



Our mission is to provide opportunities for children and their families to move from poverty and dependence to self-reliance.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



**1**  
Denver's Next Generation of Children



**2**  
Piton's Perspective



**6**  
Focus on Denver's At-Risk Newborns



**7**  
Piton's Programs



**8**  
Foundation News

THE PITON FOUNDATION



THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT DIVISION OF GARY-WILLIAMS ENERGY CORPORATION

# The Piton Perspective

Connecting the Denver Community to Neighborhood Facts and Piton Foundation Programs

## The Next Generation: Children born in Denver in 2004

More than 10,000 children were born to Denver families in 2004. Whether or not these children grow up to be productive, successful individuals is influenced partly by the family and economic situations they are born into and in part by the investments society makes in them. In order to determine the resources necessary to ensure these children's success, The Piton Foundation believes it is essential to know more about them. To that end, its researchers studied birth data from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

As with all the data analysis Piton routinely conducts, the foundation examined these data at a neighborhood level for Denver. Specifically, the foundation looked at changes by neighborhood in birth rates over the past 14 years and changes in race, ethnicity, and births to foreign-born women. Because The Piton Foundation's focus is on lower-income families, our research staff also examined birth rates to teen mothers and to mothers 20 years of age and older with less than 12 years of education – two factors that often have been linked to poverty for families and poor educational outcomes for school-aged children.



The foundation's research produced the following major findings, which are detailed in this newsletter.

- Denver's birth rate has remained relatively unchanged since 1990.
- In 2004 over half the city's births were to Latinas, compared to only about a third in 1990.
- One out of every three births in 2004 was to a Latina woman born outside of the U.S.
- 40% of Denver's births in 2004 were to teen mothers or women with less than 12 years of education.

*(Continued on page 3)*

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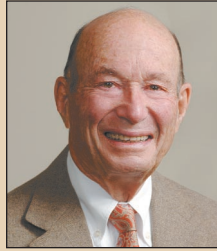
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# Piton's

## P E R S P E C T I V E

When my wife Nancy and I established The Piton Foundation in 1976, it was based on our personal belief that American society could and should act on its ideals to enable all individuals to become productive and successful. Our emphasis over these 30 years has been on addressing the root causes of poverty and working to strengthen families and neighborhoods in Denver so that children growing up without the same advantages that you and I have can still become productive and self-sufficient members of our society. To our way of thinking, these are **all** our children.

This issue of "The Piton Perspective" looks at the children born in Denver in 2004 and attempts to assess their chances for attaining the "American Dream." What our researchers found is that 40% of the newborns in Denver are at-risk of not realizing their full potential because of the circumstances into which they are born. These children were born either to teenage mothers or to mothers who never finished high school. Decades of research have proven that children in these circumstances are more likely to fail in school and their families are likely to live in poverty.

I firmly believe that the future health and well-being of Denver depends on our ability to intervene early in the lives of these children and provide the support they need to succeed. The Piton Foundation's program areas focus on improving public education, expanding economic opportunity, and strengthening neighborhoods as the fundamentals of helping Denver's at-risk children and their families. More information about our work in those three areas appears on page 7 of this newsletter.

In particular, we know that investing in high-risk children through early childhood education yields significant rewards. Children participating in early childhood education enter kindergarten on more equal footing with children from more advantaged backgrounds and make better progress in school.

Because Piton's research provides specific information about who these at-risk children are and in what neighborhoods they are being born, we as a city have the opportunity to really focus resources on where the need is the greatest.

For example, the neighborhoods with the highest birth rates and the most at-risk newborns are in southwest Denver. Our research also tells us that these are neighborhoods where the majority of births are to Latinas. Piton's own experience has been that some of these families, particularly recent immigrants, are not comfortable with formal child care but are receptive to resources to help them teach their own children.

Knowing that, we believe we should be focusing on making home visits to these families and providing them with parenting education and tools, such as age-appropriate books. Our experience also has been that these families are more likely to use formal preschool at age three or four if they've participated in these types of services during their children's early years.

We also need to look to be sure that the early childhood programs and services we have are responsive to consumer needs, including being located where the need is the greatest. Like business, if the demand for a product moves across town, so should the supply.

