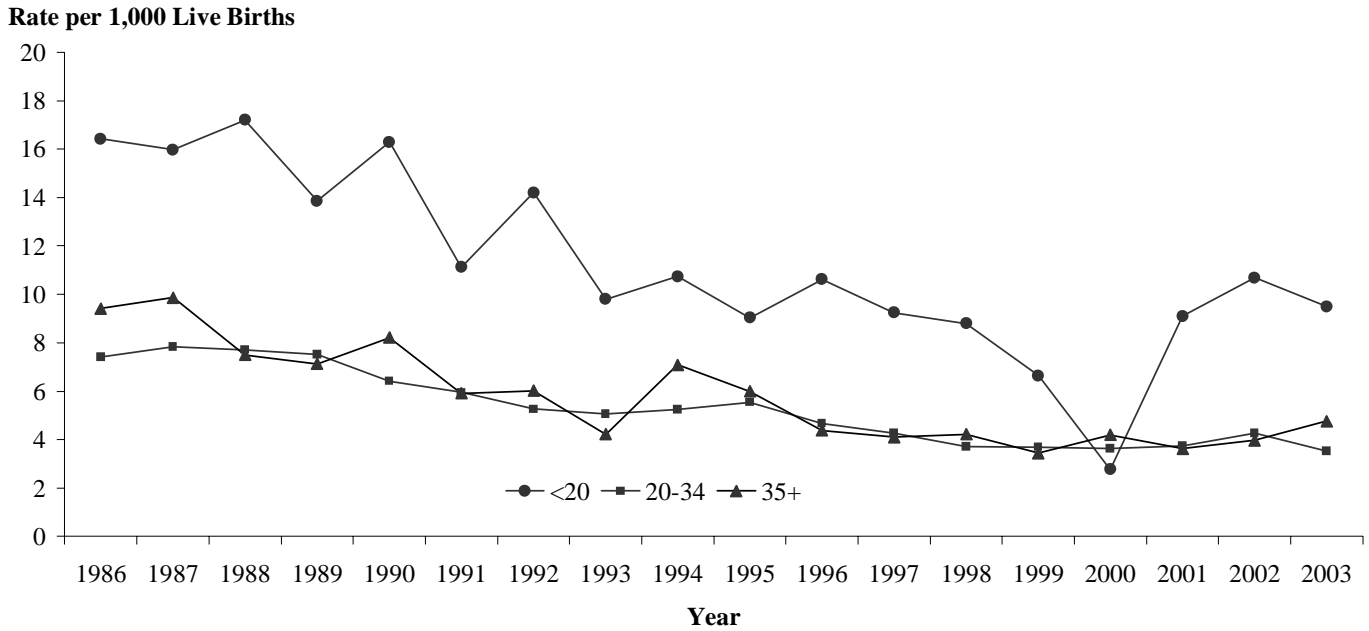
FIGURE 13
INFANT MORTALITY
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986–2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO TABLE 4/FIGURE 13

- In 2003, there were 163 infant deaths (age at death less than one year) in the province, for an infant mortality rate of 4.05 per 1,000 live births. This is a decrease from 178 infant deaths and an infant mortality rate of 4.46 per 1,000 live births in 2002. The smallest numbers and lowest rates of infant mortality occurred in 1999 to 2000.
- The B.C. infant mortality rate has been less than five per 1,000 live births since 1996.
- The rate of infant deaths in the province has been on a downward trend (statistically significant at the 95% level).
- Infant mortality rates in B.C. have fallen dramatically to one fifth of the rates seen in 1965. Decreases in early neonatal mortality (age at death less than seven days) and neonatal mortality (age at death less than 28 days) have been major contributors to the overall decline in infant mortality rates over this time period. In Canada infant mortality rates have also fallen to approximately one fifth of the rates seen in 1965.
- Since 1992, the B.C. infant mortality rate has been consistently below the Canadian rate.

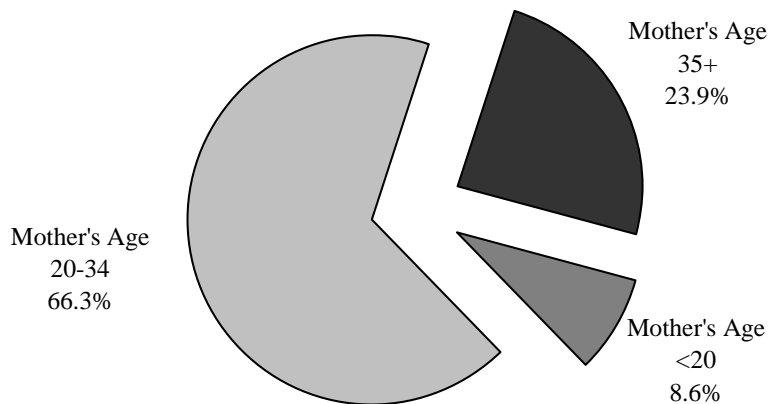
FIGURE 14
INFANT MORTALITY BY AGE OF MOTHER
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 14

- Teen mothers had the highest rate of infant deaths in 2003 and every year since 1986 except for 2000.
- All three age groups (<20, 20-34 and 35+) are experiencing a downward trend in infant deaths (statistically significant at the 95% level).

