

2013

# DATA BOOK

state trends in child well-being



**KIDS  
COUNT**



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Permission to copy, disseminate or otherwise use information from this *Data Book* is granted as long as appropriate acknowledgment is given.

## Outreach Partners

The Annie E. Casey Foundation wishes to thank our Outreach Partners for their support and assistance in promoting and disseminating the 2013 *KIDS COUNT Data Book*. With the help of our partners, data on the status and well-being of kids and families are shared with policymakers, advocates, practitioners and citizens to help enrich local, state and national discussions on ways to improve outcomes for America's most vulnerable children.

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The 2013 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* can be viewed, downloaded or ordered on the Internet at:

[www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org)

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To learn more about the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2013 KIDS COUNT Outreach Partners, please visit:

[www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/KIDSCOUNT/OutreachPartners.aspx](http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/KIDSCOUNT/OutreachPartners.aspx)

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# FOREWORD



# 2013 KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK

**After many years of calamitous economic trends, this year's *KIDS COUNT Data Book* reveals some modest but hopeful signs of recovery and improvement for America's children and families. While the nation certainly has not fully recovered from the recession, we are doing the hard work of digging out and moving ahead.**

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With the national economy now out of crisis, we have an opportunity to refocus our attention on improving outcomes for the next generation. Today's children literally represent our future — as tomorrow's leaders, citizens, workers and the next generation of parents — and it is imperative that we attend to their well-being in the present. Research shows that smart investments in the early years of childhood can increase the odds of success for all children, especially our nation's most disadvantaged. In this year's *Data Book*, we highlight indicators on the well-being of our youngest children to help further the conversation about opportunities for and the benefits of early intervention.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has published the *Data Book* for each of the past 24 years, tracking the well-being of America's children nationally and by state. As you read the 2013 *Data Book*, we want to remind you of an important change

made last year. To take advantage of the tremendous growth in research and data on child development, we improved how we measure child well-being and rank states. The KIDS COUNT index now includes 16 child-level indicators across four domains: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health and (4) Family and Community. This multifaceted index provides a more complex picture of child well-being in each state, especially in cases where a state excels in one or two areas but lags behind in others.

## **Gains for Children Overall, With Critical Exceptions**

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Examining national changes in child well-being over the past five or six years, we observe modest gains in the Education and Health domains, some of which build on longer-term, incremental improvements. But when we turn to the Economic



Well-Being and Family and Community domains, three troubling trends emerge. First, we see lingering effects of the recession and continued high unemployment. Second, disparities among children by income and family structure continue to grow. (In contrast, while some disparities by race and ethnicity have increased, others have narrowed.) Third, our nation's youngest children are disproportionately affected by these negative trends.

Here are some of the specifics behind the overall findings from this year's *Data Book*. We often hear that our public education system is failing, but the reality is more complex. Overall, national math and reading scores have steadily improved over time for students of all races and income levels,<sup>1</sup> and the testing gap between African-American and white students has declined.<sup>2</sup> The charge that American students are falling behind comes from international comparisons, which typically rank the United States in the top third or half, depending on the age of students and subject matter being tested. But when researchers disaggregate the data, it becomes clear that our nation's overall achievement levels are limited by the performance of our lowest-income students.

Controlling for poverty, American students rank much higher.<sup>3</sup> In 2009, students at U.S. schools with fewer than 10 percent of students in poverty ranked number one in reading.<sup>4</sup> Thus, our education problem is twofold. First, at 23 percent in 2011, the U.S. child poverty rate was much higher than that

in countries with the highest overall academic achievement levels. Second, the gap in standardized test scores between affluent and low-income students in the United States has grown about 40 percent since the 1960s, even as the racial gap has narrowed.<sup>5</sup>

Comprehensive early childhood programs and high-quality preschool can help improve school readiness among low-income children, but nationally, fewer than half (46 percent) of 3- and 4-year-olds attended preschool. Only a small percentage of poor children participated in programs of sufficient quality and intensity to overcome the developmental deficits associated with chronic economic hardship and low levels of parental education. Clearly, we are far from ensuring that all children have the opportunity to enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

Many child health and safety indicators have steadily improved over the past couple of decades, with additional gains in recent years. Despite declines in employer-sponsored health insurance coverage, the overall rate of insured children has increased because of expanding public health coverage for kids. Mortality rates for children of all ages continue to fall as a result of medical advances and increased safety measures, such as more widespread use of seat belts, car seats and bike helmets. One growing health problem is childhood obesity. Rates of childhood obesity have skyrocketed in recent decades, especially among low-income and minority children. Given that obesity in childhood is associated with



**The child poverty rate increased to 23 percent in 2011, two years after the recession had ended. Even more disturbing is the fact that the poverty rate for very young children — those under 3 years old — was 26 percent.**

short- and long-term health problems, this area is ripe for early intervention.<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps the most troubling finding in this year's report is in the area of Economic Well-Being. The child poverty rate increased to 23 percent in 2011, two years after the recession had ended. Even more disturbing is the fact that the poverty rate for very young children — those under 3 years old — was 26 percent. These statistics are based on a very conservative measure of hardship, meaning the percentage of children living in economically fragile homes is considerably higher. The official poverty line in 2011 was \$22,811 for a family of two adults and two children, while researchers estimate that families typically need twice that amount to meet their basic needs.<sup>7</sup>

A lingering concern post-recession is the impact of unemployment on children. Although the overall unemployment rate continues to decline, five years after the crisis, unemployment remains high, at 7.5 percent, with almost 12 million Americans out of work.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, long-term unemployment is increasingly a problem: A total of 4.5 million workers were unemployed for more than six months, and more than 3 million were without work for a year or more.<sup>9</sup> Adults with the lowest levels of education are most likely to suffer long-term unemployment, which then creates hardship for their children.

As employment figures slowly returned to near pre-recession levels, more children lived in concentrated poverty. About 12 percent of children lived in neighborhoods where 30 percent or more of households

have incomes below the poverty line, putting those children at higher risk of experiencing crime, violence and physical and mental health problems.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, the percentage of children living in single-parent families continues to climb. In 2011, more than one-third (35 percent) of all children lived in a single-parent household, as did 37 percent of infants and toddlers. Such children are at higher risk of negative outcomes later in life because they typically have fewer economic and emotional resources than children growing up in two-parent families. The one bright spot among the Family and Community indicators is a record low level of births to teens.

In sum, there are some positive developments in child well-being to celebrate. But the number of low-income children continues to increase, and the gap between their well-being and that of their middle-class and affluent peers continues to widen. In part, that's because children in low-income households often experience multiple risks — for example, living in poverty, having a single parent and lacking access to quality early care and education programs and well-resourced public schools.

### **The Advantages of Starting Early**

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In a recent study of 29 economically advanced countries, the United States ranked 26th in overall child well-being. Only Lithuania, Latvia and Romania ranked below us.<sup>11</sup> Now that the worst of the economic crisis is behind us, we must take this opportunity to think strategically

**Although the early years are critically important, we must continue to identify other key developmental moments when intervention pays off in the long term.**

about the future. We know that vibrant and prosperous communities require strong families, who, together with all of society, have a commitment to the care, health and education of our youngest children. The early years of a child's life are critically important, and when the community partners with parents to promote healthy early childhood development, we all benefit. Our nation's children become healthy and productive adults; our economy becomes stronger because businesses can find the skilled workers they need; and our democracy can thrive as a new generation of informed Americans continues to enrich civil society.

**Why the early years matter.** Early relationships and experiences help shape the architecture and wiring of the brain, creating either a sturdy or fragile foundation for a young child's cognitive, emotional and behavioral development. Nurturing relationships with parents and other caregivers, as well as stimulating and educationally rich environments, help young children thrive. But the experience of poverty and related risk factors — such as poor parenting, inadequate nutrition, frequent moves and changes in non-parental caregivers, insufficient cognitive stimulation and unsafe environments — can actually suppress brain development and have lasting effects.

From even the youngest age, there are measurable differences in how children from lower-income families and their middle-class peers develop and learn. These differences persist after children

enter school, where a lack of high-quality early childhood experiences is linked to failure to read at grade level by the end of third grade — a strong predictor of becoming a high school dropout.<sup>12</sup> The effects of poverty and inadequate early care extend beyond the school years. Children who are persistently poor are more likely to live in poverty between ages 25 and 30, become teen and/or unmarried parents and have spotty employment records.<sup>13</sup>

**The benefits of early intervention.** A child's earliest relationships and experiences matter. Early intervention can prevent, or at least reduce, some of the negative effects associated with living in poverty. Parents are their child's first and primary teachers and caregivers, but some low-income, new and expecting parents need support to succeed in these roles. Although we still have a lot to learn in this area, research suggests that high-quality early childhood programs can help reduce the stresses of poverty by providing better, more sensitive care and by teaching parents how to interact more positively with their young children. Evidence also suggests that highly targeted income supports can help reduce the effects of poverty and improve children's outcomes, particularly academic performance.

All children benefit from high-quality early care and education, but research indicates that the quality of care is most important for children at highest risk of poor developmental outcomes. According to Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman, early childhood

interventions are some of the best investments we can make as a nation, with a return on investment at 7 to 10 percent annually by reducing crime, improving academic achievement and building a skilled workforce.<sup>14</sup>

### The importance of two-generation strategies.

Too often, low-income parents struggle to gain and retain employment. Many experience violence and trauma, battle substance abuse, and have physical and mental health problems. Given the enormous influence that parents have on their children, especially when those children are infants and toddlers, we need to find better ways to support parents of young children. Early childhood strategies alone will not successfully reduce disparities among children; we must also assist their parents.

### The Need for Smart Investments

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Given the consensus on the need to reduce the country's long-term debt, simply adding more public dollars to existing strategies is neither wise nor feasible. Although we will need to invest more in early childhood, we should focus our resources on strategies with evidence of high returns in child well-being and healthy development. For example, we should weave together existing programs that support new parents — such as home visiting programs and programs that help parents fulfill their roles as their children's first and most important teachers — with high-quality early childhood and prekindergarten programs, to

ensure that every child enters school ready to learn. These strategies should, in turn, be integrated into the curricula and learning supports of the early elementary years, thus increasing the odds that all of our children are reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

Compared to the drivers of the national debt, the additional resources required to improve opportunities for our nation's youngest children are relatively modest. If we invest those resources wisely, along with refocusing existing resources on approaches with strong evidence of success, the return on investment will far outweigh the costs. The same is true of investments in older children: Smarter spending on programs and services that we know increase children's long-term chances for success is essential. Although the early years are critically important, we must continue to identify other key developmental moments when intervention pays off in the long term.

The following pages illustrate some of the progress we have made as a nation in improving child well-being, while identifying areas where our efforts are falling short. As we celebrate long-term gains in Health and Education, we must find effective ways to halt — and reverse — the widening disparities among children's access to economic resources and ensure that they grow up in strong, stable families and communities. That's the challenge ahead.

**Patrick T. McCarthy**  
President and CEO  
The Annie E. Casey Foundation



# KIDS COUNT DATA CENTER

Access Data on Child Well-Being Through  
the Improved KIDS COUNT Data Center

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's updated KIDS COUNT Data Center makes it easier to access hundreds of child well-being indicators related to education, employment and income, health, poverty and youth risk factors. Data are available for the nation and for states, as well as for cities, counties and congressional districts. New site features include improved search options; more attractive and easier to create tables, maps and graphs; and better ways to share information through social media on how children are faring.

[datacenter.kidscount.org](http://datacenter.kidscount.org)

## Mobile Site

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All indicators currently found on the KIDS COUNT Data Center can be accessed quickly and easily anytime, anywhere on your mobile device at: [mobile.kidscount.org](http://mobile.kidscount.org)



Enter any location, topic and/or keyword in the comprehensive new search function.

Learn how children are faring where you live by using the new interactive map.

Search by topic to find the data you need.

Use the quick links to access widely used information.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the KIDS COUNT data center. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'DATA BY LOCATION', 'DATA BY TOPIC', 'PUBLICATIONS', 'UPDATES', 'Help', 'About', and 'Contact'. Below this is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Enter any location, topic and/or keywords here' and a 'SEARCH DATA CENTER' button. A map of the United States is displayed under the heading 'CHOOSE A STATE', with a 'VIEW U.S. DATA' button. Below the map is a 'CHOOSE A DATA TOPIC' section with icons for Demographics, Economic Well-Being, Education, Family & Community, Health, and Safety & Risky Behavior. The main content area is divided into 'THE LATEST FROM KIDS COUNT' (featuring a '2013 Kids Count Data Book' image) and 'QUICK LINKS' (with links for 'Create Custom Profiles', 'KIDS COUNT State Rankings', and 'Media Inquiries and Resources'). There is also a 'CASEY TWEETS' section with recent tweets from @aecfnews and @aecfkids. At the bottom, there is a mailing list sign-up form and social media links for Facebook and Twitter.

# TRENDS



# STATUS OF CHILDREN

Since 1990, KIDS COUNT has ranked states annually on overall child well-being using an index of key indicators. Last year's *Data Book* included an updated index to take advantage of advances in knowledge about child development and the availability of new state-level data to create a more robust tool to better track trends in child well-being.

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The KIDS COUNT index now consists of four domains that capture what children need most to thrive: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health and (4) Family and Community. Each domain comprises four indicators, for a total of 16. (For a more thorough description of the KIDS COUNT index review and revision process, visit [datacenter.kidscount.org/databook/2013](http://datacenter.kidscount.org/databook/2013).)

This year's *Data Book* presents recent trends, generally comparing data from 2005 with data from 2011, which are often the most recent available. The national trend data allow us to compare how the country's children were faring mid-decade, prior to the economic crisis, with how they are doing in its aftermath. State rankings focus only on the most recent data.

## National Trends in Child Well-Being

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Comparing data from before and after the recession reveals positive and negative developments in child well-being nationally (see Figure 1). Broadly speaking, children experienced gains in the Education and Health domains, but setbacks in the Economic Well-Being and Family and Community domains.