On a personal note, I remember as a child visiting the Statue of Liberty. Even at seven or eight, I was struck by the strong symbolism of Lady Liberty welcoming immigrants from around the world and standing as a beacon for those seeking economic opportunity. My own grandparents had immigrated to America. In some ways, I see this research we've done as a type of a beacon too – offering guidance and encouragement. I hope that as a community, Denver too will see fit to embrace its newest residents. After all, these are **all** our children.

Sam Gary  
*Chairman of the Board*

## The Next Generation *(cont.)*

### Denver and Adams Counties Have Highest Metro Birth Rates

Piton researchers analyzed the birth data by looking at birth rates, or the number of births in a year per 1,000 people. Birth rates allow comparisons to be made, between counties or neighborhoods for instance, that take into account differences in population sizes.

	1990	2004
<b>Births</b>	8,532	10,438
<b>Birth Rate</b>	18.2	18.3
<b>Mother's Race/Ethnicity</b>		
Latina	32.3%	50.6%
White	48.4%	36.2%
African-American	15.0%	9.1%
<b>Mothers from Latin America</b>		
	9.5%	32.9%

family homes have sprouted up, like Green Valley Ranch and Stapleton in Denver, Highlands Ranch and all along southern portions of E-470, as well as Thornton, Northglenn, Broomfield and Commerce City. Communities seeing decreases included cities with aging populations, like Arvada, Lakewood and Littleton.

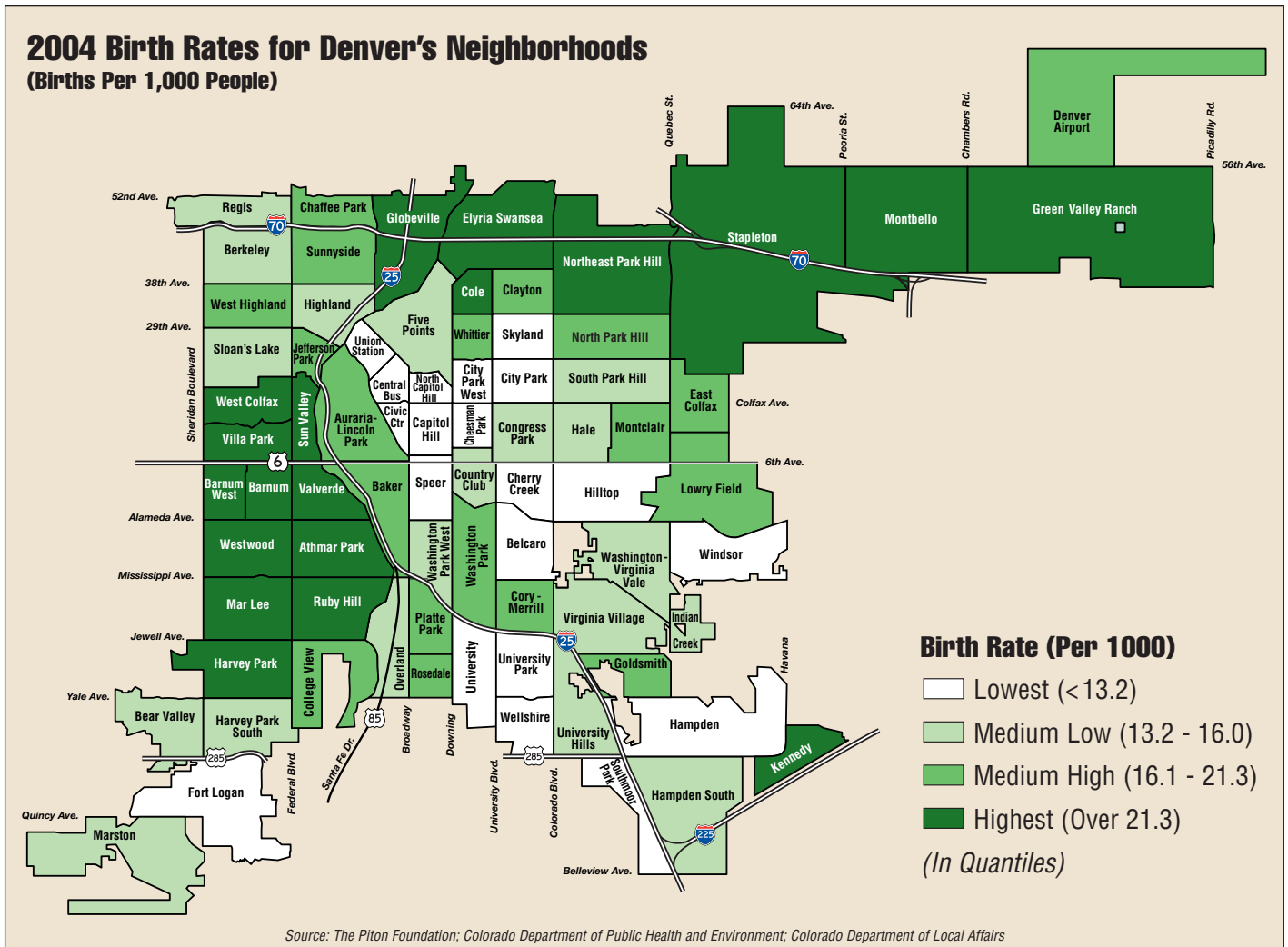
### Denver Births Occur in Montbello, Green Valley Ranch and Southwest Neighborhoods