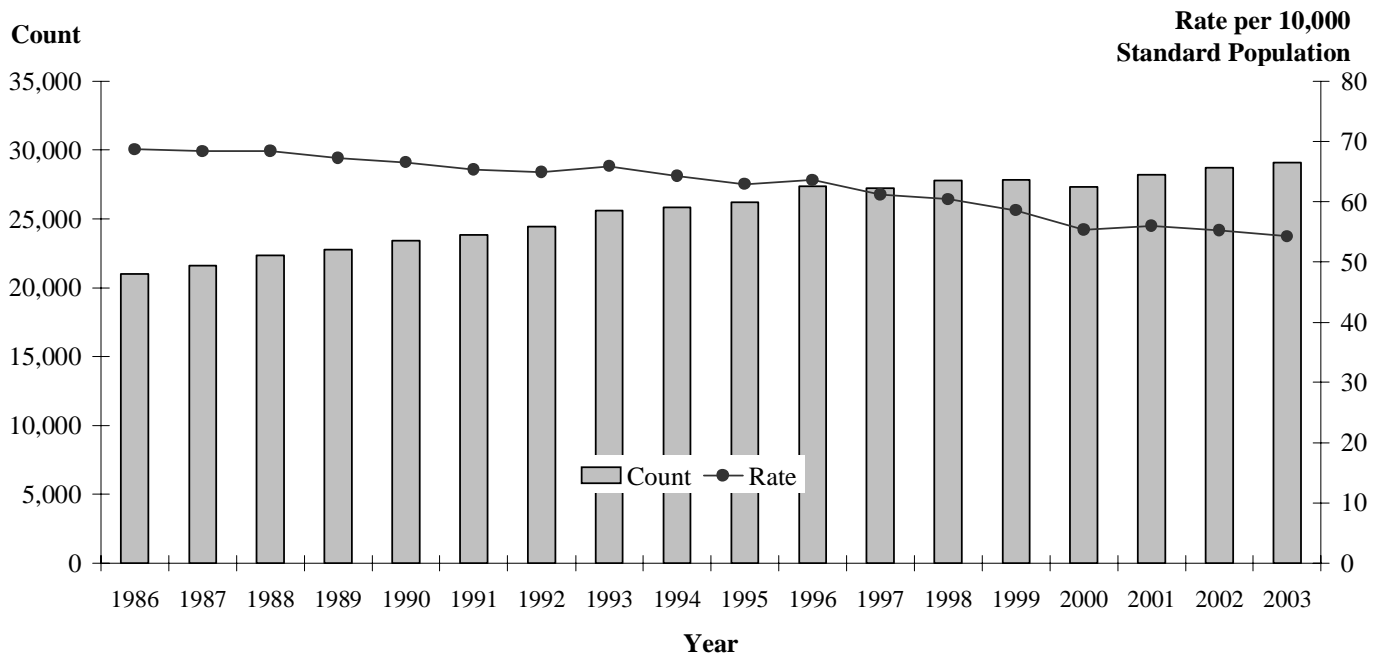
FIGURE 15
PERCENTAGE OF INFANT MORTALITY BY AGE OF MOTHER
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 15

- Despite the relatively low rate of infant deaths among mothers aged 20-34, this group experienced two thirds (66.3%) of the infant deaths in 2003 because they have by far the largest number of births.
- Despite having the highest rate of infant death, teen mothers experienced only 8.6% of the infant deaths in the province because of the low number of teen mothers.

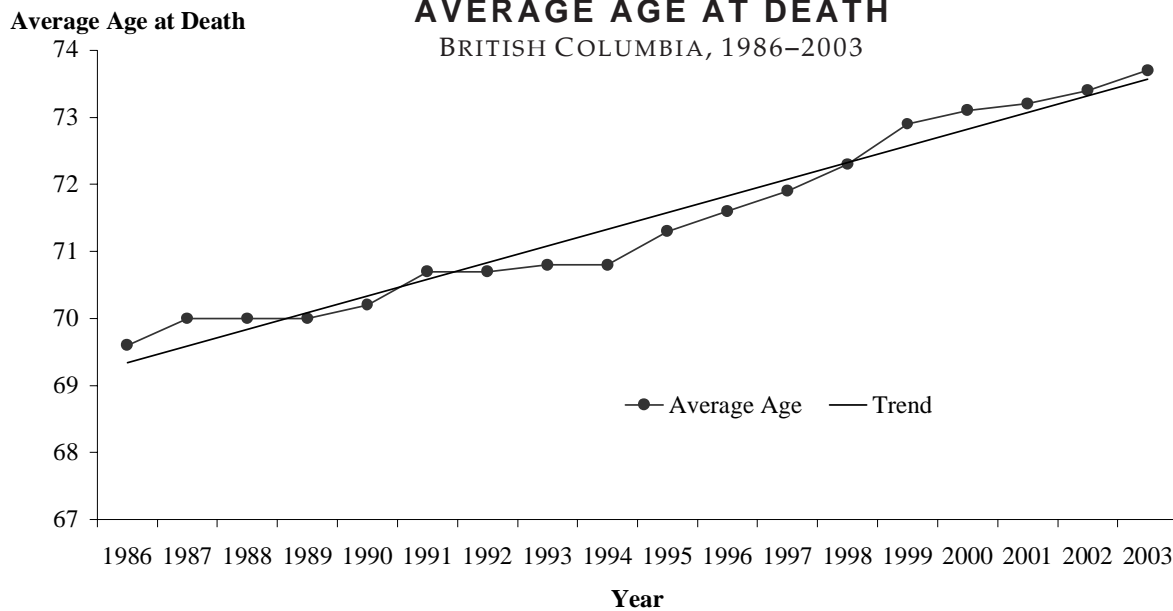
FIGURE 16
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, ALL CAUSES OF DEATH
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 16

- There were 29,108 deaths of British Columbia residents in the province in 2003, up from 28,707 in 2002. Despite the increase in the number of deaths, an aging population allowed the Age Standardized Mortality Rate (ASMR) for all deaths to fall from 55.22 per 10,000 standard population in 2002 to 54.21 in 2003.
- The provincial ASMR has been on a downward trend (statistically significant at the 95% level) since 1986 and is currently at an historic low.

FIGURE 17
AVERAGE AGE AT DEATH
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003