Three of the four Economic Well-Being indicators got substantially worse, which is not surprising, given the depth and severity of the economic crisis. Although still not on par with their pre-recession rates, there is a glimmer of hope in this year's economic data, with several indicators improving slightly since 2010. Note that in 2011, the year of our most recent

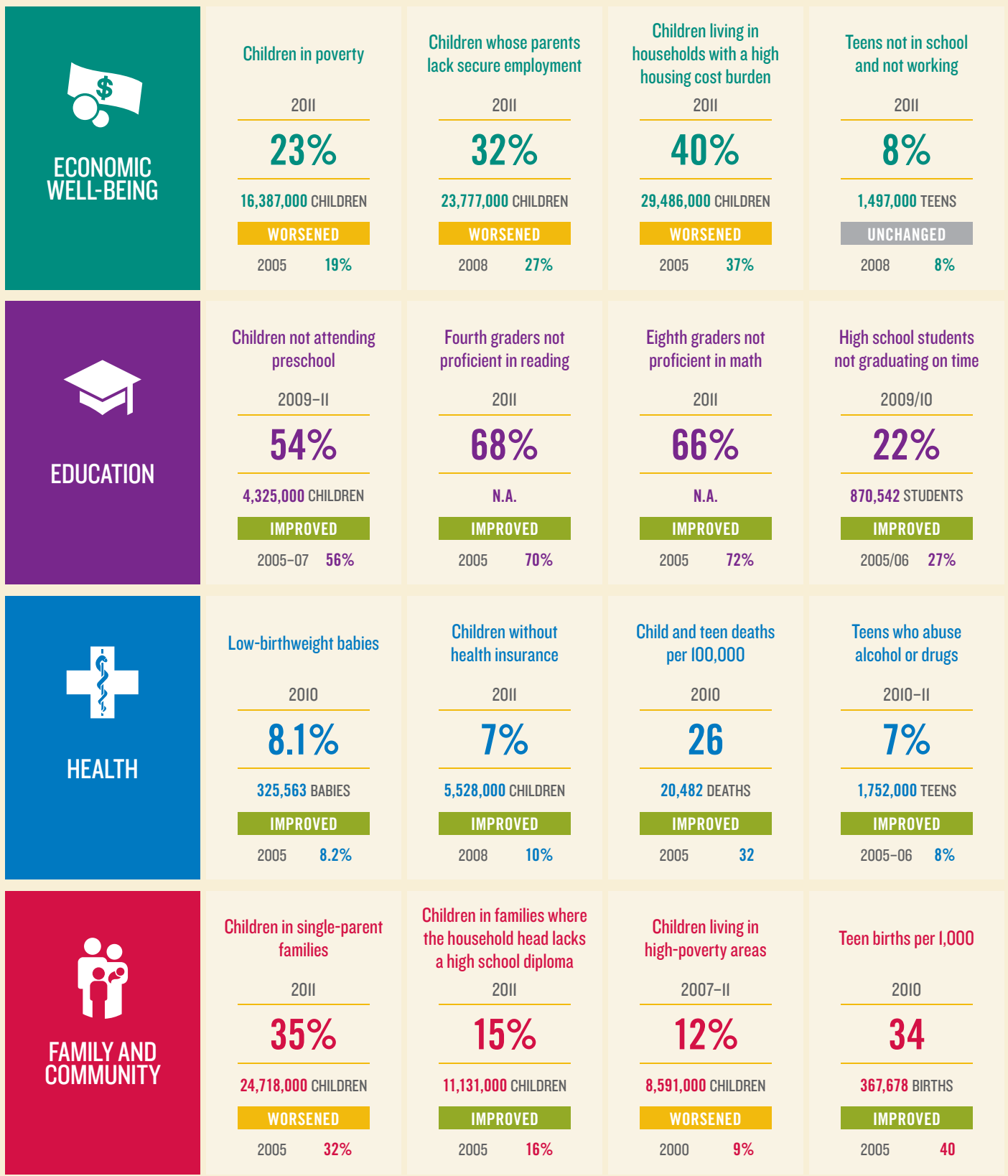
## Profile Pages Online

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National and state profiles providing current and trend data for all 16 indicators are available at [datacenter.kidscount.org/databook/2013/profiles](http://datacenter.kidscount.org/databook/2013/profiles).

National and state data are also available in Appendix 2, on page 42.

## National Trends in 16 Key Indicators of Child Well-Being by Domain



N.A. Data not available.



FIGURE 2

## National Key Indicators by Race and Hispanic Origin

	National Average	African American	American Indian	Asian and Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White	Two or More Races
<b>ECONOMIC WELL-BEING</b>							
Children in poverty: 2011	23%	39%	37%	14%	34%	14%	24%
Children whose parents lack secure employment: 2011	32%	49%	51%	22%	39%	25%	37%
Children living in households with a high housing cost burden: 2011	40%	53%	36%	40%	52%	31%	43%
Teens not in school and not working: 2011	8%	13%	15%	4%	11%	7%	9%
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
Children not attending preschool: 2009–11	54%	51%	58%	48%	63%	50%	53%
Fourth graders not proficient in reading: 2011	68%	84%*	81%*	51%*	82%	58%	63%*
Eighth graders not proficient in math: 2011	66%	87%*	83%*	45%*	80%	57%	63%*
High school students not graduating on time: 2009/10†	22%	34%*	31%*	6%*	29%	17%	N.A.
<b>HEALTH</b>							
Low-birthweight babies: 2010	8.1%	13.2%	7.6%	8.5%	7.0%	7.1%	N.A.
Children without health insurance: 2011	7%	6%	17%	8%	13%	5%	6%
Child and teen deaths per 100,000: 2010	26	36	30	14	21	25	N.A.
Teens who abuse alcohol or drugs: 2011^	7%	6%*	13%*	3%**	7%	7%	9%
<b>FAMILY AND COMMUNITY</b>							
Children in single-parent families: 2011	35%	67%	53%	17%	42%	25%	42%
Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma: 2011	15%	14%	20%	12%	37%	6%	11%
Children living in high-poverty areas: 2007–11	12%	28%	27%	7%	21%	4%	10%
Teen births per 1,000: 2010	34	51	39	11	56	23	N.A.

\* Data are for non-Hispanics only in each respective group. All other rates for these racial groups include both Hispanics and non-Hispanics.

† Provisional data.

^ These are single-year race data for 2011. Data in index are 2010–11 multiyear data.

+ Data results do not include Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders.

N.A. Data not available.

data, the national unemployment rate was nearly 9 percent, but has since come down to 7.5 percent, so next year's data should reflect more improvement in this domain.

In contrast, all four Education indicators — which cover preschool to high school graduation — showed some improvement in recent years. Child health continued to improve, with gains in children's health insurance coverage and reductions in child and teen mortality and teen substance abuse. The percentage of low-birthweight babies improved slightly.

Trends in the Family and Community domain were mixed. There was a substantial drop in the teen birth rate and a small decline in the percentage of children living with parents without a high school diploma. However, the percentage of children living in high-poverty neighborhoods increased, as did that of children in single-parent families.

Overall, developments in child well-being during the past five or six years demonstrate important progress in some areas, while highlighting the substantial work that remains to improve the prospects for the next generation.

Perhaps the most striking finding is that despite tremendous gains during recent decades for children of all races and income levels, inequities among children remain deep and stubbornly persistent (see Figure 2). The recession exacerbated some socioeconomic inequities that were already on the rise, with potential negative consequences for the future.

## Overall Rank

1	New Hampshire
2	Vermont
3	Massachusetts
4	Minnesota
5	New Jersey
6	North Dakota
7	Iowa
8	Nebraska
9	Connecticut
10	Maryland
11	Virginia
12	Wisconsin
13	Maine
14	Utah
15	Wyoming
16	Kansas
17	Pennsylvania
18	South Dakota
19	Washington
20	Idaho
21	Colorado
22	Delaware
23	Illinois
24	Ohio
25	Hawaii
26	Rhode Island
27	Missouri
28	Montana
29	New York
30	Indiana
31	Michigan
32	Oregon
33	Alaska
34	Kentucky
35	North Carolina
36	Oklahoma
37	West Virginia
38	Florida
39	Tennessee
40	Arkansas
41	California
42	Texas
43	Georgia
44	Alabama
45	South Carolina
46	Louisiana
47	Arizona
48	Nevada
49	Mississippi
50	New Mexico

# OVERALL CHILD WELL-BEING

National data mask a great deal of state-by-state and regional variations in child well-being. A state-level examination of the data reveals a hard truth: A child's chances of thriving depend not just on individual, familial and community characteristics, but also on the state in which she or he is born and raised. States vary considerably in their amount of wealth and other resources. State policy choices also strongly influence children's chances for success.

We derive a composite index of overall child well-being for each state by combining data across the four domains: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health and (4) Family and Community. These composite scores are then translated into a single state ranking for child well-being. The three highest-ranked states are New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts; the three lowest ranked are Nevada, Mississippi and New Mexico.

As is apparent in Figure 3, distinct regional patterns emerge from the state rankings. All of the northeastern states rank in the top 15 in terms of overall child well-being, except for Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and New York, which fall in the middle. Most of the states in the industrial Midwest rank in the middle on overall child well-being, while some of the

states farther west — Minnesota, North Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska — are in the top 10.

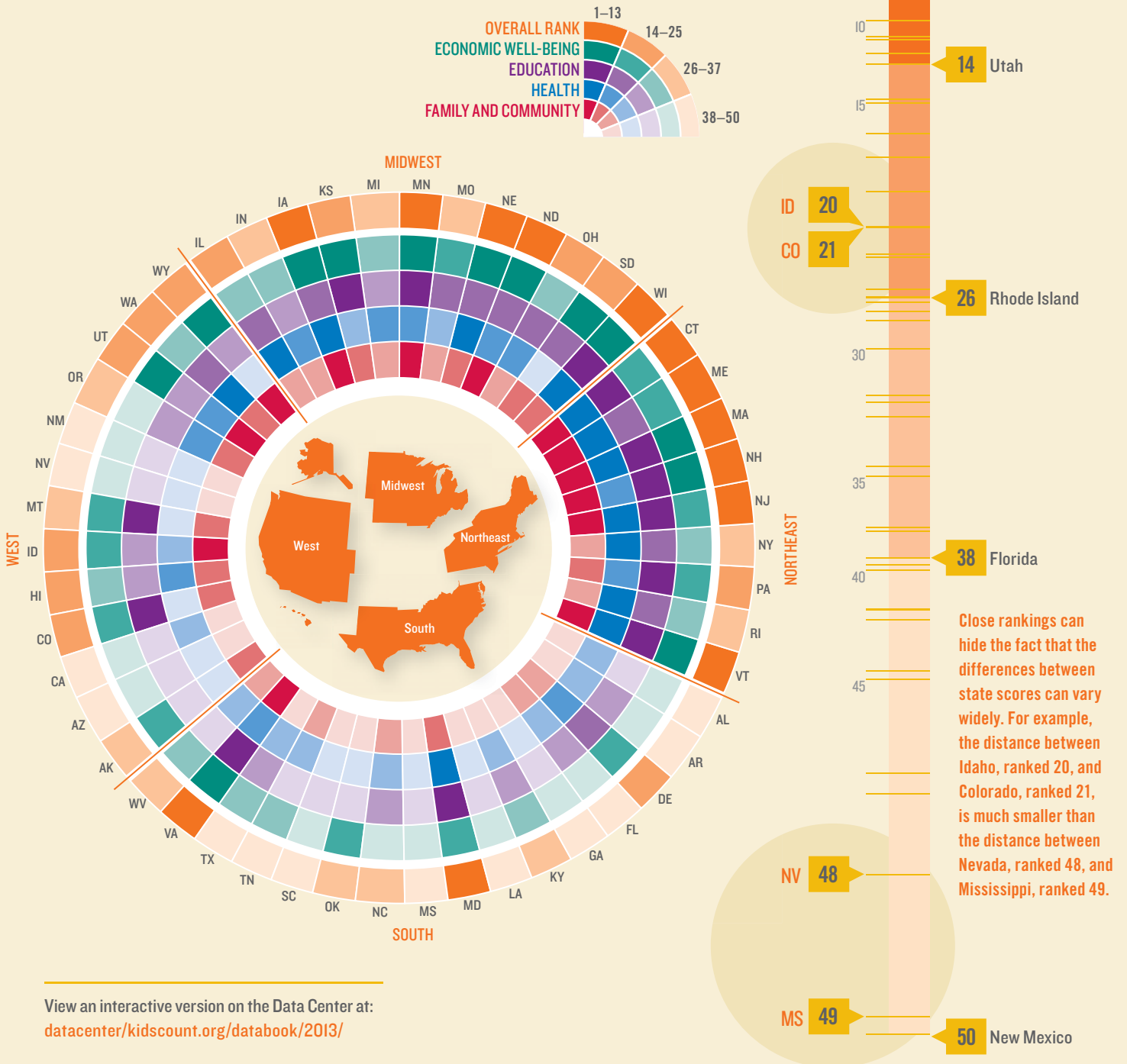
States in the Southeast, Southwest and Appalachia — where the poorest states are located — populate the bottom of the overall rankings. In fact, with the exception of California, the 17 lowest-ranked states are located in these regions. For the first time, New Mexico ranked worst among states for overall child well-being in this year's *KIDS COUNT Data Book*. Along with Nevada and Arizona, states in the Southwest now occupy three of the five lowest rankings for child well-being.

However, as is obvious in Figure 3, the overall rankings obscure some important variations within states. The graphic highlights states that rank best overall and in each domain (represented by concentric circles) in dark colors and those ranking worst in light colors. Although most states' rankings did not vary dramatically across domains, there were a few exceptions. For example, Rhode Island ranked among the top five states in the Health domain, but was among the bottom 20 states in terms of the Economic Well-Being of its children. Conversely, Wyoming ranked second for Economic Well-Being, but was among the worst 12 states for Health. For all states, the index identifies bright spots and room for improvement.

FIGURE 3

## Overall Child Well-Being by State

We derive a composite index of overall child well-being for each state by combining data across the four domains: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health and (4) Family and Community. To see how each state ranked overall and by domain, see Appendix I.



## Economic Well-Being Domain Rank

- 1 North Dakota
- 2 Wyoming
- 3 South Dakota
- 4 Nebraska
- 5 Iowa
- 6 Minnesota
- 7 New Hampshire
- 8 Kansas
- 9 Vermont
- 10 Virginia
- 11 Utah
- 12 Wisconsin
- 13 Massachusetts
- 14 Maryland
- 15 Montana
- 16 Connecticut
- 17 Pennsylvania
- 18 New Jersey
- 19 Colorado
- 20 Maine
- 21 Delaware
- 22 Missouri
- 23 Idaho
- 24 Alaska
- 25 Oklahoma
- 26 Indiana
- 27 Ohio
- 28 Washington
- 29 Illinois
- 30 Texas
- 31 Rhode Island
- 32 Kentucky
- 33 West Virginia
- 34 Hawaii
- 35 New York
- 36 Michigan
- 37 Tennessee
- 38 North Carolina
- 39 Arkansas
- 40 Alabama
- 41 Oregon
- 42 Louisiana
- 43 Georgia
- 44 South Carolina
- 45 Florida
- 46 California
- 47 Arizona
- 48 Nevada
- 49 New Mexico
- 50 Mississippi



# ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

To help children grow into successful, productive adults, their parents need well-paying jobs, affordable housing and the ability to invest in their children's future. When parents are unemployed or their incomes are low, they may struggle to meet their children's most basic needs for food, safe housing, medical care and quality child care. They may be unable to provide books, toys and activities that are developmentally enriching. Inadequate family income and economic uncertainty also increase parental stress, which, in turn, can cause depression and anxiety and increase the risk of substance abuse and domestic violence — all of which can compromise parenting.<sup>15</sup> While the negative effects of poverty on children are troubling in their own right, they also increase the chances of poor outcomes for youth and young adults, such as teen pregnancy, failure to graduate from high school, poor health and lack of secure employment.<sup>16</sup>

## Children in Poverty



From 2005 to 2011, the child poverty rate rose from 19 to 23 percent, representing an increase of 3 million children.