Nine neighborhoods in the northeast and southwest parts of Denver accounted for about 31% of all the city's births in 2004. The neighborhoods with the greatest number of births were Montbello (778), Green Valley Ranch (512), and Westwood (421). On the other end of the spectrum, central-city neighborhoods accounted for just 2% of all births.

*(Continued on page 4)*

	No. of Births	Birth Rate
Adams	7,483	19.0
Arapahoe	8,056	15.3
Boulder	3,548	12.4
Broomfield	620	13.9
Denver	10,438	18.3
Douglas	4,014	16.8
Jefferson	6,251	11.7

In 2004, Adams County had the highest birth rate (19.0) of all the metro counties, followed by Denver (18.3). Over time, Adams and Denver counties have had similar birth rates and trends. Douglas County had the highest birth rate in the metro area in 1990, but its rate consistently declined. In all other metro counties, birth rates have remained relatively flat since 2001. Metro-wide, increases primarily were seen in areas where single-



## The Next Generation (cont.)

Piton's analysis also examined where a statistically significant change in birth rates – either an increase or decrease – occurred when comparing 2004 to 1990.<sup>1</sup> Ten neighborhoods experienced a significant increase in birth rates.<sup>2</sup> The majority of these neighborhoods were concentrated either in southwest Denver or northeast Denver, where a great deal of new, and primarily single-family housing construction occurred during this time. Three neighborhoods in southeast Denver also had increases.

During the same period, 16 neighborhoods experienced significant decreases in birth rates. Jefferson Park had the biggest decrease, followed by Five Points,

“ Since 1990, Denver's share of metro-area births to African Americans decreased... while Arapahoe County's steadily increased. ”

Asians and American Indians, make up just 4% of the population. Therefore, the foundation's analysis focused on the three largest groups.

In the seven-county metro area, there were 40,410 total births in 2004. Of that total, 13,535, or one-third, were to Latina mothers. Denver had the largest share of births to Latinas (39%), followed by

