

# Community Loss & Hope Index

## Data Documentation & Methodology

A comprehensive guide to the datasets, sources, and methodology used in the CLHI Philadelphia Dashboard.

**Project:** Community Loss and Hope Index (CLHI)

**Organization:** Wealth + Work Futures Lab

**Institution:** Drexel University Lindy Institute for Urban Innovation

**Framework:** "Grief as Sacred Data: Loss and Hope as Design"

**Geographic Scope:** Philadelphia, PA (ZIP Code Level)

**Time Period:** 2012-2023 (varies by indicator)

**Document Date:** December 2025

### Table of Contents

1. Overview & Framework
2. Loss Index (Composite Score)
3. Overdose Deaths
4. Homicide Data
5. Incarceration Rates

6. Foster Care Placements
  7. Non-Fatal Shootings
  8. Bereavement Disparity Data
  9. Additional Context Data
  10. Data Limitations & Future Indicators
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# 1. Overview & Framework

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The Community Loss Index (CLI) was originally developed by **Albrecht & Abramovitz (2013)** at CUNY to measure cumulative community-level loss. The Wealth + Work Futures Lab has adapted this framework for Philadelphia as the **Community Loss and Hope Index (CLHI)**.

## Theoretical Foundation

The CLHI is built on the understanding that grief and loss are not just individual experiences but community-level phenomena that compound over time and concentrate geographically. Key principles include:

- **Place-based loss:** Loss is not random — it concentrates in specific neighborhoods
- **Compounding effects:** Multiple loss indicators reinforce each other
- **Structural patterns:** Disparities persist across generations
- **Sacred data:** Statistics represent human lives and community grief

**Source:** Albrecht, G. L., & Abramovitz, M. (2013). The Community Loss Index: A new social indicator. *Social Service Review*, 87(4), 677-724.

[https://academicworks.cuny.edu/hc\\_pubs/27/](https://academicworks.cuny.edu/hc_pubs/27/)

# 2. Loss Index (Composite Score)

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## Description

The Loss Index is a composite score (0-1 scale) combining multiple loss indicators into a single measure of community-level grief burden. **Higher values indicate greater cumulative loss.**

## Methodology

Each indicator is normalized to a 0-1 scale using min-max normalization across all Philadelphia ZIP codes. The composite index is calculated as a weighted average of normalized indicators:

- Overdose death rate (per 1,000 population)
- Homicide rate (per 1,000 population)

- Incarceration rate (per 1,000 population)
- Foster care placement rate (per 1,000 children)
- Early death rate / premature mortality
- Non-fatal shooting rate (per 1,000 population)

Top 5 ZIP Codes by Loss Index (2023)

Rank	ZIP Code	Neighborhood	Loss Index
1	19134	Kensington	0.72
2	19140	Nicetown-Tioga	0.62
3	19132	Strawberry Mansion	0.58
4	19124	Frankford	0.55
5	19143	Southwest Philadelphia	0.51

## 3. Overdose Deaths

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### Description

Drug overdose deaths by ZIP code, including opioid-related fatalities. Philadelphia has experienced a significant increase in overdose deaths over the past decade, with a **156% increase from 2012 to 2023**.

2012 Citywide Total: **478** overdose deaths

2023 Citywide Total: **1,224** overdose deaths

Change: **+156%** increase over 11 years

- **Highest Rate ZIP:** 19134 (Kensington) - 5.59 per 1,000
- **Lowest Rate ZIP:** 19118 (Chestnut Hill) - 0.42 per 1,000

**Data Source:** Pennsylvania Vital Registration System, accessed via Philadelphia Department of Public Health. Data includes ICD-10 codes for drug overdose deaths (X40-X44, X60-X64, X85, Y10-Y14).

**URL:** <https://www.phila.gov/programs/substance-use-data/>

## 4. Homicide Data

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### Description

Homicide incidents by ZIP code, representing violent deaths in Philadelphia communities. Homicide rates show strong geographic concentration in specific neighborhoods.

- **Highest Rate ZIP:** 19132 (Strawberry Mansion) - 2.85 per 1,000
- **Second Highest:** 19140 (Nicetown-Tioga) - 2.54 per 1,000
- **Third Highest:** 19134 (Kensington) - 2.10 per 1,000
- **Lowest Rate ZIP:** 19118 (Chestnut Hill) - 0.08 per 1,000
- **Disparity:** ~35x higher rate in highest vs lowest ZIP

**Data Source:** Philadelphia Police Department Homicide Data, available through OpenDataPhilly.

**URL:** <https://www.opendataphilly.org/datasets/philadelphia-homicides/>

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# 5. Incarceration Rates

## Description

Number of people from each ZIP code currently incarcerated in Pennsylvania state prisons. This data reveals where mass incarceration extracts people from communities.