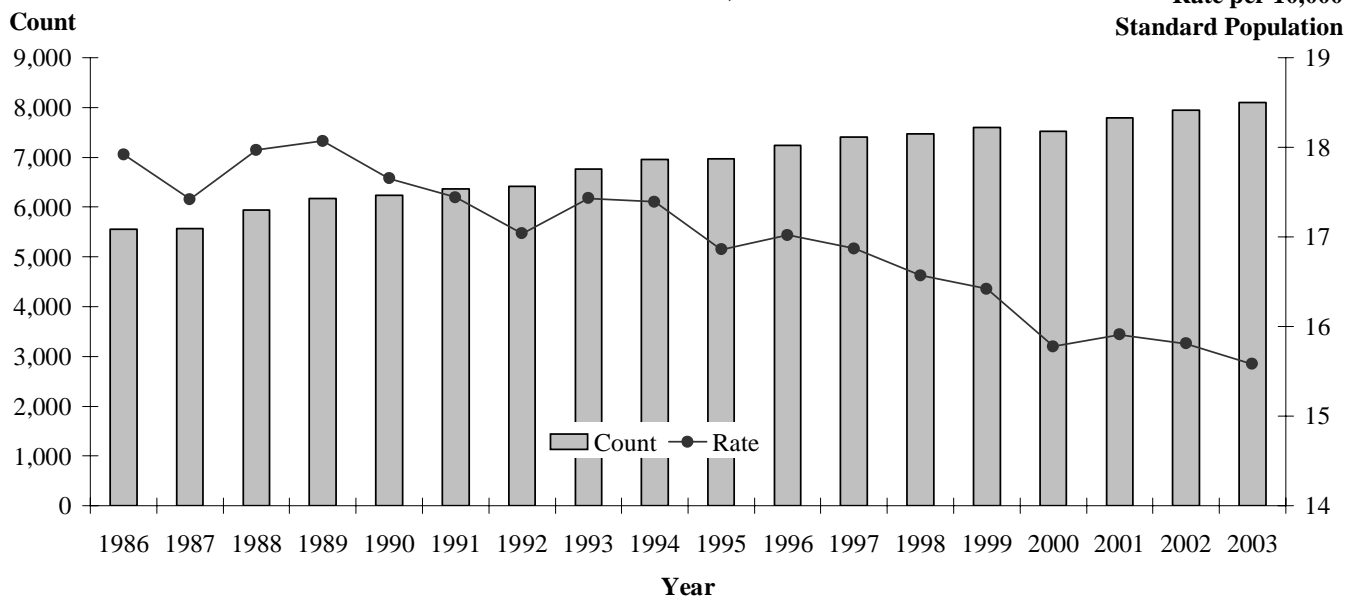


Based on 5 year age groups to 85+

HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 17

- The trend in average age at death (not life-expectancy) has seen the average age increase from 69.6 years in 1986 to 73.7 years in 2003 (statistically significant at the 95% level).

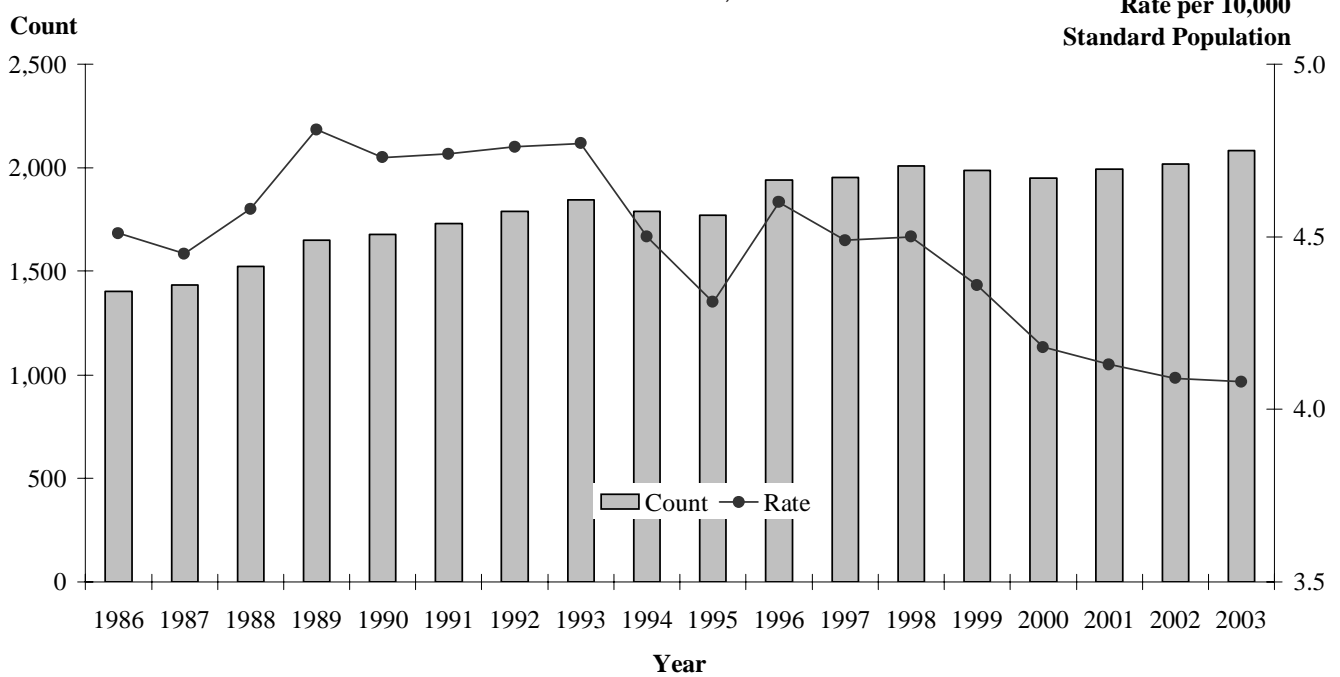
FIGURE 18
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, MALIGNANT NEOPLASMS (CANCER)
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 18