**1 IN 4**  
YOUNG CHILDREN

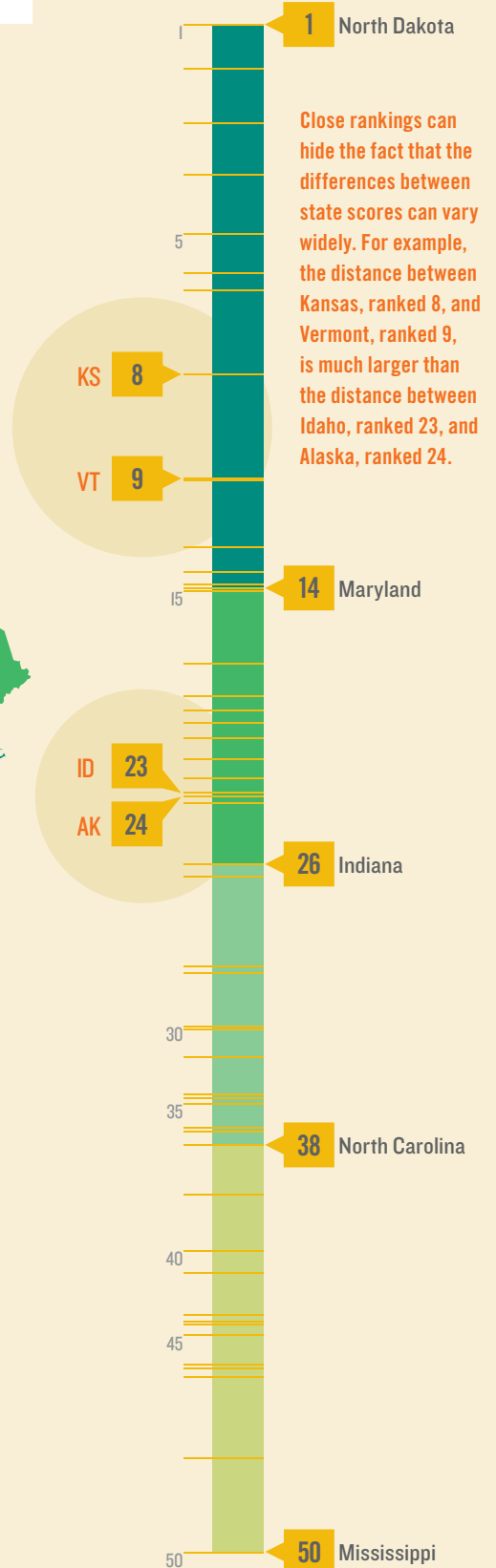
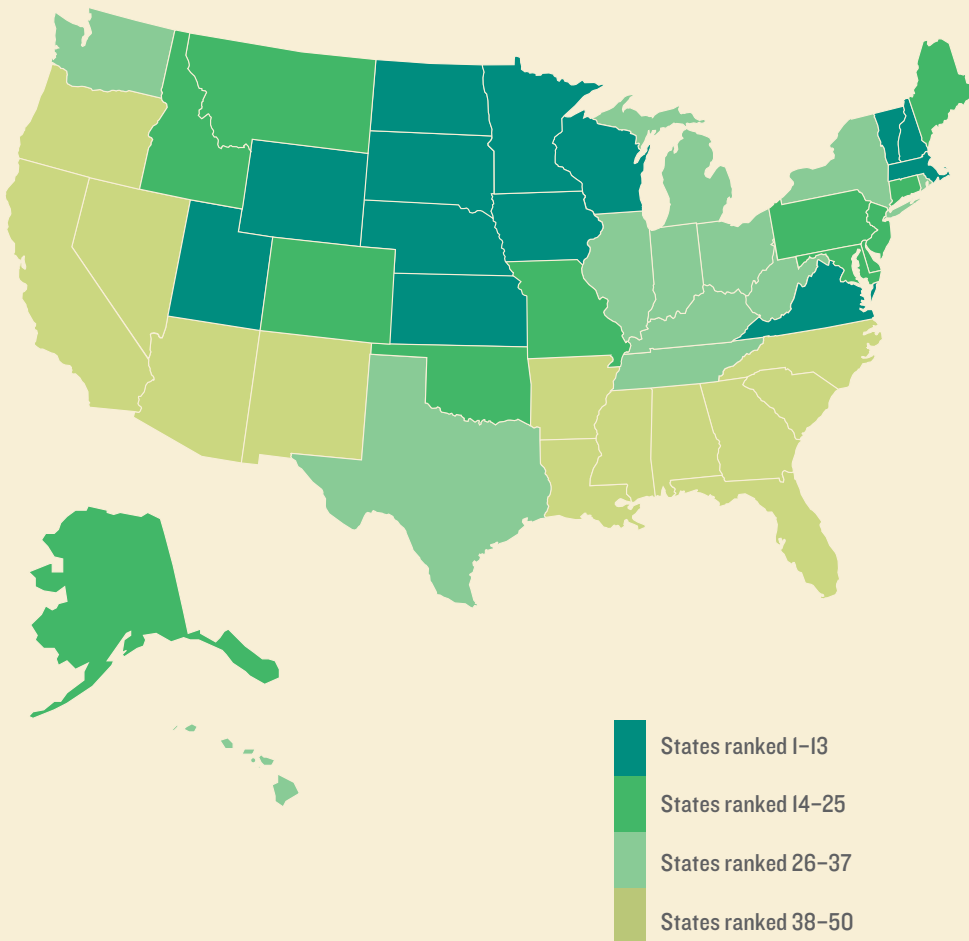
Poverty rates for children age 5 and under are even higher than overall rates, at 26 percent.

SOURCE U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.



## A State-to-State Comparison of Economic Well-Being

The map below illustrates how states ranked on the Economic Well-Being domain. The bar on the right displays the scores behind the rankings and the relative distance between state scores, demonstrating that not all ranks are created equal.

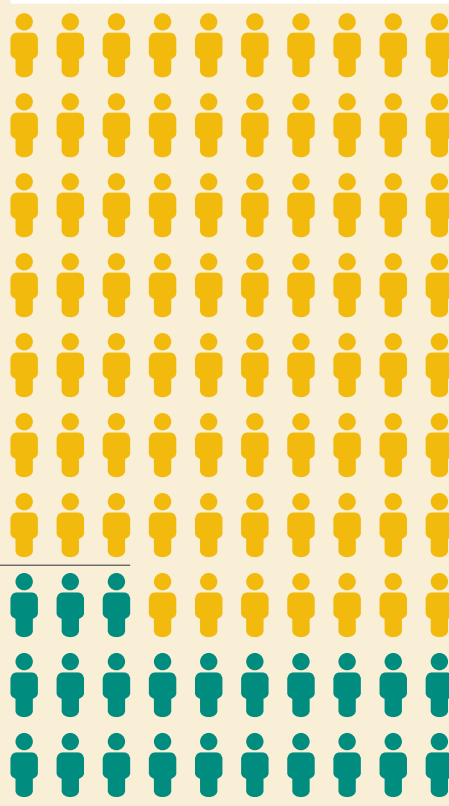




## Children in poverty

Nationally, 23 percent of children (16.4 million) lived in poverty in 2011, up from 22 percent in 2010 (15.7 million).

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WHO LIVED IN POVERTY: 2011



The number of poor children continued to climb even as the national unemployment rate was gradually declining.

**23%**  
OR  
**16.4**  
MILLION CHILDREN

SOURCE U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.

Growing up in poverty is one of the greatest threats to healthy child development. Poverty and financial stress can impede children's cognitive development and their ability to learn. It can contribute to behavioral, social and emotional problems and poor health. The risks posed by economic hardship are greatest among children who experience poverty when they are young and among children who experience persistent and deep poverty.<sup>17</sup> Already high compared with other developed nations, the child poverty rate in the United States increased dramatically as a result of the economic crisis. The official poverty line in 2011 was \$22,811 for a family of two adults and two children.

- Nationally, 23 percent of children (16.4 million) lived in poor families in 2011, up from 22 percent in 2010 (15.7 million). This means that the number of poor children continued to climb even as the national unemployment rate was gradually declining. From 2005 to 2011, the child poverty rate rose from 19 to 23 percent, representing an increase of 3 million children.
- The rate of child poverty for 2011 ranged from a low of 12 percent in New Hampshire, to a high of 32 percent in Mississippi.
- The child poverty rate among African Americans (39 percent) was almost three times the rate for non-Hispanic whites (14 percent) in 2011.

## A Better Measure of Poverty and the Role of the Social Safety Net

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* uses the official federal poverty measure for state child poverty rates. However, this statistic measures only the cash income available to families, without accounting for many supports that a family might receive, such as federal tax credits, child care and housing assistance and food aid through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly food stamps).

The official measure also fails to adequately reflect the ways in which costs — such as housing and child care — vary by region and have changed dramatically over the past half century.

Researchers have quantified basic living expenses in specific localities and found that, on average, families need an income of roughly twice the federal poverty level to cover basic expenses for housing, food, transportation, health care and child care.<sup>18</sup> In 2011, 45 percent (32.7 million) of U.S. children lived in families with incomes

below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (\$45,622 for a family of four).

To better understand how families are faring, the U.S. Census Bureau created a Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), which measures the impact of social programs and accounts for rising costs, among other changes. While the Census Bureau does not yet have sufficient data (or funding) to calculate the SPM at the state level, this new national measure is an important advance in understanding child poverty and the effects of safety net programs and tax policies on the economic well-being of families.

For example, revised poverty measures demonstrate that our existing social safety net lifts millions of Americans out of poverty every year. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, when key safety net programs were included in a poverty measure, some 40 million people in 2011 rose above the poverty line.<sup>19</sup>

**In 2011, 45 percent (32.7 million) of U.S. children lived in families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (\$45,622 for a family of four).**

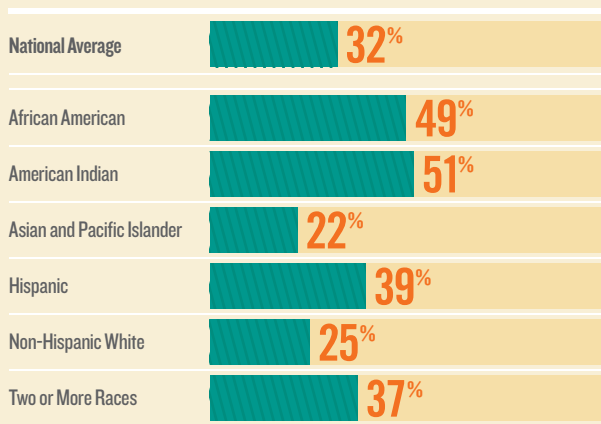


## Children whose parents lack secure employment

In 2011, one in three children in the United States (23.8 million) lived in families where no parent had full-time, year-round employment. Roughly half of African-American and American Indian children and 39 percent of Latino children lacked secure parental employment.



PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK SECURE EMPLOYMENT BY RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN: 2011



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.

Children living in families lacking secure parental employment, defined as those families where no parent works full time, year round, are particularly vulnerable. Without at least one parent employed full time, children are more likely to fall into poverty. Yet too many parents who want full-time work are forced to piece together part-time or temporary jobs that do not provide sufficient or stable income; some lack the education and skills needed to secure a good job. The recession exacerbated both unemployment and underemployment. Even a full-time job at low wages does not necessarily lift a family out of poverty. Without access to benefits and tax credits, one adult in a two-parent family with two children would need to earn about \$11.41 per hour — \$4.16 more than the federal minimum wage — working 40 hours per week for 50 weeks per year just to reach the poverty line.

■ In 2011, nearly one-third of all children in the United States (23.8 million) lived in families where no parent had full-time, year-round employment. Since 2008, the number of such children climbed by 3.6 million.

■ North Dakota had the lowest percentage of children in families without secure parental employment in 2011 (22 percent), followed by New Hampshire, at 23 percent. Mississippi had the highest rate, at 38 percent.

■ Roughly half of all American Indian children (51 percent) and African-American children (49 percent) had no parent with full-time, year-round employment in 2011, compared with 25 percent of white children and 39 percent of Latino children.

## Children living in households with a high housing cost burden

Family income is only one factor of financial security; the cost of basic expenses also matters. Housing is typically one of the largest expenses that families face. This measure identifies the proportion of children living in households that spend more than 30 percent of their pretax income on housing, whether they are renters or homeowners. Low-income families, in particular, are unlikely to be able to meet all of their basic needs if housing consumes nearly one-third or more of their income.

- Across the nation, 40 percent of children (29.5 million) lived in households with a high housing cost burden in 2011, compared with 37 percent in 2005 (27.4 million). The 2011 figure represents a slight improvement from the prior year, when 41 percent of children lived in families facing disproportionately high housing costs.

- In 2011, California had the highest percentage of children — a startling 52 percent — living in households that spent more than 30 percent of income for housing. North Dakota had the lowest, at 21 percent.

- More than half of African-American children (53 percent) and Hispanic children (52 percent) lived in households with a high housing cost burden in 2011, compared with 31 percent of non-Hispanic white children.

## Teens not in school and not working

Teens who leave school and do not become part of the workforce are at high risk of experiencing negative outcomes as they transition to adulthood. The percentage of teens not in school and not working (sometimes referred to as “disconnected youth” or “idle teens”) includes young people ages 16 to 19 who are not engaged in school or the workforce. While those who have dropped out of school are clearly vulnerable, many young people who have finished school but are not working are also at a disadvantage in terms of achieving economic success in adulthood.

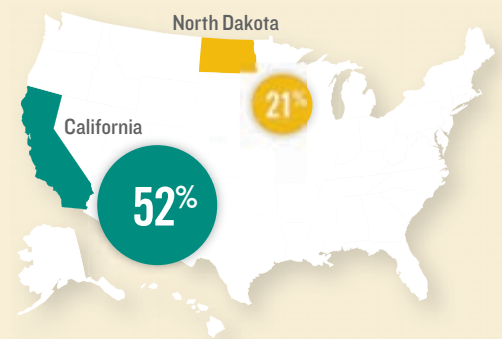
- Nationally, 8 percent of youth were disconnected from both work and school in 2011. About 1.5 million teens between the ages of 16 and 19 were neither enrolled in school nor working, up from 1.4 million in 2008, but down from 1.6 million in 2010.

- At 4 percent, Wyoming had the lowest rate of teens not in school and not working in 2011. Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska and South Dakota were close behind, at 5 percent. In contrast, Nevada had the highest rate, at 13 percent.

- American Indian, African-American and Latino teens had considerably higher rates of being neither in school nor working than their white and Asian and Pacific Islander counterparts.

**In 2011, California had the highest percentage of children — a startling 52 percent — living in households spending more than 30 percent of income for housing, whereas North Dakota had the lowest, 21 percent.**

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH A HIGH HOUSING COST BURDEN: 2011



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.