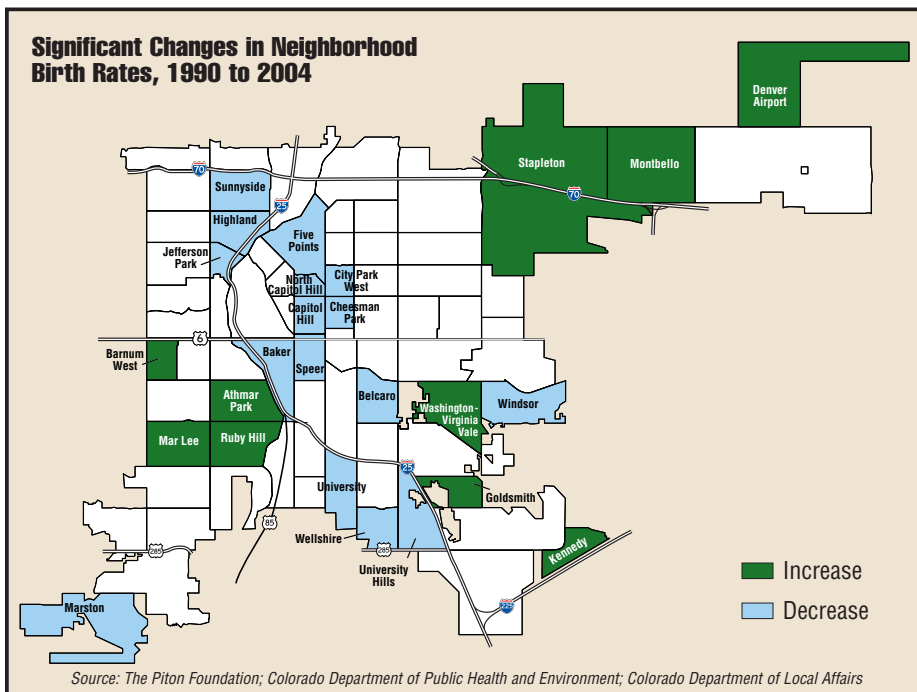
Americans decreased from 61% to 43%. During the same period, Arapahoe County steadily increased its share from 25% to 43%.

Jefferson County has had the highest percentage of white births since 1990, but has seen a small but steady decrease, to 20% in 2004. Douglas County, on the other hand, steadily increased its share of the metro area's white births, from 5% in 1990 to 15% in 2004. Denver had 17% of the metro-area's white births in 2004.

## Majority of Denver Births to Latinas

The racial/ethnic makeup of Denver's newborns was dramatically different in 2004 than in 1990. In 1990, babies in the city were born predominately to white mothers (48%), followed by Latina (32%), and then African American (15%). By 2004, births to Latinas had become the majority (51%), followed by white (36%) and African American (9%). Notably, in 2004, African-American births were not concentrated within any specific neighborhoods, whereas in 1990, African American births made up the majority of births in six neighborhoods – Whittier, Clayton, Skyland, Northeast Park Hill, North Park Hill and Montbello.

In 1990, there were 20 Denver neighborhoods where the majority of births (50% or more) were to Latina mothers. They were primarily in west and north Denver. By 2004, that number had jumped to 26. The neighborhoods that had a majority of births to Latinas were in southwest and northeast Denver (with the exception of Stapleton, which was majority white). Between 1990 and 2004, Denver also saw an



and Highland. Other neighborhoods with decreases were generally located within central Denver and ran along a northwest to southeast pattern.

## Denver Has Largest Percentage of Births to Latinas, Arapahoe County to African Americans

In the metro area, the three largest racial/ethnic groups are Latino, white, and African American.<sup>3</sup> Other groups, including

Adams County (26%). And while Denver has had the highest share of births to Latina mothers in the metro area since 1990, its share has decreased from a high of 57% in 1992. On the other hand, Adams and Arapahoe counties' share of births to Latinas have steadily increased.