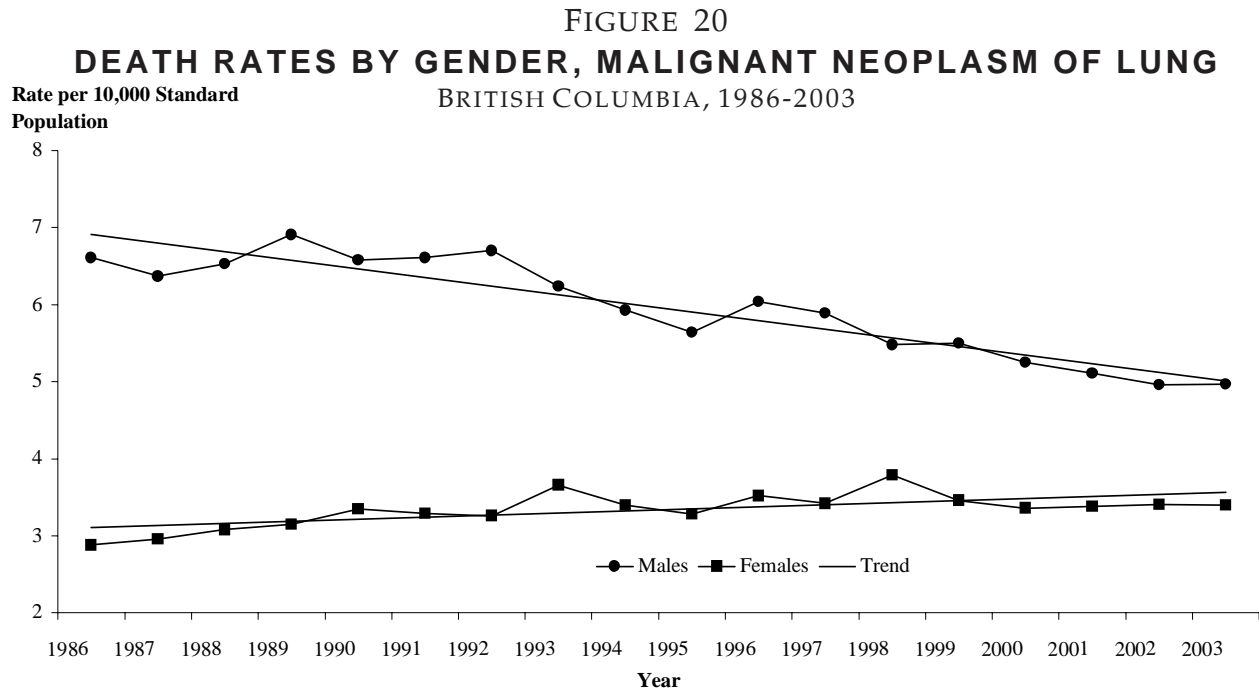
- The number of B.C. residents who died from malignant neoplasms (cancer) rose to 8,101 in 2003 from 7,946 in 2002. The ASMR for malignant neoplasms fell from 15.81 per 10,000 standard population in 2002 to 15.58 in 2003, driven by an aging and growing population in the province.
- The downward trend in the ASMR for cancer is statistically significant at the 95% level.

FIGURE 19
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, MALIGNANT NEOPLASM OF LUNG
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 19

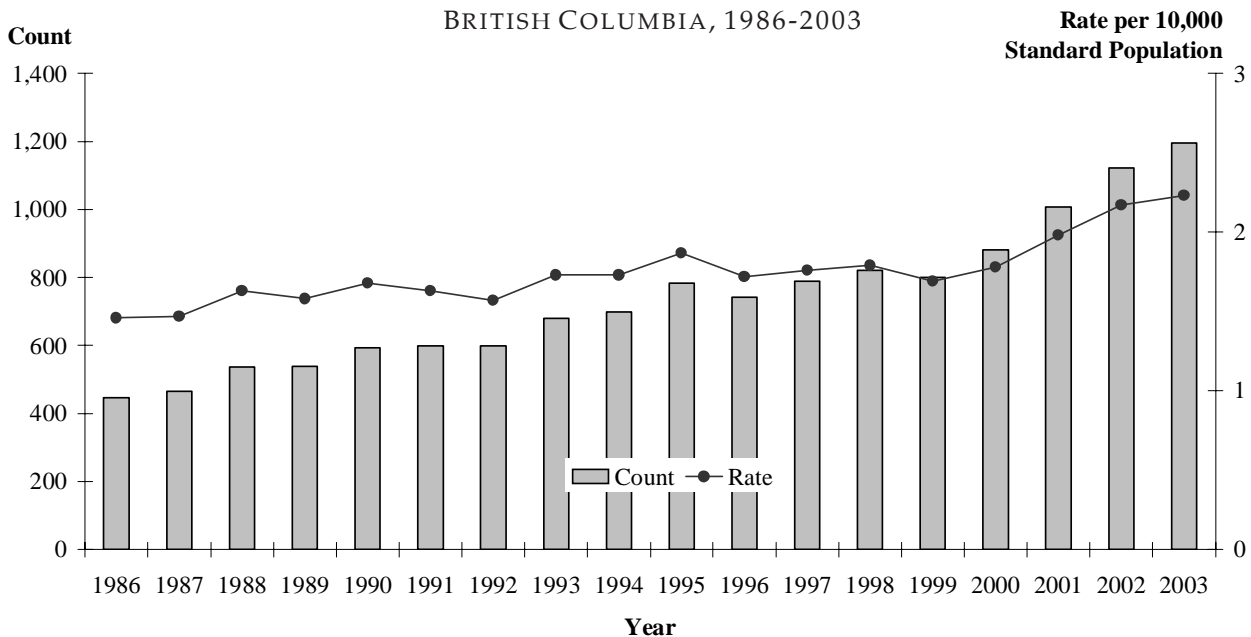
- Deaths from malignant neoplasm of lung (lung cancer) in 2003 increased to 2,082, up 66 from the 2,016 deaths in 2002. The ASMR was 4.08 per 10,000 standard population in 2003, almost identical to the rate in 2002 (4.09).
- The ASMR for malignant neoplasm of lung is on a downward trend (statistically significant at the 95% level) after being level until the early 1990s.



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 20

- The ASMR for malignant neoplasm of lung (lung cancer) in males in 2003 (4.97 per 10,000 standard population) was almost identical to the rate in 2002 (4.96), the lowest since at least 1986. The downward trend in the ASMR for malignant neoplasm of lung in males is statistically significant at the 95% level.
- The ASMR for malignant neoplasm of lung for females in 2003 (3.40 per 10,000 standard population) was also almost identical to the rate in 2002 (3.41). The increasing trend in the ASMR for malignant neoplasm of lung in females is statistically significant at the 95% level.