## Education Domain Rank

- 1 Massachusetts
- 2 New Jersey
- 3 Vermont
- 4 New Hampshire
- 5 Maryland
- 6 Connecticut
- 7 Minnesota
- 8 Pennsylvania
- 9 Colorado
- 10 Virginia
- 11 Kansas
- 12 Wisconsin
- 13 Montana
- 14 Illinois
- 15 Iowa
- 16 North Dakota
- 17 Nebraska
- 18 Ohio
- 19 New York
- 20 Maine
- 21 Missouri
- 22 South Dakota
- 23 Delaware
- 24 Rhode Island
- 25 Washington
- 26 Wyoming
- 27 North Carolina
- 28 Kentucky
- 29 Idaho
- 30 Utah
- 31 Texas
- 32 Michigan
- 33 Hawaii
- 34 Indiana
- 35 Florida
- 36 Arkansas
- 37 Oregon
- 38 Georgia
- 39 California
- 40 Oklahoma
- 41 South Carolina
- 42 Tennessee
- 43 Alaska
- 44 Alabama
- 45 Louisiana
- 46 Arizona
- 47 West Virginia
- 48 Mississippi
- 49 New Mexico
- 50 Nevada



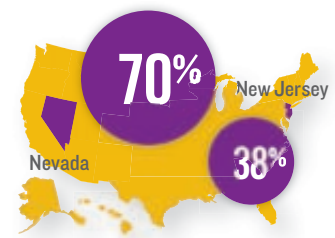
# EDUCATION

Establishing the conditions that promote successful educational achievement for children begins with quality prenatal care and continues into the early elementary school years. With a strong and healthy beginning, children can more easily stay on track to remain in school and graduate, pursue postsecondary education and training and successfully transition to adulthood. Yet the United States continues to have significant gaps in educational achievement by race and income. Although the achievement gap between black and white students has narrowed considerably over the past four decades, the gap by income has steadily increased.<sup>20</sup> Addressing this gap will be key to ensuring our future workforce can compete on a global scale, given that most of the new jobs that will be created over the next decade will require some postsecondary education, training or certification.

## Children Not Attending Preschool



From 2009 to 2011, more than half of 3- and 4-year-olds were not enrolled in preschool, representing 4.3 million children.

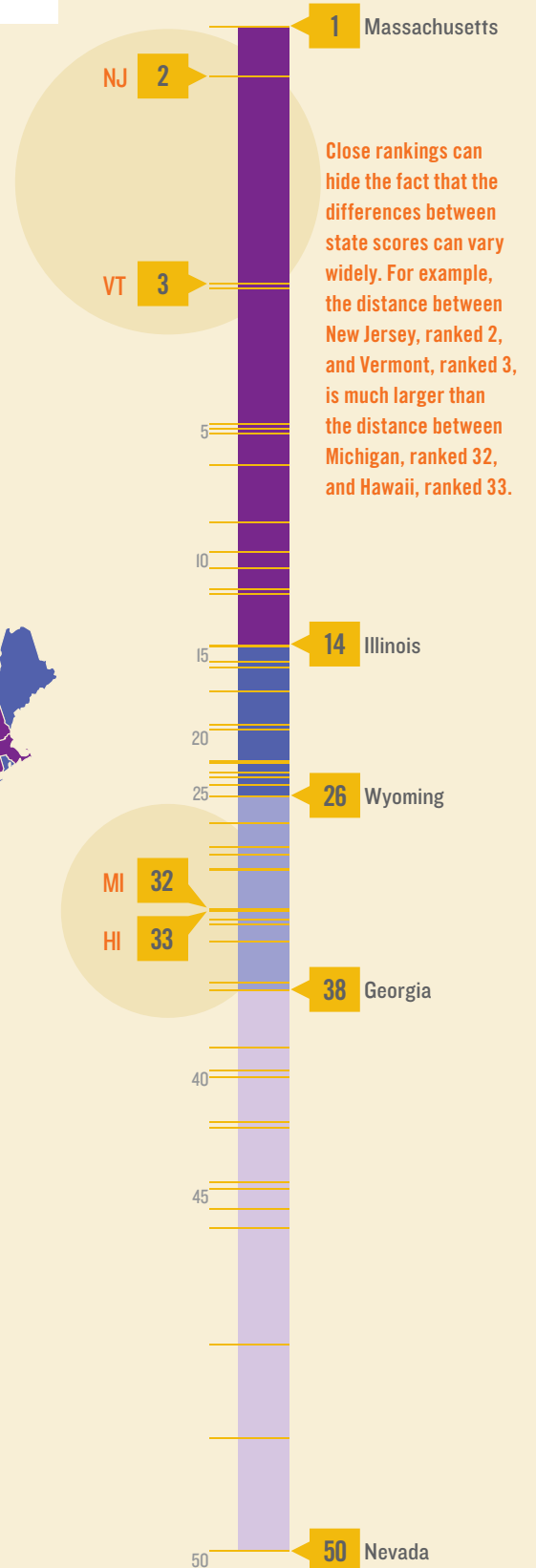
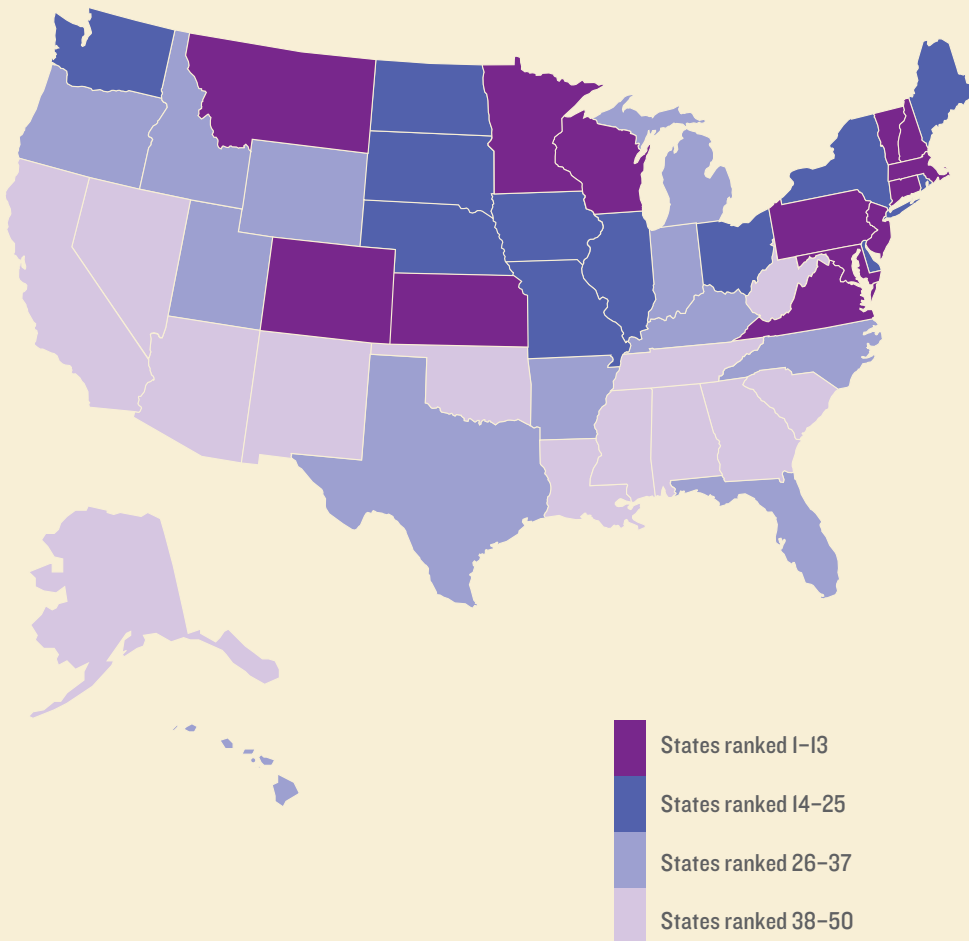


In 2011, New Jersey, at 38 percent, had the lowest percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds not enrolled in preschool. The highest was Nevada, at 70 percent.

SOURCE U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.

## A State-to-State Comparison of Education

The map below illustrates how states ranked on the Education domain. The bar on the right displays the scores behind the rankings and the relative distance between state scores, demonstrating that not all ranks are created equal.





EDUCATION

## Children not attending preschool

High-quality prekindergarten programs for 3- and 4-year-olds can improve school readiness, with the greatest gains accruing to the highest-risk children. Head Start and the expansion of state-funded programs since the 1990s have greatly increased access to preschool.<sup>21</sup> But many children, especially 3-year-olds, continue to be left out, exacerbating socioeconomic differences in educational achievement. Because of small sample sizes in some states, we combined data collected over a three-year period for this measure.

- From 2009 to 2011, more than 4.3 million 3- and 4-year-olds were not enrolled in preschool, representing more than half (54 percent) of all children in that age group. This is a slight improvement over 2005–07, when nearly 4.7 million children (56 percent) did not participate in a pre-K program.

- In 2009–11, New Jersey and Connecticut, at 38 and 39 percent, respectively, had the lowest percentages of 3- and 4-year-olds not enrolled in preschool. The states with the highest percentages of children not enrolled in 2009–11 were Nevada (70 percent) and Arizona (67 percent).

- Half of African-American and white 3- and 4-year-olds were not in pre-K programs; the percentage was nearly the same for Asian and Pacific Islander children (48 percent). The rates were noticeably higher for Latinos (63 percent) and American Indians (58 percent).

EDUCATION

## Fourth graders not proficient in reading

Proficiency in reading by the end of third grade is a crucial marker in a child's educational development. In the early years, learning to read is a critical component of education. But beginning in fourth grade, children use reading to learn other subjects, and therefore, mastery of reading becomes a critical component in their ability to keep up academically. Children who reach fourth grade without being able to read proficiently are more likely to drop out of high school, reducing their earning potential and chances for success.<sup>22</sup>

- A stunning 68 percent of fourth graders in public school were reading below proficient levels in 2011, a slight improvement from 2005, when the figure was 70 percent.

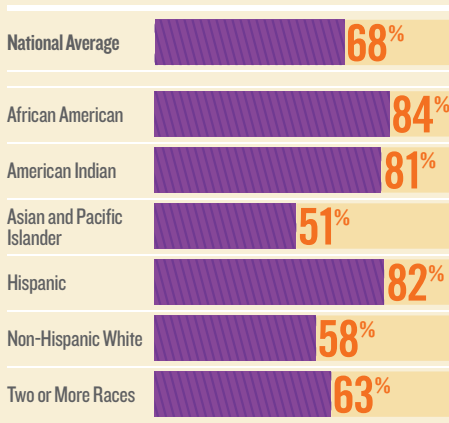
- State differences in fourth-grade reading levels among public school students were wide. In 2011, Massachusetts had the lowest percentage of public school fourth graders not proficient in reading, 50 percent, compared with a high of 79 percent in New Mexico.

- More than 80 percent of African-American, American Indian and Latino fourth graders were not proficient in reading, compared with 58 percent of non-Hispanic whites. Although these figures are deeply troubling, fourth-grade reading levels have improved by 3 to 4 percentage points since 2005 for three of these four groups; reading proficiency stayed the same for American Indian fourth graders.

- Among low-income fourth graders, 82 percent were not proficient in reading in 2011, compared with 52 percent of their higher-income peers.<sup>23</sup>

Children who reach fourth grade without being able to read proficiently are more likely to drop out of high school, reducing their earning potential and chances for success.

PERCENTAGE OF FOURTH GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN READING BY RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN: 2011



SOURCE U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress.

## Eighth graders not proficient in math

Competence in mathematics is essential for success in the workplace, which increasingly requires higher-level technical skills. The influence of high school students' math proficiency on later earnings has grown steadily over time. Students who take advanced math and science courses that require a strong mastery of math fundamentals are more likely to attend and complete college.<sup>24</sup> But even for young people who do not attend college, basic math skills improve employability.

- Among public school students, math proficiency levels in eighth grade and reading proficiency levels in fourth grade were quite similar in 2011, but there was greater improvement in eighth-grade math achievement. Nationwide, two-thirds (66 percent) of public school eighth graders scored below proficient math levels in 2011, compared with 72 percent in 2005.

- At 49 percent, Massachusetts had the lowest percentage of public school eighth graders not proficient in math in 2011. Mississippi had the highest rate, at 81 percent.

- In 2011, 57 percent of non-Hispanic white eighth graders were below the proficient level, compared with 80 percent of Latinos, 83 percent of American Indians and 87 percent of African Americans. But eighth-grade math achievement improved for all racial and ethnic groups from 2005 to 2011, including a 7 percentage point improvement for Latinos.

- Income disparities were similarly wide. In 2011, 81 percent of low-income eighth graders were not proficient in math, compared with 53 percent of higher-income eighth graders.<sup>25</sup>

## High school students not graduating on time

Students who graduate from high school on time are more likely to continue to postsecondary education and training; they are more employable and have higher incomes than students who fail to graduate.<sup>26</sup> In 2011, median annual earnings for someone without a high school diploma (\$18,800) were 70 percent of those of a high school graduate (\$26,700) and 39 percent of the median earnings of someone with a bachelor's degree (\$48,300).<sup>27</sup> High school graduates have better health outcomes, make healthier choices and are less likely to engage in risky behavior.<sup>28</sup>

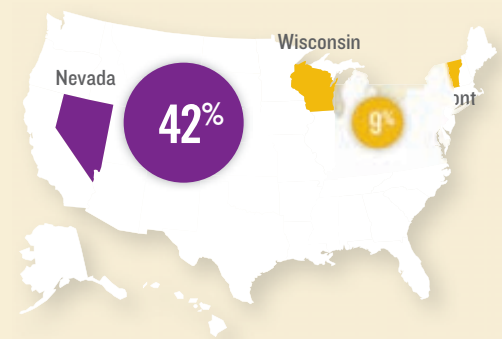
- Nationally, for the 2009/10 school year, roughly 871,000 high school students (22 percent) did not graduate on time. However, this is an improvement from 2005/06, when 27 percent did not graduate in four years.

- Among the states, the percentage of high school students not graduating from high school in four years ranged from a low of 9 percent in Vermont and Wisconsin, to a high of 42 percent in Nevada for 2009/10.

- In 2009/10, 17 percent of non-Hispanic white students did not graduate from high school on time. The rate for African Americans was twice as high.

Among the states, the percentage of students not graduating from high school in four years ranged from a low of 9 percent in Vermont and Wisconsin, to a high of 42 percent in Nevada for 2009/10.

PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO DON'T GRADUATE ON TIME: 2009/10



SOURCE U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009/10 Common Core of Data.