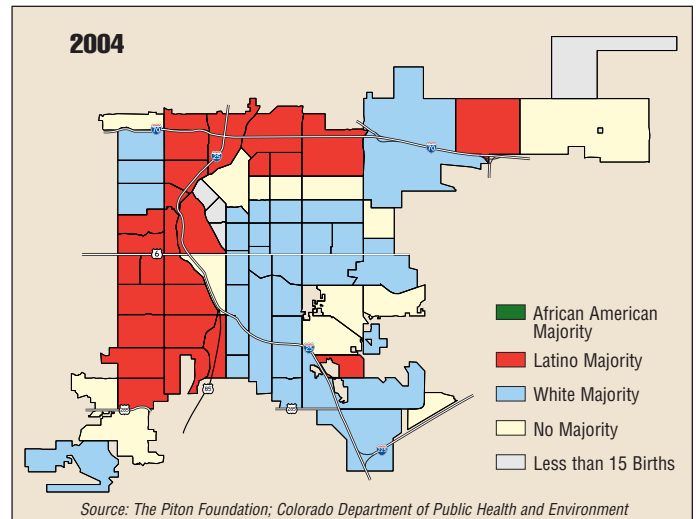
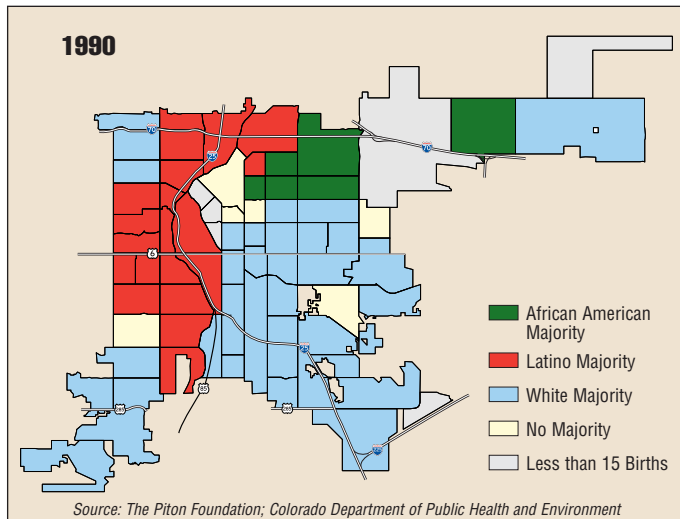
Combined, Denver and Arapahoe counties accounted for 85% of all births in the metro area to African-American women in 2004. Since 1990, however, Denver's share of metro-area births to African

<sup>1</sup>A z-statistic was calculated to assess the statistical significance of a change in the birth rate (or proportion of births to overall population) within each of Denver's neighborhoods from 1990-2004. The alpha level for each test was set at .05, indicating a 95% confidence level.

<sup>2</sup>Significant increases in the Stapleton, Kennedy and Denver Airport neighborhoods are the result of recent housing development and do not reflect a gradual increase in birth rates since 1990.

<sup>3</sup>This report uses the following race and ethnicity classifications as determined by the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment: White Non-Hispanic, White Hispanic, Black, Asian, American Indian, Other/Unknown. In this report, White Non-Hispanic is referred to as White, White Hispanic as Latino/a, and Black as African American.

## Race and Ethnicity of New Mothers



increase in the number of racially mixed neighborhoods. In 1990, six neighborhoods had no majority of any one racial or ethnic group. By 2004 that number had increased to 13.

### Births to Foreign-Born Mothers on the Rise

In 2004, 11,581 (29%) of births in the metro area were to foreign-born mothers. 72% of these births were to women from Latin American countries. 92% of these new Latina mothers were born in Mexico.

Over time, Denver has maintained the highest share of births to mothers born in Latin American countries. However, Adams County has grown at a faster

“ Denver has the highest share of births to women born in Latin American countries... but Adams County grew at a faster rate. ”

rate and in other areas outside of Denver, including western Aurora along Colfax Avenue and Commerce City, a larger share of births in 2004 were to women born in Latin America.

### One in Three Denver Births to Mexican-Born Women

In 2004, 4,093 (39%) of all births to families in Denver were to foreign-born mothers. One out of every three of these births (33%)

#### Neighborhoods with over 50% of births in 2004 to mothers born in Latin American countries

Neighborhood	Foreign Born from Latin America	Total Births
Cole	70.2%	124
Villa Park	62.6%	257
Montbello	62.5%	778
Ruby Hill	62.5%	261
Barnum West	62.1%	153
Westwood	61.2%	420
Valverde	61.1%	108
Jefferson Park	60.3%	68
Barnum	59.7%	159
Elyria Swansea	59.5%	210
Mar Lee	58.8%	296
Clayton	57.0%	107
Globeville	55.7%	79
Athmar Park	54.2%	240

was to a mother born in Latin America. Similar to the metro area statistic, 95% of them were born in Mexico.

As the table shows, in some Denver neighborhoods the share of births to mothers born in Latin America exceeded 50%.