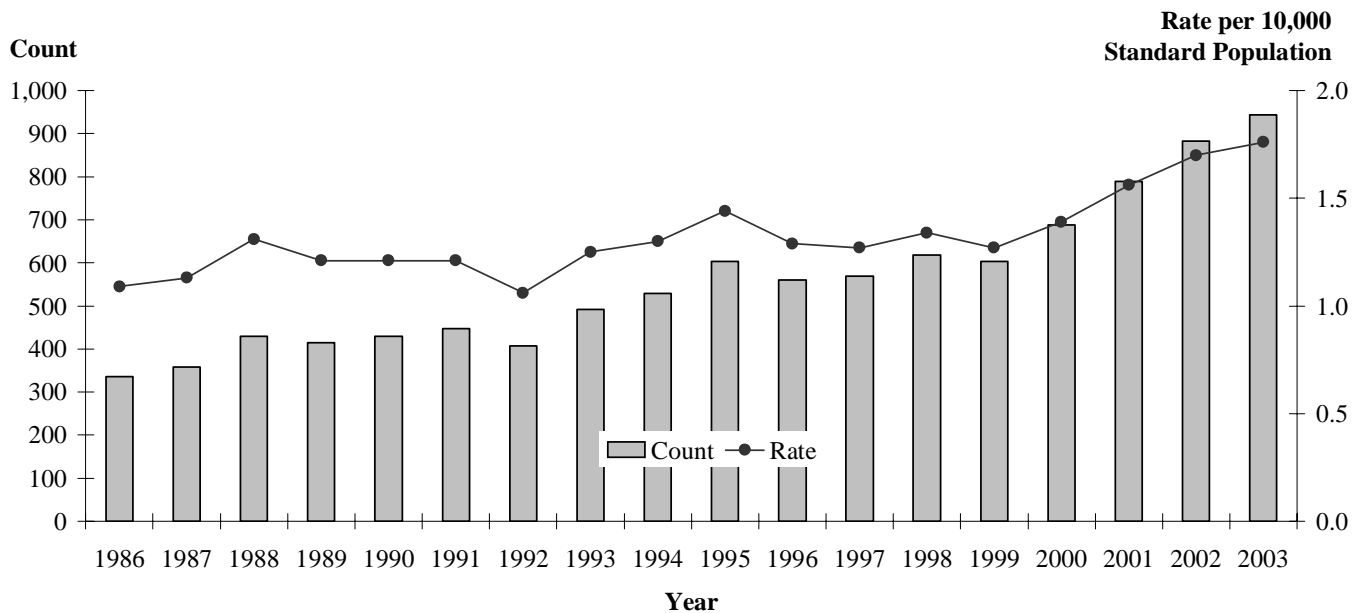
FIGURE 21
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, ENDOCRINE, NUTRITIONAL AND METABOLIC DISEASES
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 21

- There were 1,196 deaths from endocrine, nutritional, and metabolic disorders to B.C. residents in 2003. This was an increase of 73 from the 1,123 in 2002. The ASMR for endocrine, nutritional, and metabolic disease rose from 2.17 per 10,000 standard population in 2002 to 2.23 in 2003.
- Endocrine, nutritional, and metabolic disease rates are on an upward trend (statistically significant at the 95% level).

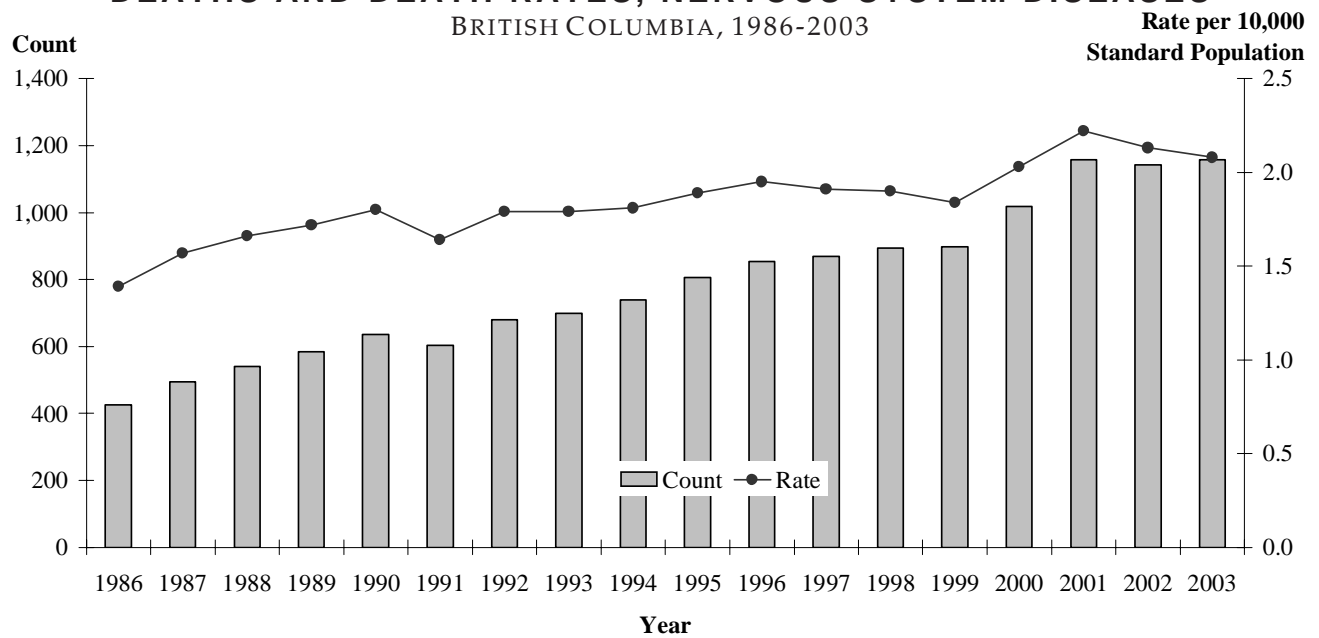
FIGURE 22
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, DIABETES MELLITUS
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 22

- In 2003, 78.8% of the endocrine, nutritional, and metabolic disease deaths were due to diabetes. There were 943 deaths from diabetes in 2003, up from 883 in 2002. The ASMR for diabetes increased as well, from 1.70 per 10,000 standard population in 2002 to 1.76 in 2003.
- The long term upward trend in the ASMR for diabetes is statistically significant at the 95% level.