## Health Domain Rank

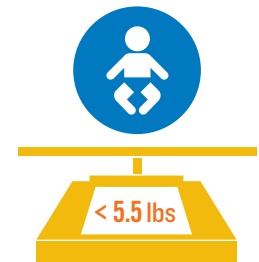
- 1 Maine
- 2 Connecticut
- 3 Wisconsin
- 4 Vermont
- 5 Rhode Island
- 6 Washington
- 7 Iowa
- 8 Maryland
- 9 New York
- 10 Nebraska
- 11 Massachusetts
- 12 Illinois
- 13 New Jersey
- 14 Utah
- 15 Minnesota
- 16 New Hampshire
- 17 Oregon
- 18 Hawaii
- 19 Delaware
- 20 Virginia
- 21 Indiana
- 22 Pennsylvania
- 23 Michigan
- 24 Ohio
- 25 North Dakota
- 26 Kansas
- 27 West Virginia
- 28 Idaho
- 29 California
- 30 Arkansas
- 31 Kentucky
- 32 Missouri
- 33 Tennessee
- 34 North Carolina
- 35 Alabama
- 36 Texas
- 37 Florida
- 38 South Dakota
- 39 Wyoming
- 40 Georgia
- 41 Louisiana
- 42 Colorado
- 43 Oklahoma
- 44 South Carolina
- 45 Arizona
- 46 Alaska
- 47 Nevada
- 48 Mississippi
- 49 New Mexico
- 50 Montana



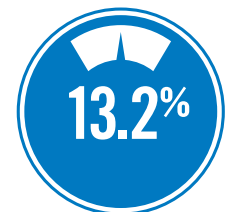
# HEALTH

Children's health is the foundation of their overall development, and ensuring that they are born healthy is the first step toward increasing the life chances of disadvantaged children. Poverty, poor nutrition, lack of preventive health care, substance abuse, maternal depression and family violence put children's health at risk. Poor health in childhood impacts other critical aspects of a child's life, such as school readiness and attendance, and can have lasting consequences on his or her future health and well-being.

## Low-birthweight babies



Nationally, low-birthweight babies represented 8.1 percent of all live births in 2010, virtually unchanged from 2005.



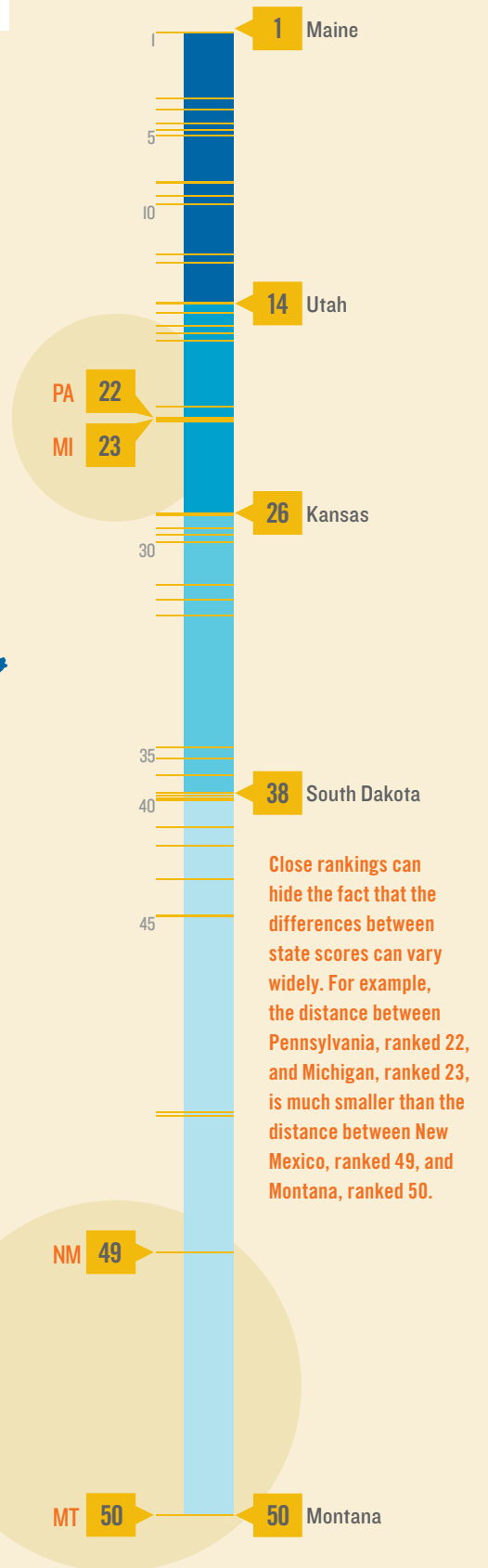
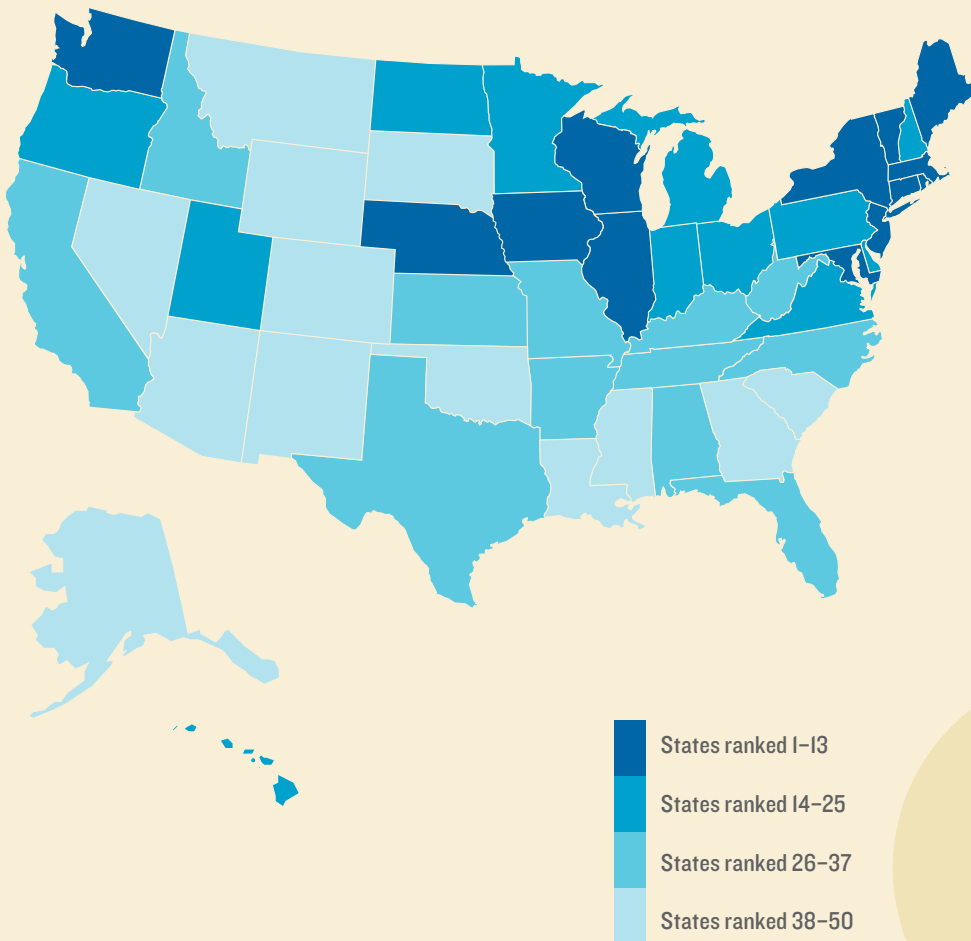
African-American babies are most likely to be born with a low birthweight, at a rate of 13.2 percent in 2010.

SOURCE Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 2010 Vital Statistics.



## A State-to-State Comparison of Health

The map below illustrates how states ranked on the Health domain. The bar on the right displays the scores behind the rankings and the relative distance between state scores, demonstrating that not all ranks are created equal.





## HEALTH

### Low-birthweight babies

The birth of a baby reminds us of the potential that exists in every new generation. Yet, the odds against thriving are higher for some newborns than for others. Babies born with a low birthweight (less than about 5.5 pounds) have a high probability of experiencing developmental problems and short- and long-term disabilities and are at greater risk of dying within the first year of life. Although recent increases in multiple births have strongly influenced the rise in rates of low-birthweight babies, rates have also been higher among single births. Smoking, poor nutrition, poverty, stress, infections and violence can increase the risk of a baby being born with a low birthweight.<sup>29</sup>

► Nationally, low-birthweight babies represented 8.1 percent of all live births in 2010, virtually unchanged from 2005. After gradually increasing over time, the percentage of low-birthweight babies has remained relatively stable for the past several years, slightly below the three-decade high of 8.3 percent reached in 2006.<sup>30</sup>

► Alaska had the lowest percentage of low-birthweight babies in 2010 — 5.7 percent of live births — while Mississippi had the highest, 12.1 percent.

► Among racial and ethnic groups, African-American babies were most likely to be born with a low birthweight, at a rate of 13.2 percent of live births in 2010. Although this represents a slight decline from a high of 13.6 percent in 2007, it is still close to twice the low-birthweight rate for Latinos and non-Hispanic whites.

## HEALTH

### Children without health insurance

Children without health insurance coverage are less likely than insured children to have a regular health care provider and to receive care when they need it. They are also more likely to receive treatment after their condition has worsened, putting them at greater risk of hospitalization. Having health insurance can protect families from financial devastation when a child experiences a serious or chronic illness. Although the provision of employer-sponsored health insurance is declining, and most low-wage and part-time workers lack employer coverage, public health insurance has resulted in increased coverage among children during the past decade.

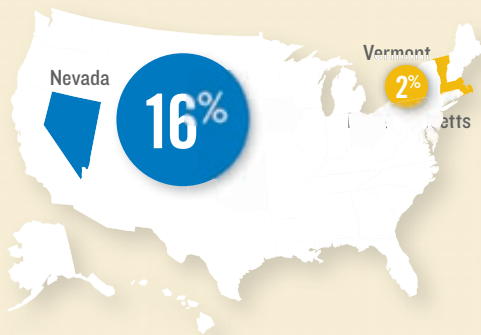
► Across the nation, 7 percent of children (5.5 million) lacked health insurance in 2011. That's a 30 percent improvement from 2008, when 10 percent of children were uninsured.

► In 18 states, the percentage of children lacking health coverage was 5 percent or less in 2011. Massachusetts and Vermont had the lowest rate, 2 percent, compared with a high of 16 percent in Nevada. The rate was 13 percent in Arizona and Texas.

► American Indian (17 percent) and Latino children (13 percent) were far more likely to be uninsured than non-Hispanic white (5 percent), African-American (6 percent) and Asian and Pacific Islander (8 percent) children.

In 18 states, the percentage of children lacking health coverage was 5 percent or less in 2011. Massachusetts and Vermont had the lowest rate, 2 percent, compared to a high of 16 percent in Nevada.

#### PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE: 2011



SOURCE U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.

## Child and teen deaths

The child and teen death rate (deaths per 100,000 children ages 1 to 19) reflects a broad array of factors: physical and mental health; access to health care; community factors (such as violence and environmental toxins); use of safety practices and, especially for younger children, the level of adult supervision. Accidents, primarily those involving motor vehicles, were the leading cause of death for children and youth, accounting for 32 percent of all deaths among children ages 1 to 14.<sup>31</sup> As children move into their mid- and late-teenage years, they encounter new risks that can be deadly. In 2010, accidents, homicides and suicides accounted for 73 percent of deaths to teens ages 15 to 19.<sup>32</sup>

- Nearly 20,500 children and youth ages 1 to 19 died in the United States in 2010, which translates into a mortality rate of 26 per 100,000 children and teens. The rate declined from 2005, when it was 32 per 100,000, resulting in roughly 4,600 fewer child and teen deaths in 2010.
- Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island had the lowest rates, 17 deaths per 100,000 children and youth in 2010. Montana fell at the other end of the spectrum, with a child and teen death rate of 45 per 100,000.
- The 2010 mortality rates for African-American and American Indian children and teens (36 and 30 per 100,000, respectively) were considerably higher than death rates for children and youth of other racial and ethnic groups.

## Teens who abuse alcohol or drugs

Teen alcohol and drug abuse are associated with a variety of potentially harmful behaviors, such as engaging in risky sexual activity, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, abusing multiple substances and committing crimes. Alcohol and drug abuse among adolescents can cause both short- and long-term physical and mental health problems and exacerbate existing conditions. Teen substance abuse is also associated with poor academic performance and increased risk of dropping out of school. The negative consequences of teen alcohol and drug abuse can carry over into adulthood. Overall, alcohol and drug use by adolescents has declined over the past decade, although patterns vary by substance.

- In 2010–11, 7 percent of teens ages 12 to 17 had abused or were dependent on alcohol or drugs during the past year, declining from 8 percent in 2005–06.
- Rates of substance abuse among teens varied from a low of 6 percent in 16 states for 2010–11, to a high of 10 percent in Montana.
- Among racial and ethnic groups, Asian and Pacific Islander and African-American teens were least likely (3 and 6 percent, respectively) to abuse or be dependent on alcohol or drugs.

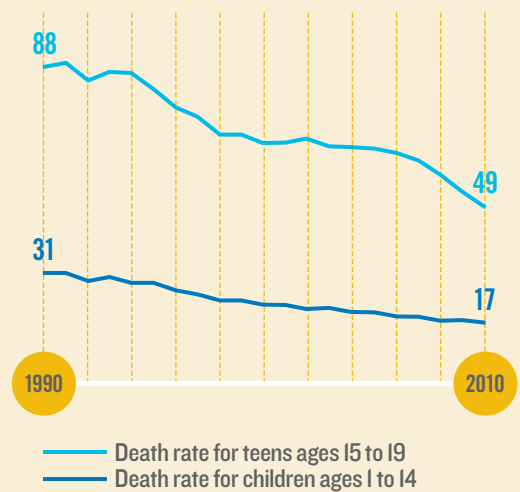
Death rates for children of all age groups have declined considerably in recent decades.

INFANT MORTALITY PER 1,000 BIRTHS: 2010

6.1 PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS

Infant mortality rate

CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS PER 100,000: 1990–2010



SOURCE Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 1990–2010 Vital Statistics.

## Family and Community Domain Rank

- 1 New Hampshire
- 2 Utah
- 3 Vermont
- 4 North Dakota
- 5 Minnesota
- 6 Maine
- 7 Massachusetts
- 8 Iowa
- 9 New Jersey
- 10 Idaho
- 11 Connecticut
- 12 Wyoming
- 13 Virginia
- 14 Montana
- 15 Nebraska
- 16 Hawaii
- 17 Washington
- 18 Wisconsin
- 19 Alaska
- 20 Maryland
- 21 Colorado
- 22 Oregon
- 23 Kansas
- 24 South Dakota
- 25 Pennsylvania
- 26 Missouri
- 27 Michigan
- 28 Delaware
- 29 Illinois
- 30 Indiana
- 31 Ohio
- 32 Rhode Island
- 33 New York
- 34 West Virginia
- 35 Florida
- 36 North Carolina
- 37 Tennessee
- 38 Kentucky
- 39 Oklahoma
- 40 Georgia
- 41 Nevada
- 42 California
- 43 South Carolina
- 44 Alabama
- 45 Arkansas
- 46 Arizona
- 47 Louisiana
- 48 Texas
- 49 New Mexico
- 50 Mississippi



# FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

When children are nurtured and well cared for, especially during their early years, they have better social-emotional, language and learning outcomes. These, in turn, lead to more positive behavior and academic achievement in later years. But single parents, especially those struggling with financial hardship, are more prone to stress, anxiety and depression, which can interfere with effective parenting. These findings underscore the importance of two-generation strategies that strengthen families by mitigating their underlying economic distress and addressing the well-being of both parents and children. Families exist in and are affected by neighborhoods and communities. When communities have strong social and cultural institutions; good role models for children; and the resources to provide safety, good schools and quality support services, families and their children are more likely to thrive.