### Conclusion

Many children continue to be born to families in Denver. However, Denver's steady birth rate masks the dramatic change in the race and ethnicity of the children being born in the city. The majority of births are now to Latinas, many of whom themselves were born in Mexico.

What does this mean for Denver, and also for neighboring counties seeing similar changes?

It is certain to have an impact on our public schools, health-care system, and employment base. The Piton Foundation believes that the most important investment we can make as a community is in our children and their families. Certainly, the well-being of our community and our residents are inextricably entwined. These data should be used to direct our investments – public and private – in the most sensible and meaningful ways to ensure Denver's children grow up to be productive and successful individuals.

### Find More Facts

- Neighborhood Facts – birth rates, births by race and ethnicity, and other birth-related data for all Denver neighborhoods and the metro Denver counties: [www.piton.org](http://www.piton.org)
- Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment – state, county and local birth statistics and data on health risk behaviors: [www.cdphe.state.co.us/stats.asp](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/stats.asp)

# Focus on

## DENVER'S AT-RISK NEWBORNS

The Piton Foundation's focus is on Denver's low-income children and neighborhoods. Our mission is to provide opportunities for children and their families to move from poverty and dependence to self-reliance. Therefore, our researchers examined the birth data with a special focus on this population.

People familiar with Piton's data analysis will notice we did not analyze the neighborhood-level data by the income categories we typically do – poor, at-risk and non-poor neighborhoods. That's because that level of income analyses can only be done based on 2000 census data, which the foundation does not believe to be accurate any longer. If you live, work or play in Denver, you know that the city has experienced a lot of changes since 2000 and therefore we believe the six-year old census data related to income and poverty are very out-of-date.

Instead, we examined birth rates to mothers 20 years of age and older with less than 12 years of education (i.e. "low-education mothers") and birth rates to teen mothers (19 years and under), since these characteristics have been linked to poverty for families and poor educational and school-related behavioral outcomes for their children.<sup>5,6</sup>

Looking at these two factors across the metro counties, in 2004 Denver had the highest percentage of at-risk newborns (40%), followed by Adams County (36%). This trend was consistent with 1990, when Denver also had the highest

**Change in Percent of At-Risk Births 1990 to 2004**

	Neighborhood	% At-Risk Births		Change
		1990	2004	
<b>Increase</b>	Montbello	34.0%	62.3%	28.3%
	East Colfax	27.9%	51.1%	23.2%
	Harvey Park	30.1%	51.6%	21.6%
	Athmar Park	41.7%	62.1%	20.4%
	Ruby Hill	47.0%	65.9%	18.9%
<b>Decrease</b>	Five Points	64.1%	48.1%	-16.0%
	Whittier	57.0%	38.8%	-18.2%
	Highland	64.6%	46.2%	-18.4%
	West Highland	37.0%	16.4%	-20.6%
	Baker	63.7%	40.4%	-23.3%

*Limited to neighborhoods with over 25 at-risk births in 1990 and 2004*

percentage of at-risk newborns (36%), followed by Adams (30%). Interestingly, the data show that between 1990 and 2004 there were no increases in the percent of births to teen mothers. Increases, therefore, appear to be a result of a greater percentage of births to low-education mothers.