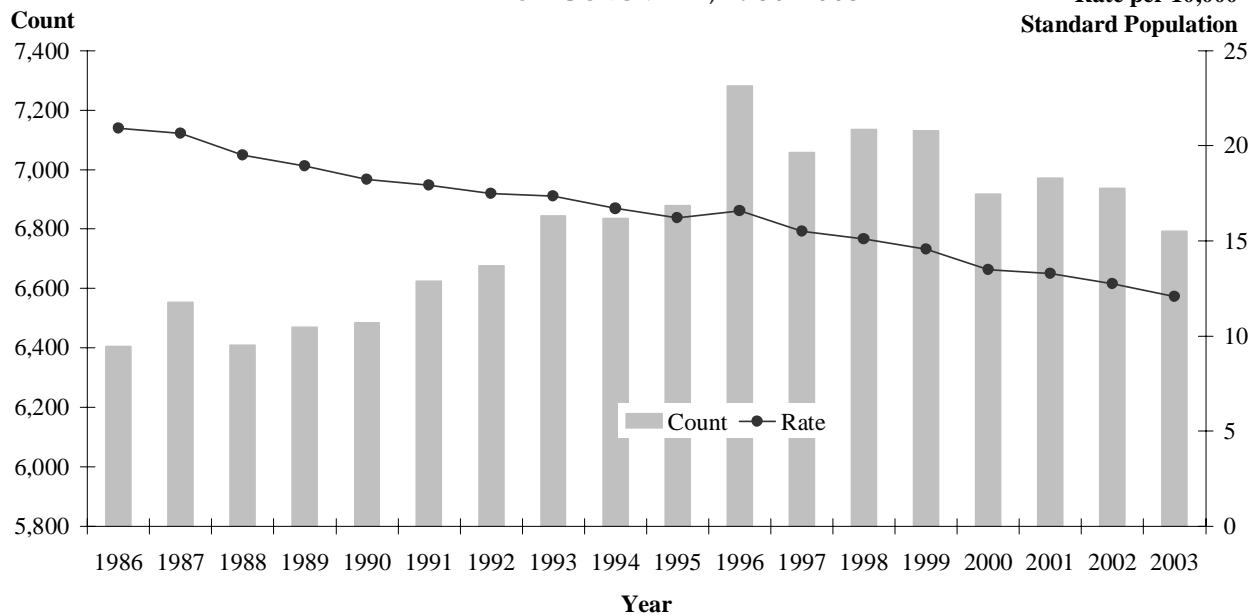
FIGURE 23
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, NERVOUS SYSTEM DISEASES
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 23

- The number of deaths from diseases of the nervous system increased slightly to 1,158 deaths in 2003, from 1,143 in 2002. The ASMR decreased from 2.13 per 10,000 standard population in 2002 to 2.08 in 2003.
- Despite the current drop in the ASMR, there is an upward trend in the ASMR of diseases of the nervous system (statistically significant at the 95% level).

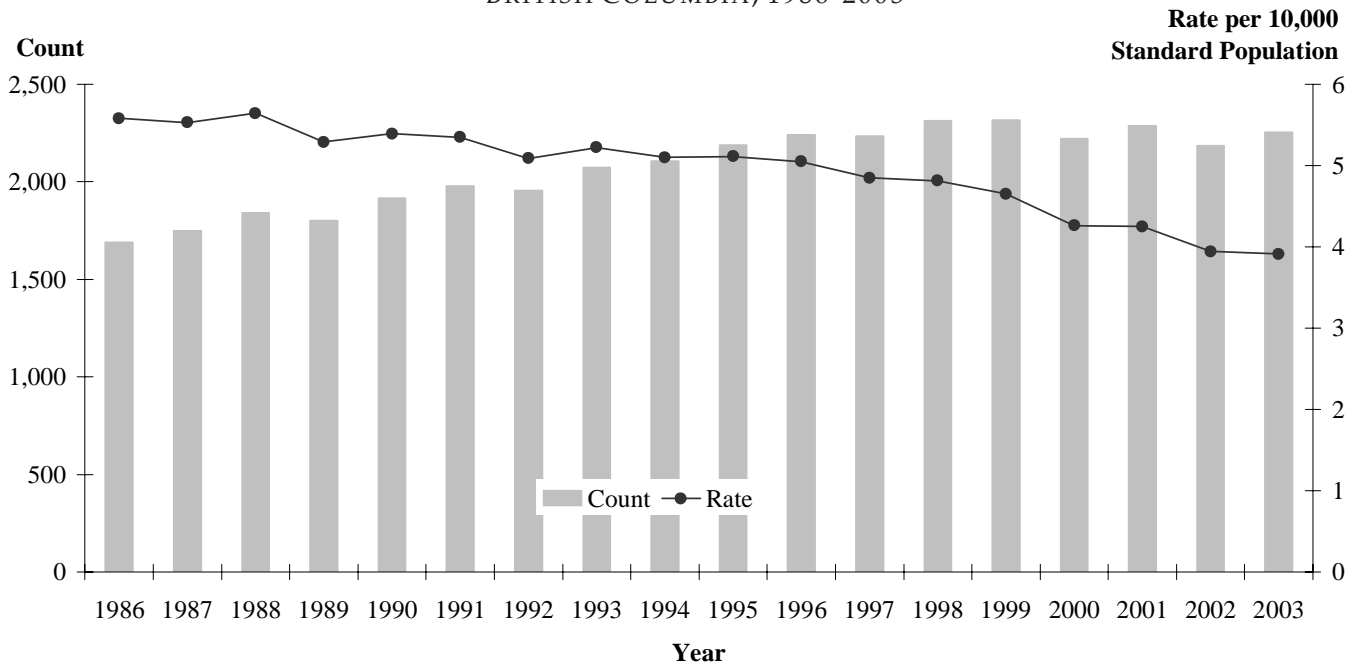
FIGURE 24
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 24

- There were 6,792 deaths from cardiovascular diseases in 2003, down from 6,936 in 2002. The ASMR for cardiovascular diseases also dipped from 12.74 per 10,000 standard population in 2002 to 12.06.
- The rate of deaths from cardiovascular diseases continues a downward trend (statistically significant at the 95% level), which has seen the ASMR drop from 20.92 per 10,000 standard population in 1986 to 12.06.