## Children in Single-Parent Families



**+3** MILLION

35 percent of all children lived in single-parent families in 2011, representing an increase of more than 3 million children since 2005.



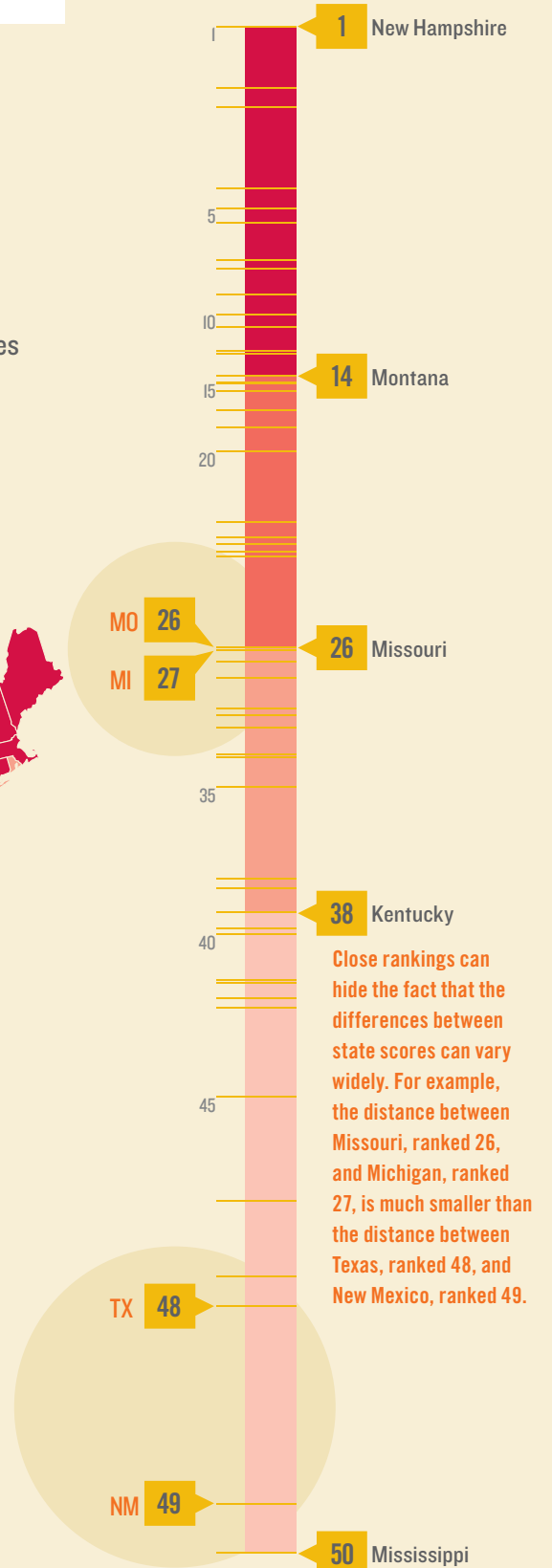
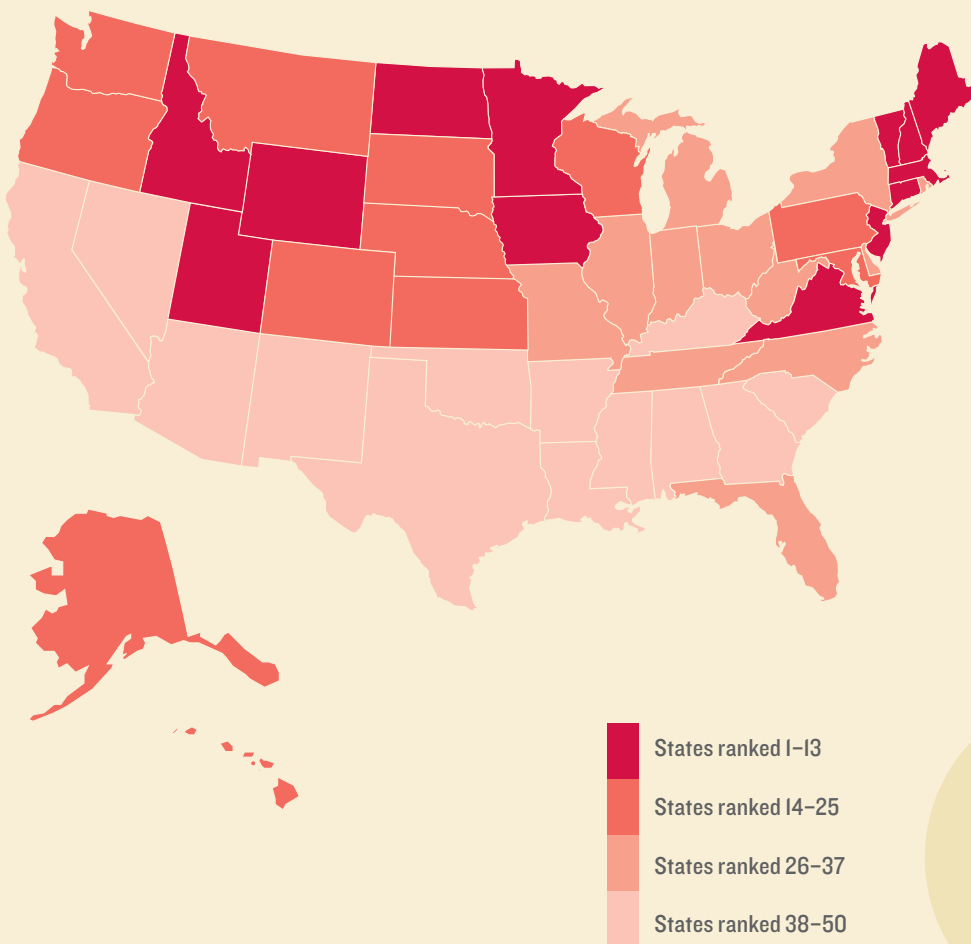
NEARLY  
**2 OF 5**  
YOUNG CHILDREN

Young children were more likely to live in a single-parent family. 37 percent of children under age 6 lived with a single parent.

SOURCE U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.

## A State-to-State Comparison of Family and Community

The map below illustrates how states ranked on the Family and Community domain. The bar on the right displays the scores behind the rankings and the relative distance between state scores, demonstrating that not all ranks are created equal.







### Children in single-parent families

Children growing up in single-parent families typically do not have the same economic or human resources available as those growing up in two-parent families. In 2011, 37 percent of single-parent families had incomes below the poverty line, compared with 9 percent of married couples with children. Only 30 percent of female-headed families reported receiving any child support payments in 2010.<sup>33</sup> Compared with children in married-couple families, children raised in female-headed households are more likely to drop out of school, to have or cause a teen pregnancy and to experience a divorce in adulthood.<sup>34</sup> The U.S. Census Bureau defines single-parent families as those headed by an unmarried adult. A child living with cohabiting parents is counted as living in a single-parent family.

► The percentage of children living in single-parent families rose from 32 percent in 2005 to 35 percent in 2011, representing an increase of more than 3 million children. After holding steady for several years, the percentage of children in single-parent homes has been rising since 2009.

► At the state level, the percentage of children living in single-parent families in 2011 ranged from a low of 21 percent in Utah, to a high of 47 percent in Mississippi.

► Two-thirds (67 percent) of African-American children lived in single-parent families in 2011, compared with 53 percent of American Indian children and 42 percent of Latino children. By comparison, 25 percent of non-Hispanic white and 17 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander children lived in single-parent households.

### Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma

Higher levels of parental education are strongly associated with better outcomes for children. Children whose parents have not graduated from high school are at greater risk of being born with a low birth-weight and having health problems, and they are more likely to smoke and binge drink when they are older. Their school readiness and educational achievement are also at risk.<sup>35</sup> More highly educated parents are better able to provide their children with economic stability and security, which, in turn, enhances child development. Over the past several decades, parental education levels have steadily increased.

► In 2011, 15 percent of children lived in households headed by an adult without a high school diploma. This represents 11.1 million children, compared with 12 million in 2005.

► In North Dakota, only 5 percent of children lived in families not headed by a high school graduate in 2011, the lowest percentage in the country. At 25 percent, California had the highest rate of children living without a high-school-educated head of household.

► More than one-third (37 percent) of Latino children lived in households headed by someone without a high school diploma. That's more than two and a half times the rate for African-American children (14 percent) and more than six times the rate for non-Hispanic white children (6 percent).

**In 2011, 15 percent of children lived in households headed by an adult without a high school diploma. This represents 11.1 million children, compared with 12 million in 2005.**

CHILDREN IN FAMILIES WHERE THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD LACKS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA: 2011



SOURCE U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.

## Children living in high-poverty areas

Concentrated poverty puts whole neighborhoods, and the people living in them, at risk. High-poverty neighborhoods are much more likely than others to have high rates of crime and violence, physical and mental health issues, unemployment and other problems. Concentrated neighborhood poverty negatively affects poor children, as well as those who are better off.<sup>36</sup> High-poverty areas are defined here as census tracts where the poverty rates of the total population are 30 percent or more.

- During the period from 2007 through 2011, 12 percent of children lived in high-poverty areas nationwide, a total of 8.6 million. This represents an increase of 2.3 million children since 2000, when the rate was 9 percent.

- Variation among the states was wide: Only a fraction of a percent of children in Wyoming lived in areas of concentrated poverty from 2007 through 2011, whereas 24 percent of Mississippi's children lived in high-poverty areas.

- African-American, American Indian and Latino children were much more likely to live in high-poverty areas than were children from other racial and ethnic groups. The rates were 28 percent, 27 percent and 21 percent, respectively.

## Teen births

Teenage childbearing can have long-term negative effects for both the mother and newborn. Teens are at higher risk of bearing low-birthweight and preterm babies. And, their babies are far more likely to be born into families with limited educational and economic resources, which function as barriers to future success.<sup>37</sup> In 2006, the United States saw the first increase in the teen birth rate in more than a decade, a rise that continued through 2007. But since the two-year increase, the teen birth rate has declined to a historic low.

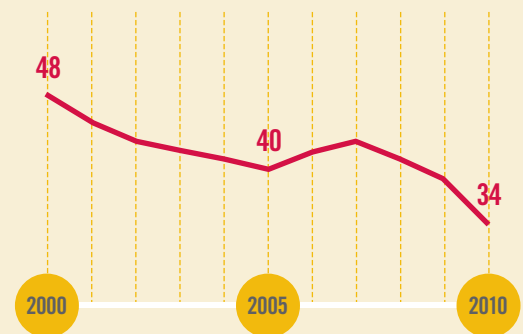
- In 2010, there were nearly 368,000 babies born to females ages 15 to 19. That translates into a birth rate of 34 births per 1,000 teens, which represents a substantial decrease from 2000, when the rate was 48 births per 1,000 teens.

- Among the states, the teen birth rate for 2010 ranged from a low of 16 births per 1,000 teens ages 15 to 19 in New Hampshire, to a high of 55 per 1,000 in Mississippi.

- At 56 births per 1,000 teenage girls, the teen birth rate for Latinos was the highest across major racial and ethnic groups. Although it remained high, the 2010 rate for births to Latino teens was the lowest rate on record.<sup>38</sup>

**In 2010, there were nearly 368,000 babies born to females ages 15 to 19. That translates into a birth rate of 34 births per 1,000 teens, which represents a substantial decrease from 2000, when the rate was 48 births per 1,000 teens.**

TEEN BIRTHS PER 1,000 FEMALES: 2000–2010



SOURCE Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 2000–2010 Vital Statistics.



# CONCLUSION

**This year's *KIDS COUNT Data Book* provides some hopeful signs. The latest data show continued incremental improvement in educational achievement and child health and safety, as well as a record low level of teen births. At the same time, children and families are still coping with the effects of the recession and continued high unemployment. Child poverty continued to climb in 2011, two years after the recession ended; hopefully, the data for 2012 will show a decline.**

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Nonetheless, to improve outcomes for the next generation, serious challenges remain. The gulf continues to widen between children growing up in strong, economically secure families who are embedded in thriving communities and children who are not. And, while African-American and Latino children continue to fall disproportionately into the latter group, greater numbers of children of all racial and ethnic groups are facing conditions that can impede long-term success.

Improving outcomes for all children is essential for our nation to remain strong,

stable and globally competitive. Research clearly indicates that one of the most cost-effective strategies is to reach the highest-risk kids in their earliest years. Smart investments in programs and services with a proven record — such as those that help low-income parents develop stronger, more nurturing relationships with their infants and toddlers and high-quality early care and education programs that provide stimulating environments and activities for developing young minds — can expand the opportunity for children to reach their full potential, benefiting us all.



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# APPENDICES



## Child Well-Being Rankings

	Overall Rank	Economic Well-Being Rank	Education Rank	Health Rank	Family and Community Rank
State					
Alabama	44	40	44	35	44
Alaska	33	24	43	46	19
Arizona	47	47	46	45	46
Arkansas	40	39	36	30	45
California	41	46	39	29	42
Colorado	21	19	9	42	21
Connecticut	9	16	6	2	11
Delaware	22	21	23	19	28
District of Columbia	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.
Florida	38	45	35	37	35
Georgia	43	43	38	40	40
Hawaii	25	34	33	18	16
Idaho	20	23	29	28	10
Illinois	23	29	14	12	29
Indiana	30	26	34	21	30
Iowa	7	5	15	7	8
Kansas	16	8	11	26	23
Kentucky	34	32	28	31	38
Louisiana	46	42	45	41	47
Maine	13	20	20	1	6
Maryland	10	14	5	8	20
Massachusetts	3	13	1	11	7
Michigan	31	36	32	23	27
Minnesota	4	6	7	15	5
Mississippi	49	50	48	48	50
Missouri	27	22	21	32	26
Montana	28	15	13	50	14
Nebraska	8	4	17	10	15
Nevada	48	48	50	47	41
New Hampshire	1	7	4	16	1
New Jersey	5	18	2	13	9
New Mexico	50	49	49	49	49
New York	29	35	19	9	33
North Carolina	35	38	27	34	36
North Dakota	6	1	16	25	4
Ohio	24	27	18	24	31
Oklahoma	36	25	40	43	39
Oregon	32	41	37	17	22
Pennsylvania	17	17	8	22	25
Puerto Rico	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.
Rhode Island	26	31	24	5	32
South Carolina	45	44	41	44	43
South Dakota	18	3	22	38	24
Tennessee	39	37	42	33	37
Texas	42	30	31	36	48
Utah	14	11	30	14	2
Vermont	2	9	3	4	3
Virginia	11	10	10	20	13
Washington	19	28	25	6	17
West Virginia	37	33	47	27	34
Wisconsin	12	12	12	3	18
Wyoming	15	2	26	39	12

N.R. Not Ranked.