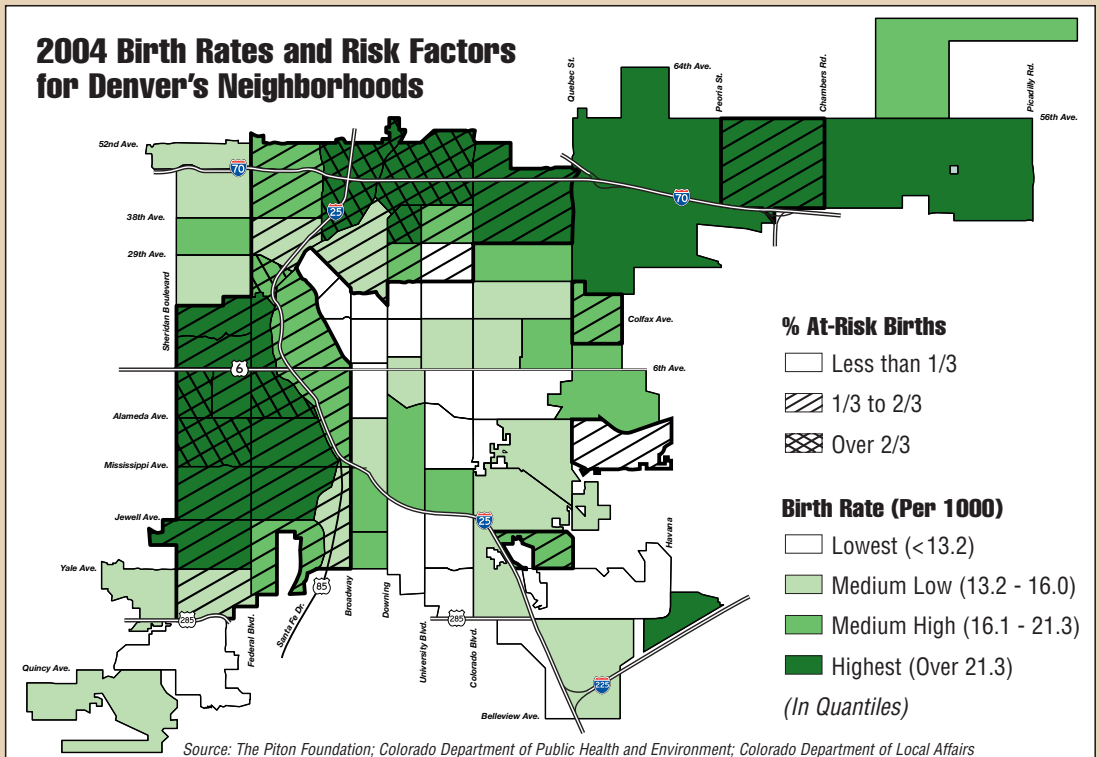
### At-Risk Newborns Concentrated in 16 Neighborhoods

While Denver as a whole did not experience a dramatic change in the percent of at-risk births from 1990 to 2004, at the neighborhood level, as the table shows, some neighborhoods increased while others decreased in their concentrations of at-risk births.

In 2004, six Denver neighborhoods that had high concentrations (over two-thirds) of at-risk newborns also ranked high in birth rates. These neighborhoods are Barnum West, Westwood and Valverde in west Denver, and Elyria Swansea, Globeville and Cole to the north. Another 10 neighborhoods had a moderate concentration of at-risk newborns (between one-third and two-thirds) and ranked high in birth rates. These 16 neighborhoods also are where the majority of births were to Latinas in 2004.

In contrast, three neighborhoods (Stapleton, Green Valley Ranch and Kennedy) had high birth rates but low birth rates to teen mothers and low-education mothers.

**2004 Birth Rates and Risk Factors for Denver's Neighborhoods**



Source: The Piton Foundation; Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment; Colorado Department of Local Affairs

<sup>5</sup>Englund, M., Luckner, A., Whaley, G. & Egeland, B., (2004). Children's Achievement in Early Elementary School: Longitudinal Effects of Parental Involvement, Expectations, and Quality of Assistance, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 96 (4), 723-730.

<sup>6</sup>Davis-Kean, P. (2005). The Influence of Parent Education and Family Income on Child Achievement: The Indirect Role of Parental Expectations and the Home Environment. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 19 (2), 294-304.

# Piton Programs

## SUPPORT AT-RISK DENVER CHILDREN

The Piton Foundation's program areas focus on improving public education, expanding economic opportunities and strengthening neighborhoods as the fundamentals of moving low-income families toward greater prosperity. We operate several initiatives under each of these broad areas.

### Improving Public Education

The Piton Foundation believes that education is a pathway out of poverty. Our vision is that all children in Denver Public Schools will achieve at their highest levels because they attend



schools that effectively address the full range of their abilities and needs. Therefore, The Piton Foundation's work in public education aims at helping low-income communities develop a continuum of quality learning

opportunities from the preschool years through preparation for higher education and the workforce.

The foundation advocates for school autonomy and school choice, supports reform efforts at individual schools and works to increase philanthropic collaboration and investment in public education. Programs supported by Piton also strive to provide parents with skills to advocate effectively for their children's education.