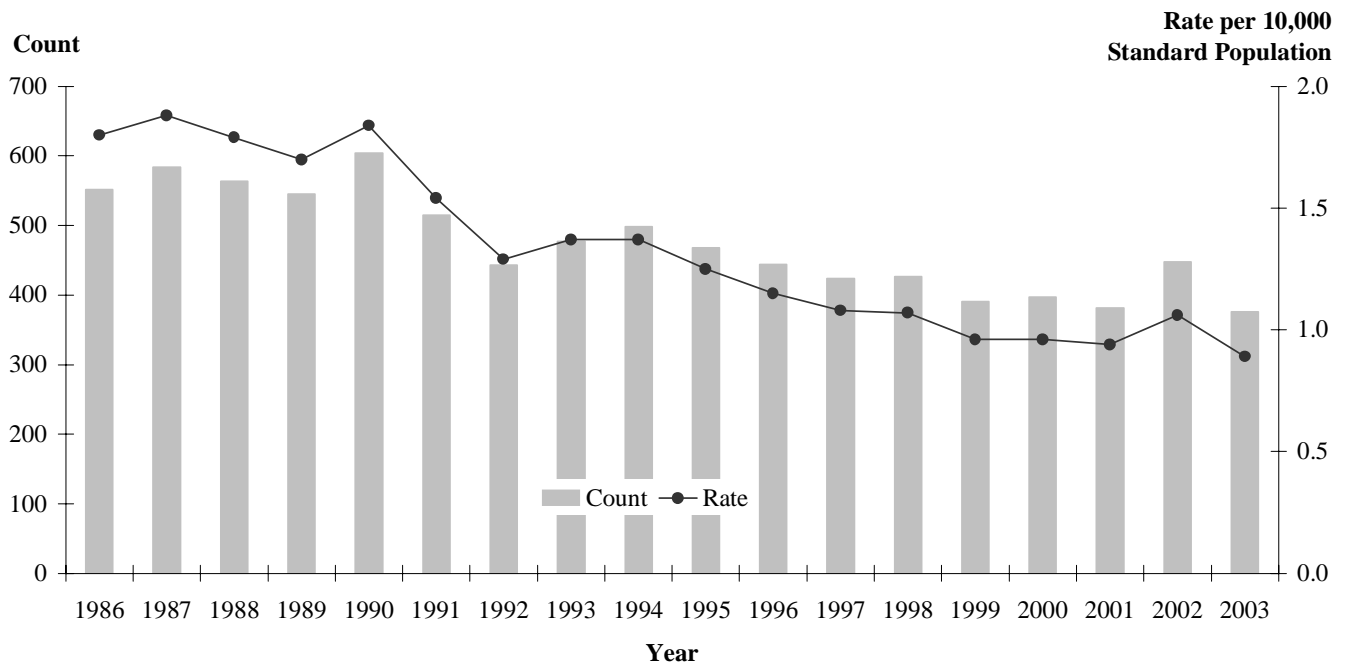
FIGURE 25
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, CEREBROVASCULAR DISEASES
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986-2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 25

- There were 2,255 deaths from cerebrovascular diseases in 2003, up from 2,185 in 2002. The ASMR for cerebrovascular diseases in 2003 (3.91 deaths per 10,000 standard population) was almost identical to 2002 (3.94).
- There is a long run downward trend in the ASMR for cerebrovascular diseases (statistically significant at the 95% level).

FIGURE 26
DEATHS AND DEATH RATES, MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1986–2003



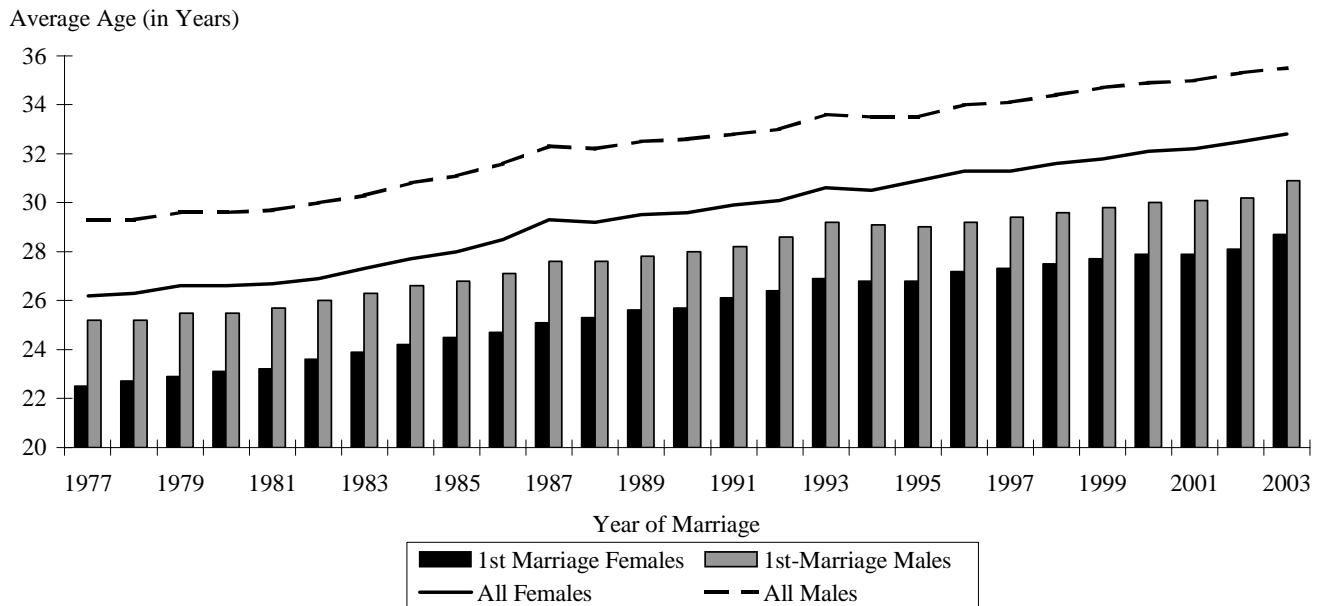
HIGHLIGHTS TO FIGURE 26

- There were 376 deaths due to motor vehicle accidents (MVA) to B.C. residents in 2003, a decrease from 448 deaths in 2002. The ASMR for MVAs decreased to 0.89 per 10,000 standard population in 2003 from 1.06 in 2002.
- There is a long term downward trend in MVA death rates (statistically significant at the 95% level). The ASMR has dropped from 1.80 per 10,000 standard population in 1986 to 0.89 in 2003.

TABLE 5
AGE OF FIRST AND ALL MARRIAGES
BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1977–2003

Year of Marriage	Average Age (in Years)				Year of Marriage	Average Age (in Years)			
	First Marriage		All Marriages			First Marriage		All Marriages	
	Males	Females	Males	Females		Males	Females	Males	Females
1977	25.2	22.5	29.3	26.2	1991	28.2	26.1	32.8	29.9
1978	25.2	22.7	29.3	26.3	1992	28.6	26.4	33.0	30.1
1979	25.5	22.9	29.6	26.6	1993	29.2	26.9	33.6	30.6
1980	25.5	23.1	29.6	26.6	1994	29.1	26.8	33.5	30.5
1981	25.7	23.2	29.7	26.7	1995	29.0	26.8	33.5	30.9
1982	26.0	23.6	30.0	26.9	1996	29.2	27.2	34.0	31.3
1983	26.3	23.9	30.3	27.3	1997	29.4	27.3	34.1	31.3
1984	26.6	24.2	30.8	27.7	1998	29.6	27.5	34.4	31.6
1985	26.8	24.5	31.1	28.0	1999	29.8	27.7	34.7	31.8
1986	27.1	24.7	31.6	28.5	2000	30.0	27.9	34.9	32.1
1987	27.6	25.1	32.3	29.3	2001	30.1	27.9	35.0	32.2
1988	27.6	25.3	32.2	29.2	2002	30.2	28.1	35.3	32.5
1989	27.8	25.6	32.5	29.5	2003	30.9	28.7	35.6	32.9
1990	28.0	25.7	32.6	29.6					