Total Philadelphians in State Prison: **7,019** (2020 Census)

Disparity: **69x** higher rate in 19132 vs 19103

## Top 10 ZIP Codes by Incarceration Rate

ZIP	Neighborhood	People in Prison	Rate per 100,000
19133	North Philly-East	300	1,197
19132	Strawberry Mansion	401	1,168
19140	Nicetown-Tioga	496	943
19139	Cobbs Creek	345	791
19121	North Philadelphia	313	743
19143	Southwest Philly	471	723
19134	Kensington	412	712
19138	Germantown East	215	671
19141	Logan	209	669
19124	Frankford	407	588

**Data Source:** Prison Policy Initiative analysis of 2020 Census redistricting data.

**URL:** <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/origin/pa/2020/philadelphia.html>

## 6. Foster Care Placements

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### Description

Children entering foster care by ZIP code. Foster care placement represents family separation and is both a consequence of community stress and a source of childhood loss/trauma.

- **Citywide Foster Care Entries (2023):** ~1,998 children
- **Highest Rate ZIP:** 19134 (Kensington) - 5.66 per 1,000 children
- **Second Highest:** 19140 (Nicetown-Tioga) - 4.92 per 1,000
- **Third Highest:** 19132 (Strawberry Mansion) - 4.45 per 1,000
- **Lowest Rate ZIP:** 19118 (Chestnut Hill) - 0.38 per 1,000

**Data Source:** Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS).

**URL:** <https://www.phila.gov/departments/departments-of-human-services/>

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## 7. Non-Fatal Shootings

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### Description

Non-fatal shooting incidents by ZIP code. These represent gun violence that does not result in death but still causes significant trauma, injury, and community impact.

- **Highest Rate ZIP:** 19140 (Nicetown-Tioga) - 1.85 per 1,000
- **Second Highest:** 19132 (Strawberry Mansion) - 1.72 per 1,000
- **Third Highest:** 19134 (Kensington) - 1.58 per 1,000
- **Lowest Rate ZIP:** 19118 (Chestnut Hill) - 0.05 per 1,000
- **Note:** Non-fatal shootings often outnumber homicides 3-4x

**Data Source:** Philadelphia Police Department Shooting Victims data via OpenDataPhilly.

**URL:** <https://www.opendataphilly.org/datasets/shooting-victims/>

## 8. Bereavement Disparity Data

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### Description

Childhood bereavement rates by race over **42 years (1980-2022)**. This data shows the persistent racial disparity in children experiencing the death of a parent or sibling.

Time Period: **42** consecutive years of data

Disparity Range: Black children **1.5x to 2x** more likely

Peak Disparity: **1989** (1.93x higher rate for Black children)

COVID-19 Impact: 2020 reversed years of narrowing progress



**Data Source:** Judi's House/JAG Institute Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model (CBEM).

**URL:** <https://judishouse.org/research-tools/cbem/>

**What This Data Shows:** The bereavement data demonstrates that racial disparities in community loss are not a recent phenomenon. For over four decades, Black children have faced significantly higher rates of losing a parent or sibling. This intergenerational pattern has compounding effects on educational outcomes, mental health, economic mobility, and community stability.

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## 9. Additional Context Data

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### Census/Demographic Data

Population data by ZIP code used to calculate per-capita rates comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates via the U.S. Census Bureau.

**URL:** <https://data.census.gov>

### Eviction Data (Future Indicator)

Eviction Lab provides eviction filing data by ZIP code and census tract. Key finding: ZIP 19121 had an 11.6% eviction filing rate with 74.6% Black renters.

**URL:** <https://evictionlab.org/>

### Pew State of the City

Annual Philadelphia indicators including unemployment, poverty, income, and population trends. Used for contextual comparison and visualization inspiration.

**URL:** <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/projects/philadelphia-research-and-policy-initiative>

## 10. Data Limitations & Future Indicators

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### Current Limitations

- **Temporal Gaps:** Not all indicators cover the same time periods
- **Small Cell Suppression:** Some ZIP codes have suppressed data for privacy
- **Reporting Differences:** Data comes from multiple agencies with varying methodologies
- **Lag Time:** Some datasets have 1-2 year reporting delays
- **Geographic Boundaries:** ZIP codes don't perfectly align with neighborhoods

## Future Indicators (Per WWF Wish List)

- Unemployment: By ZIP code (requires Census ACS pull)
- Foreclosures: Housing loss data
- Hospital Closures: Healthcare access loss
- School Closures: Educational institution loss
- Cost-Burdened Households: Housing instability
- Life Expectancy: Via CDC PLACES data
- Vacant Lots: Physical environment indicators
- Literacy Rates: Educational outcomes

This documentation was prepared as a [high level documentation meant as a proof of concept](#).

For questions about data sources or methodology, please contact the [Mind Power team](#).

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