In the preschool arena, the foundation's work centers on two strategies: building tighter connections between K-12 education and early childhood education, and building public will around the importance of early childhood education.

### Creating Economic Opportunities

The foundation recognizes that serious obstacles impede the achievement of economic success for many families, even in times of economic prosperity. We work to increase economic security by connecting people to the education and other opportunities necessary to earn higher wages and benefits, and to accumulate assets.

Piton has three major strategies to help adults achieve economic self-sufficiency.

- Increase employment skills – Research documents the significant impact the development of vocational skills and post-secondary education has on income. Piton partners with educational and other institutions to improve the success rate of people striving to increase their skills so they can move up

the career ladder toward better paying jobs.

- Provide opportunities to accumulate assets – Just as lack of income keeps families from getting by, lack of assets prevents them from getting ahead. Piton works with financial and other institutions to deliver alternative, and innovative, products and services that help build positive financial habits that can increase people's assets.



- Build social networks – Piton believes that people succeed when they have relationships with people who can help guide and inspire them, as well as offer information, ideas and resources to help them achieve self-sufficiency. Piton works to encourage practices – individual, institutional and community – that foster environments in which these relationships can form and flourish.

### Strengthening Neighborhoods

Piton has consistently supported efforts to help ordinary citizens come together to strengthen their neighborhoods. Our vision is that residents are organized to affect positive, sustainable change in their communities. The two program components that support this vision are:

- strengthening residents' skills to organize and create a neighborhood-driven agenda to improve conditions in low-income neighborhoods.



- building the capacity of schools, faith-based institutions, nonprofit organizations, philanthropy and the public sector to implement the neighborhood agenda to improve the quality of life in low-income communities.

**MORE ONLINE:** For information on Piton's current work in each of these program areas, go to [www.piton.org](http://www.piton.org)



# Foundation

## NEWS

### Employee Fund Focuses on Helping Veterans



Recognizing individuals and organizations that have made a lasting impact on improving the quality of life for members of the Armed Forces or veterans and their families was the focus of the 2005 Gary-Williams Energy Corporation Employee Fund. The employee fund, which is administered by The Piton Foundation, was established in 1983 to foster awareness among company employees of the importance and rewards of community service. The fund awarded \$72,000 in grants to Colorado Veterans Housing, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Blind Veterans Association, Adaptive Adventures, The Fisher House and the C.A.R.E Channel. In addition, company employees put on a Christmas Party for residents of the Colorado State Veterans Home.

### Piton Kicks Off 17th Annual Public Education Campaign on Tax Credits



In January, The Piton Foundation launched its 17th annual public information campaign on tax credits targeted to low-income working families. The foundation distributes more than 1,000,000 printed pieces through public and private agencies serving low-income families and through employers. About 250,000 Colorado families making less than about \$37,000 get \$400 million in refunds each year through the Earned Income Tax Credit. New this year, the campaign included bus ads in Denver and Grand Junction, a letter from Mayor John Hickenlooper to Denver-area businesses, and a television commercial supported by Piton, the City and County of Denver, Mile High United Way and H&R Block. For more information go to [www.piton.org/eitc](http://www.piton.org/eitc).

### Study Documents Racial and Socio-Economic Isolation Since End of Busing

The end of busing in Denver Public Schools has contributed to the growing racial and socioeconomic isolation of low-income, racial minority students, according to a study commissioned by The Piton Foundation. The research was conducted by The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University. Part One was released in January and is available on the foundation's web site at [www.piton.org](http://www.piton.org). Part Two, to be released later this year, will provide a detailed analysis of student achievement trends since the end of busing.

### Ron Williams Rings Bell at NY Stock Exchange



Ron Williams (second from right), Gary-Williams president and Piton vice chairman, helped ring the opening bell of the New York Stock Exchange on January 6. Among his many community activities, Ron serves as treasurer and on the executive committee of the National Western Stock Show Association. Ron and other leaders donned their cowboy hats and rang the bell as part of the stock show's centennial celebration.

### THE PITON FOUNDATION



THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT DIVISION OF  
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