FIGURE 27
AGE OF FIRST AND ALL MARRIAGES
BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1977–2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO TABLE 5/FIGURE 27

- The average age of males marrying for the first time in 2003 was 30.9, while females marrying for the first time were, on average, 28.7 years old.
- In recent decades, there has been a steady increase in the average age of first marriages (statistically significant for both males and females at the 95% level). Males marrying for the first time in 2003 were 5.7 years older than males marrying for the first time in 1977, while females were 6.2 years older than females marrying for the first time in 1977.
- The average age of people getting married has climbed steadily since 1977 (a statistically significant trend for both males and females at the 95% level). The average age of males who got married in B.C. in 2003 was 35.6 years old, females averaged 32.9 years old.

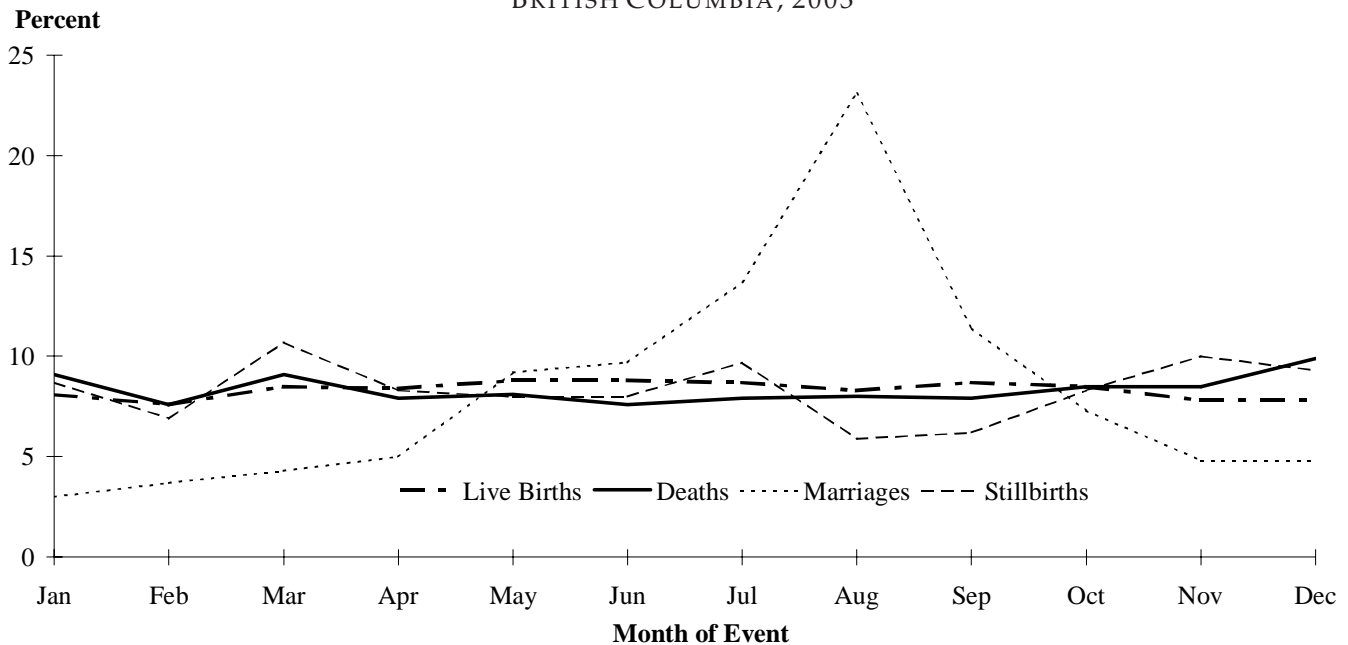
TABLE 6
LIVE BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES AND STILLBIRTHS BY MONTH
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2003

Month	Live Births		Deaths		Marriages		Stillbirths	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
January	3,244	8.1	2,649	9.1	650	3.0	25	8.7
February	3,072	7.6	2,201	7.6	813	3.7	20	6.9
March	3,442	8.5	2,642	9.1	953	4.3	31	10.7
April	3,367	8.4	2,306	7.9	1,091	5.0	24	8.3
May	3,560	8.8	2,355	8.1	2,032	9.2	23	8.0
June	3,563	8.8	2,215	7.6	2,139	9.7	23	8.0
July	3,503	8.7	2,310	7.9	3,018	13.7	28	9.7
August	3,351	8.3	2,319	8.0	5,070	23.1	17	5.9
September	3,491	8.7	2,287	7.9	2,495	11.4	18	6.2
October	3,423	8.5	2,485	8.5	1,601	7.3	24	8.3
November	3,125	7.8	2,470	8.5	1,049	4.8	29	10.0
December	3,144	7.8	2,869	9.9	1,064	4.8	27	9.3
Residents*	40,285	100.0	29,108	100.0	21,975	100.0	289	100.0
Non-residents	194		301		*		4	
TOTAL	40,479		29,409		21,975		293	

Note: Total percentage may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

*Marriage counts by month are based on event place and include non-residents.

FIGURE 28
LIVE BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES AND STILLBIRTHS BY MONTH
 BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2003



HIGHLIGHTS TO TABLE 6/FIGURE 28

- Of vital events in the province, only marriages show a marked seasonal distribution. In 2003, the most popular month to marry was August, with more than a fifth (23.1%) of the year's total marriages, and the majority of marriages (57.9%) occurred in the summer (June to September). January was the least popular month for marriages in 2003.
- Live births were fairly evenly distributed over the twelve months in 2003, although the winter months (November, December, January, and February) had the lowest numbers, and May and June had the highest numbers of live births.
- The highest number of deaths in 2003 occurred in December and the lowest number occurred in February.
- The largest number of stillbirths in 2003 occurred in March.