## ECONOMIC WELL-BEING INDICATORS

State	Children in poverty: 2011		Children whose parents lack secure employment: 2011		Children living in households with a high housing cost burden: 2011		Teens not in school and not working: 2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
United States	16,387,000	23	23,777,000	32	29,486,000	40	1,497,000	8
Alabama	307,000	28	399,000	35	394,000	35	28,000	10
Alaska	27,000	15	62,000	33	61,000	32	4,000	10
Arizona	435,000	27	560,000	35	664,000	41	41,000	11
Arkansas	197,000	28	253,000	36	225,000	32	16,000	10
California	2,085,000	23	3,314,000	36	4,820,000	52	193,000	9
Colorado	217,000	18	362,000	29	461,000	38	21,000	8
Connecticut	119,000	15	221,000	28	351,000	44	14,000	7
Delaware	35,000	17	61,000	30	78,000	38	4,000	8
District of Columbia	32,000	30	47,000	44	47,000	44	4,000	12
Florida	980,000	25	1,364,000	34	1,922,000	48	93,000	9
Georgia	647,000	26	866,000	35	1,004,000	40	63,000	11
Hawaii	51,000	17	96,000	32	141,000	46	7,000	11
Idaho	85,000	20	132,000	31	143,000	34	8,000	9
Illinois	658,000	22	975,000	31	1,285,000	42	61,000	8
Indiana	361,000	23	527,000	33	487,000	31	33,000	9
Iowa	123,000	17	176,000	24	185,000	26	11,000	6
Kansas	134,000	19	181,000	25	215,000	30	10,000	6
Kentucky	275,000	27	378,000	37	324,000	32	18,000	8
Louisiana	317,000	29	396,000	35	374,000	33	31,000	12
Maine	50,000	19	88,000	33	104,000	38	4,000	6
Maryland	179,000	14	367,000	27	546,000	41	25,000	8
Massachusetts	212,000	15	421,000	30	570,000	41	21,000	5
Michigan	560,000	25	813,000	35	843,000	37	52,000	9
Minnesota	194,000	15	330,000	26	412,000	32	14,000	5
Mississippi	236,000	32	285,000	38	280,000	37	22,000	12
Missouri	306,000	22	446,000	32	444,000	31	27,000	8
Montana	43,000	20	67,000	30	70,000	32	3,000	7
Nebraska	82,000	18	111,000	24	122,000	26	5,000	5
Nevada	144,000	22	224,000	34	294,000	44	18,000	13
New Hampshire	33,000	12	65,000	23	110,000	39	4,000	6
New Jersey	296,000	15	556,000	27	990,000	48	31,000	7
New Mexico	157,000	31	192,000	37	188,000	36	13,000	11
New York	951,000	23	1,361,000	32	1,985,000	46	89,000	8
North Carolina	580,000	26	782,000	34	841,000	37	52,000	10
North Dakota	22,000	15	33,000	22	31,000	21	3,000	7
Ohio	641,000	24	889,000	33	939,000	35	44,000	7
Oklahoma	216,000	23	282,000	30	282,000	30	19,000	9
Oregon	199,000	24	315,000	37	387,000	45	18,000	9
Pennsylvania	532,000	20	854,000	31	968,000	35	50,000	7
Puerto Rico	499,000	57	479,000	55	291,000	33	36,000	16
Rhode Island	47,000	22	77,000	35	94,000	43	4,000	7
South Carolina	297,000	28	381,000	35	395,000	36	30,000	11
South Dakota	36,000	18	48,000	24	50,000	25	2,000	5
Tennessee	386,000	26	513,000	34	529,000	35	32,000	9
Texas	1,829,000	27	2,112,000	30	2,525,000	36	139,000	9
Utah	138,000	16	219,000	25	323,000	37	15,000	8
Vermont	18,000	15	36,000	29	46,000	36	2,000	6
Virginia	280,000	15	472,000	25	683,000	37	32,000	7
Washington	283,000	18	517,000	33	649,000	41	33,000	9
West Virginia	98,000	26	137,000	35	102,000	26	11,000	11
Wisconsin	237,000	18	378,000	29	464,000	35	21,000	6
Wyoming	21,000	16	33,000	24	37,000	27	1,000	4



EDUCATION INDICATORS

State	Children not attending preschool: 2009-II		Fourth graders not proficient in reading: 2011		Eighth graders not proficient in math: 2011		High school students not graduating on time: 2009/10	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
United States	4,325,000	54	N.A.	68	N.A.	66	870,542	22
Alabama	72,000	58	N.A.	69	N.A.	80	16,914	28
Alaska	13,000	66	N.A.	74	N.A.	65	2,678	25
Arizona	124,000	67	N.A.	74	N.A.	69	20,678	25
Arkansas	42,000	52	N.A.	70	N.A.	71	9,440	25
California	532,000	53	N.A.	75	N.A.	75	112,994	22
Colorado	72,000	51	N.A.	61	N.A.	57	12,474	20
Connecticut	33,000	39	N.A.	58	N.A.	62	11,433	25
Delaware	12,000	51	N.A.	64	N.A.	68	2,635	24
District of Columbia	4,000	34	N.A.	81	N.A.	83	2,407	40
Florida	221,000	51	N.A.	65	N.A.	72	64,478	29
Georgia	139,000	52	N.A.	68	N.A.	72	39,444	30
Hawaii	16,000	48	N.A.	73	N.A.	70	3,593	25
Idaho	32,000	65	N.A.	67	N.A.	63	3,384	16
Illinois	155,000	46	N.A.	67	N.A.	67	30,647	18
Indiana	108,000	60	N.A.	67	N.A.	66	19,046	23
Iowa	43,000	53	N.A.	67	N.A.	66	4,730	12
Kansas	44,000	54	N.A.	64	N.A.	59	5,786	15
Kentucky	66,000	58	N.A.	65	N.A.	69	10,714	20
Louisiana	60,000	48	N.A.	77	N.A.	78	16,604	31
Maine	16,000	57	N.A.	68	N.A.	61	2,914	17
Maryland	72,000	49	N.A.	57	N.A.	60	12,831	18
Massachusetts	60,000	41	N.A.	50	N.A.	49	13,551	17
Michigan	128,000	54	N.A.	69	N.A.	69	35,126	24
Minnesota	78,000	54	N.A.	65	N.A.	52	7,952	12
Mississippi	40,000	50	N.A.	78	N.A.	81	14,476	36
Missouri	88,000	55	N.A.	66	N.A.	68	12,463	16
Montana	14,000	57	N.A.	64	N.A.	54	2,229	18
Nebraska	27,000	53	N.A.	64	N.A.	67	3,748	16
Nevada	53,000	70	N.A.	75	N.A.	71	15,289	42
New Hampshire	14,000	48	N.A.	57	N.A.	56	2,396	14
New Jersey	83,000	38	N.A.	56	N.A.	53	14,180	13
New Mexico	35,000	62	N.A.	79	N.A.	76	9,019	33
New York	197,000	45	N.A.	65	N.A.	70	58,158	24
North Carolina	145,000	57	N.A.	66	N.A.	63	26,670	23
North Dakota	11,000	66	N.A.	64	N.A.	57	942	12
Ohio	162,000	55	N.A.	66	N.A.	61	28,237	19
Oklahoma	61,000	59	N.A.	73	N.A.	73	10,529	21
Oregon	57,000	60	N.A.	70	N.A.	67	10,754	24
Pennsylvania	151,000	51	N.A.	59	N.A.	61	24,831	16
Puerto Rico	41,000	47	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	16,896	40
Rhode Island	13,000	53	N.A.	65	N.A.	66	3,058	24
South Carolina	63,000	55	N.A.	72	N.A.	68	18,891	32
South Dakota	14,000	60	N.A.	69	N.A.	58	1,813	18
Tennessee	98,000	60	N.A.	74	N.A.	76	15,202	20
Texas	459,000	59	N.A.	72	N.A.	60	74,924	21
Utah	63,000	60	N.A.	67	N.A.	65	8,554	21
Vermont	7,000	53	N.A.	59	N.A.	54	675	9
Virginia	105,000	52	N.A.	61	N.A.	60	18,911	19
Washington	103,000	59	N.A.	66	N.A.	60	19,508	23
West Virginia	27,000	64	N.A.	73	N.A.	79	4,904	22
Wisconsin	82,000	60	N.A.	66	N.A.	59	6,331	9
Wyoming	10,000	60	N.A.	66	N.A.	63	1,397	20

N.A. Not Available.



APPENDIX 2: DATA FOR 16 INDICATORS OF CHILD WELL-BEING

HEALTH INDICATORS

State	Low-birthweight babies: 2010		Children without health insurance: 2011		Child and teen deaths per 100,000: 2010		Teens who abuse alcohol or drugs: 2010-11	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Rate	Number	Percent
United States	325,563	8.1	5,528,000	7	20,482	26	1,752,000	7
Alabama	6,165	10.3	59,000	5	445	37	23,000	6
Alaska	651	5.7	22,000	12	84	43	5,000	8
Arizona	6,190	7.1	208,000	13	477	28	46,000	9
Arkansas	3,391	8.8	40,000	6	259	34	14,000	6
California	34,641	6.8	745,000	8	2,129	21	275,000	9
Colorado	5,811	8.8	116,000	9	322	25	32,000	8
Connecticut	3,011	8.0	23,000	3	149	17	21,000	7
Delaware	1,016	8.9	9,000	5	52	23	4,000	7
District of Columbia	934	10.2	4,000	4	48	41	2,000	7
Florida	18,681	8.7	475,000	12	1,166	27	90,000	7
Georgia	12,912	9.7	237,000	10	792	30	52,000	6
Hawaii	1,584	8.3	11,000	4	67	21	7,000	8
Idaho	1,573	6.8	39,000	9	127	28	10,000	7
Illinois	13,666	8.3	113,000	4	887	27	68,000	6
Indiana	6,732	8.0	129,000	8	485	28	31,000	6
Iowa	2,700	7.0	32,000	4	184	24	17,000	7
Kansas	2,881	7.1	46,000	6	253	33	17,000	7
Kentucky	5,044	9.0	62,000	6	354	32	21,000	6
Louisiana	6,700	10.7	65,000	6	444	37	21,000	6
Maine	814	6.3	14,000	5	80	27	6,000	6
Maryland	6,474	8.8	61,000	5	342	24	26,000	6
Massachusetts	5,634	7.7	24,000	2	258	17	44,000	9
Michigan	9,610	8.4	94,000	4	687	27	58,000	7
Minnesota	4,415	6.4	80,000	6	342	25	32,000	8
Mississippi	4,852	12.1	61,000	8	306	38	14,000	6
Missouri	6,286	8.2	95,000	7	474	31	33,000	7
Montana	901	7.5	26,000	12	108	45	7,000	10
Nebraska	1,839	7.1	27,000	6	130	27	9,000	6
Nevada	2,965	8.3	107,000	16	189	27	17,000	8
New Hampshire	881	6.9	10,000	4	63	20	9,000	9
New Jersey	8,814	8.2	105,000	5	394	18	53,000	8
New Mexico	2,427	8.7	47,000	9	200	36	15,000	9
New York	20,049	8.2	181,000	4	959	21	101,000	7
North Carolina	11,109	9.1	175,000	8	666	27	49,000	7
North Dakota	607	6.7	10,000	6	55	34	3,000	7
Ohio	11,899	8.6	157,000	6	741	25	62,000	7
Oklahoma	4,458	8.4	99,000	11	352	36	19,000	6
Oregon	2,865	6.3	63,000	7	199	21	23,000	8
Pennsylvania	11,941	8.3	149,000	5	774	25	67,000	7
Puerto Rico	5,304	12.6	34,000	4	247	25	N.A.	N.A.
Rhode Island	862	7.7	9,000	4	43	17	6,000	7
South Carolina	5,781	9.9	91,000	8	368	32	24,000	7
South Dakota	806	6.8	12,000	6	84	39	5,000	8
Tennessee	7,179	9.0	85,000	6	490	31	34,000	7
Texas	32,486	8.4	917,000	13	1,881	26	142,000	6
Utah	3,655	7.0	97,000	11	218	24	15,000	6
Vermont	382	6.1	3,000	2	26	18	4,000	9
Virginia	8,448	8.2	108,000	6	438	22	42,000	7
Washington	5,464	6.3	97,000	6	355	21	37,000	7
West Virginia	1,880	9.2	17,000	4	139	33	8,000	6
Wisconsin	4,818	7.0	58,000	4	351	24	29,000	6
Wyoming	679	9.0	12,000	9	46	32	3,000	7

N.A. Not Available.





## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INDICATORS

State	Children in single-parent families: 2011		Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma: 2011		Children living in high-poverty areas: 2007-11		Teen births per 1,000: 2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Rate
United States	24,718,000	35	11,131,000	15	8,591,000	12	367,678	34
Alabama	417,000	39	169,000	15	154,000	14	7,343	44
Alaska	63,000	35	15,000	8	2,000	1	956	38
Arizona	614,000	40	299,000	18	315,000	19	9,389	42
Arkansas	254,000	38	103,000	14	108,000	15	5,229	52
California	3,041,000	34	2,271,000	25	1,176,000	13	43,149	32
Colorado	347,000	29	163,000	13	97,000	8	5,474	33
Connecticut	247,000	32	76,000	9	68,000	8	2,274	19
Delaware	78,000	41	25,000	12	12,000	6	974	31
District of Columbia	63,000	64	16,000	15	30,000	29	951	45
Florida	1,493,000	39	543,000	14	427,000	11	19,127	32
Georgia	901,000	38	365,000	15	313,000	13	14,378	41
Hawaii	89,000	31	28,000	9	15,000	5	1,347	33
Idaho	106,000	26	47,000	11	18,000	4	1,863	33
Illinois	1,008,000	34	438,000	14	310,000	10	14,798	33
Indiana	534,000	35	202,000	13	151,000	9	8,665	37
Iowa	208,000	30	60,000	8	27,000	4	3,017	29
Kansas	213,000	31	80,000	11	51,000	7	3,865	39
Kentucky	340,000	36	131,000	13	144,000	14	6,684	46
Louisiana	471,000	45	180,000	16	193,000	17	7,689	48
Maine	88,000	34	16,000	6	9,000	3	917	21
Maryland	468,000	37	137,000	10	52,000	4	5,396	27
Massachusetts	424,000	31	127,000	9	98,000	7	3,909	17
Michigan	758,000	35	225,000	10	350,000	15	10,835	30
Minnesota	350,000	28	104,000	8	74,000	6	4,035	23
Mississippi	332,000	47	122,000	16	183,000	24	6,077	55
Missouri	465,000	35	161,000	11	124,000	9	7,669	37
Montana	64,000	30	14,000	6	17,000	7	1,128	35
Nebraska	129,000	29	48,000	10	28,000	6	1,958	31
Nevada	227,000	36	153,000	23	59,000	9	3,421	39
New Hampshire	78,000	29	20,000	7	4,000	1	722	16
New Jersey	604,000	31	201,000	10	142,000	7	5,793	20
New Mexico	208,000	43	115,000	22	108,000	21	3,872	53
New York	1,457,000	36	651,000	15	704,000	16	15,126	23
North Carolina	857,000	39	331,000	14	248,000	11	12,309	38
North Dakota	38,000	26	7,000	5	12,000	8	659	29
Ohio	944,000	37	276,000	10	352,000	13	13,752	34
Oklahoma	316,000	36	126,000	13	109,000	12	6,496	50
Oregon	261,000	32	132,000	15	57,000	7	3,496	28
Pennsylvania	912,000	34	298,000	11	300,000	11	11,959	27
Puerto Rico	479,000	57	170,000	19	776,000	84	7,170	51
Rhode Island	79,000	38	31,000	14	31,000	14	891	22
South Carolina	428,000	42	142,000	13	144,000	13	6,849	43
South Dakota	62,000	32	17,000	9	23,000	11	975	35
Tennessee	516,000	37	188,000	13	204,000	14	9,254	43
Texas	2,363,000	36	1,613,000	23	1,209,000	18	47,751	52
Utah	181,000	21	84,000	9	26,000	3	3,049	28
Vermont	39,000	32	7,000	6	2,000	2	401	18
Virginia	559,000	31	187,000	10	87,000	5	7,374	27
Washington	453,000	30	195,000	12	87,000	6	6,002	27
West Virginia	130,000	36	49,000	13	29,000	7	2,608	45
Wisconsin	403,000	32	130,000	10	108,000	8	5,100	26
Wyoming	39,000	30	13,000	9	1,000	<0.5	723	39

## About the Index

The KIDS COUNT index reflects child health and education outcomes as well as risk and protective factors, such as economic well-being, family structure and community context. The index incorporates a developmental perspective on childhood and includes experiences across life stages, from birth through early adulthood. The indicators are consistently and regularly measured, which allows for legitimate comparisons across states and over time.

Organizing the index into domains provides a more nuanced assessment of child well-being in each state that can inform policy solutions by helping policymakers and advocates better identify areas of strength and weakness. For example, a state may rank well above average in overall child well-being, while showing the need for improvement in education. Domain-specific data can strengthen decision-making efforts by providing multiple data points relevant to specific policy areas.

The 16 indicators of child well-being are derived from federal government statistical agencies and reflect the best available state and national data for tracking yearly changes. For a complete description of the definitions and data sources for each indicator, see page 47. Many of the indicators are derived from samples, and like all sample data, they contain some random error. Other measures (such as the child and teen death rate) are based on relatively small numbers of events

in some states and may exhibit some random fluctuation from year to year.

We urge readers to focus on relatively large differences across states, as small differences may simply reflect insignificant fluctuations, rather than real changes in the well-being of children. Assessing trends by looking at changes over a longer period of time is more reliable. State data for past years are available at the KIDS COUNT Data Center ([datacenter.kidscount.org](http://datacenter.kidscount.org)).

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* utilizes rates and percentages because that is the best way to compare states to one another and to assess changes over time within a state. However, our focus on rates and percentages may mask the magnitude of some of the problems examined in this report. Therefore, data on the actual number of children or events are provided in Appendix 2 and at the KIDS COUNT Data Center.

We include data for the District of Columbia and some data for Puerto Rico in the appendices of the *Data Book*, but not in our state rankings. Because they are significantly different from any state, the comparisons are not instructive. It is more useful to look at changes for these geographies over time or to compare the District with other large cities. Data for many child well-being indicators for the 50 largest cities (including the District of Columbia) are available at the Data Center, which also contains some data for children and families in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

## Definitions and Data Sources

**Domain Rank** for each state was obtained in the following manner. First, we converted the state numerical values for the most recent year for each of the four key indicators within each domain into standard scores. We summed those standard scores in each domain to get a total standard score for each state. Finally, we ranked the states on the basis of their total standard score by domain in sequential order from highest/best (1) to lowest/worst (50). Standard scores were derived by subtracting the mean score from the observed score and dividing the amount by the standard deviation for that distribution of scores. All measures were given the same weight in calculating the domain standard score.

**Overall Rank** for each state was obtained in the following manner. First, we converted the state numerical values for the most recent year for each of the 16 key indicators into standard scores. We summed those standard scores within their domains to create a domain standard score for each of the 50 states. We then summed the four domain standard scores to get a total standard score for each state. Finally, we ranked the states on the basis of their total standard score in sequential order from highest/best (1) to lowest/worst (50). Standard scores were derived by subtracting the mean score from the observed score and dividing the amount by the standard deviation for that distribution of scores. All measures were given the same weight in calculating the total standard score.

**Percent Change Over Time Analysis** was computed by comparing the most recent year's data for 16 key indicators with the data for the base year. To calculate percent change, we subtracted the rate for the most recent year from the rate

for the base year and then divided that quantity by the rate for the base year. The results are multiplied by 100 for readability. The percent change was calculated on rounded data, and the "percent change" figure has been rounded to the nearest whole number.

### Economic Well-Being Indicators

**Children in poverty** is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in families with incomes below 100 percent of the U.S. poverty threshold, as issued each year by the U.S. Census Bureau. The federal poverty definition consists of a series of thresholds based on family size and composition and is updated every year to account for inflation. In calendar year 2011, a family of two adults and two children fell in the "poverty" category if their annual income fell below \$22,811. Poverty status is not determined for people living in group quarters, such as military barracks, prisons and other institutional quarters, or for unrelated individuals under age 15 (such as foster children). The data are based on income received in the 12 months prior to the survey. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

**Children whose parents lack secure employment** is the share of all children under age 18 living in families where no parent has regular, full-time, year-round employment. For children living in single-parent families, this means that the resident parent did not work at least 35 hours per week, at least 50 weeks in the 12 months prior to the survey. For children living in married-couple families, this means that neither parent worked at least 35 hours per week, at least 50 weeks in the 12 months prior to the survey. Children living with neither parent are also listed as not having secure

## Definitions and Data Sources

parental employment because those children are likely to be economically vulnerable. The 2011 estimate for this measure should not be compared to estimates prior to 2008 because of substantial changes made to the 2008 American Community Survey questions on labor force participation and number of weeks worked. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

**Children living in households with a high housing cost burden** is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in households where more than 30 percent of monthly household pretax income is spent on housing-related expenses, including rent, mortgage payments, taxes and insurance. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

**Teens not in school and not working** is the percentage of teenagers between ages 16 and 19 who are not enrolled in school (full or part time) and not employed (full or part time). This measure is sometimes referred to as “idle teens” or “disconnected youth.” The 2011 estimate for this measure should not be compared to estimates prior to 2008 because of substantial changes made to the 2008 American Community Survey questions on labor force participation and number of weeks worked. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

### Education Indicators

**Children not attending preschool** is the percentage of children ages 3 and 4 who were not enrolled in nursery school or preschool during the previous two months. Children enrolled in kindergarten are excluded from this analysis. Due to small sample size, the three-year

American Community Survey was used to increase accuracy of the estimates. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

**Fourth graders not proficient in reading** is the percentage of fourth-grade public school students who did not reach the proficient level in reading as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Public schools include charter schools and exclude Bureau of Indian Education schools and Department of Defense Education Activity schools. **SOURCE:** U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress.

**Eighth graders not proficient in math** is the percentage of eighth-grade public school students who did not reach the proficient level in math as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Public schools include charter schools and exclude Bureau of Indian Education schools and Department of Defense Education Activity schools. **SOURCE:** U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress.

**High school students not graduating on time** is the estimated percentage of an entering freshman class not graduating in four years. The measure is derived from the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR), which uses aggregate student enrollment data to estimate the size of an incoming freshman class and aggregate counts of the number of regular diplomas awarded four years later. Estimates are based on provisional data. **SOURCE:** U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD).

## Health Indicators

**Low-birthweight babies** is the percentage of live births weighing less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds). The data reflect the mother's place of residence, not the place where the birth occurred. **SOURCE:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics.

**Children without health insurance** is the percentage of children under age 18 not covered by any health insurance. The data are based on health insurance coverage at the time of the survey; interviews are conducted throughout the calendar year. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

**Child and teen deaths** is the number of deaths, from all causes, to children between ages 1 and 19 per 100,000 children in this age range. The data are reported by the place of residence, not the place where the death occurred. **SOURCES: Death Statistics:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics. **Population Statistics:** U.S. Census Bureau.

**Teens who abuse alcohol or drugs** is the percentage of teens ages 12 to 17 reporting dependence on or abuse of either illicit drugs or alcohol in the past year. Illicit drugs include marijuana, cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants or prescription drugs used nonmedically. Dependence or abuse is based on definitions found in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. These data are based on a two-year average of survey responses. **SOURCE:** Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

## Family and Community Indicators

**Children in single-parent families** is the percentage of children under age 18 who live with their own unmarried parent, either in a family or subfamily. In this definition, single-parent families may include cohabiting couples. Children living with married stepparents are not considered to be in a single-parent family. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

**Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma** is the percentage of children under age 18 living in households where the household head does not have a high school diploma or equivalent. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

**Children living in high-poverty areas** is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in census tracts where the poverty rate of the total population is 30 percent or more. In calendar year 2011, a family of two adults and two children fell in the "poverty" category if their annual income fell below \$22,811. The data are based on income received in the 12 months prior to the survey. The census tract level data used in this analysis are only available in the five-year American Community Survey. The most recent year of data covers the time period 2007–11. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

**Teen births** is the number of births to teenagers between ages 15 and 19 per 1,000 females in this age group. Data reflect the mother's place of residence, rather than the place of the birth. **SOURCES: Birth Statistics:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics. **Population Statistics:** U.S. Census Bureau.

## Primary Contacts for State KIDS COUNT Projects

The Annie E. Casey Foundation provides funding and technical assistance for a national network of KIDS COUNT projects in every state, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. These projects, listed on the following pages, measure and report on the status of children at the state and local levels. They use the data to inform public debates and encourage public action to improve the lives of children.

The state KIDS COUNT projects publish a range of data-driven materials — state data books, special reports, issue briefs and fact sheets — that help policymakers and citizens identify the needs of children and families and develop appropriate responses to address these needs. Much of the local-level data collected by the state KIDS COUNT grantees are available at: [datacenter.kidscount.org](http://datacenter.kidscount.org)

### State Grantees

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For more information about the network of state KIDS COUNT grantees, including mailing addresses, please visit: [www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org)



### Alabama

VOICES for Alabama's Children  
www.alavoices.org  
334.213.2410

### Alaska

KIDS COUNT Alaska  
kidscount.alaska.edu  
907.786.5431

### Arizona

Children's Action Alliance  
www.azchildren.org  
602.266.0707

### Arkansas

Arkansas Advocates  
for Children & Families  
www.aradvocates.org  
501.371.9678

### California

Children Now  
www.childrennow.org  
510.763.2444

### Colorado

Colorado Children's Campaign  
www.coloradokids.org  
303.839.1580

### Connecticut

Connecticut Association  
for Human Services  
www.cahts.org  
860.951.2212

### Delaware

University of Delaware  
www.dekidscount.org  
302.831.3462

### District of Columbia

DC Action for Children  
www.dckids.org  
202.234.9404

### Florida

Florida KIDS COUNT  
University of South Florida  
www.floridakidscount.org  
813.974.7411

### Georgia

Georgia Family Connection  
Partnership, Inc.  
www.gafcp.org  
404.527.7394

### Hawaii

University of Hawaii  
Center on the Family  
www.uhfamily.hawaii.edu  
808.956.3760

### Idaho

Mountain States Group  
www.idahokidscount.org  
208.388.1014

### Illinois

Voices for Illinois Children  
www.voices4kids.org  
312.456.0600

### Indiana

Indiana Youth Institute  
www.iyi.org  
317.396.2700

### Iowa

Child & Family Policy Center  
www.cfpciowa.org  
515.280.9027

### Kansas

Kansas Action for Children  
www.kac.org  
785.232.0550

### Kentucky

Kentucky Youth Advocates, Inc.  
www.kyouth.org  
502.895.8167

### Louisiana

Agenda for Children  
www.agendaforchildren.org  
504.586.8509

### Maine

Maine Children's Alliance  
www.mekids.org  
207.623.1868

### Maryland

Advocates for Children & Youth  
www.acy.org  
410.547.9200

### Massachusetts

Massachusetts Budget  
& Policy Center  
www.massbudget.org  
617.426.1228

### Michigan

Michigan League for  
Public Policy  
www.mlpp.org  
517.487.5436

### Minnesota

Children's Defense  
Fund — Minnesota  
www.cdf-mn.org  
651.227.6121

### Mississippi

Social Science Research Center  
www.ssrc.msstate.edu/  
mskidscount  
662.325.7127

### Missouri

Partnership for Children  
http://pfc.org  
816.531.9200

### Montana

Montana KIDS COUNT  
The University of Montana  
www.montanakidscount.org  
406.243.5113

## Primary Contacts for State KIDS COUNT Projects

### Nebraska

Voices for Children in Nebraska  
[www.voicesforchildren.com](http://www.voicesforchildren.com)  
402.597.3100

### Nevada

Center for Business  
and Economic Research  
<http://kidscount.unlv.edu/>  
702.895.3191

### New Hampshire

Children's Alliance  
of New Hampshire  
[www.childrennh.org](http://www.childrennh.org)  
603.225.2264

### New Jersey

Advocates for Children  
of New Jersey  
[www.acnj.org](http://www.acnj.org)  
973.643.3876

### New Mexico

New Mexico Voices for Children  
[www.nmvoices.org](http://www.nmvoices.org)  
505.244.9505

### New York

New York State Council  
on Children & Families  
[www.ccf.ny.gov](http://www.ccf.ny.gov)  
518.473.3652

### North Carolina

Action for Children  
North Carolina  
[www.ncchild.org](http://www.ncchild.org)  
919.834.6623

### North Dakota

North Dakota State University  
[www.ndkidscount.org](http://www.ndkidscount.org)  
701.231.5931

### Ohio

Children's Defense Fund — Ohio  
[www.cdfohio.org](http://www.cdfohio.org)  
614.221.2244

### Oklahoma

Oklahoma Institute  
for Child Advocacy  
[www.oica.org](http://www.oica.org)  
405.236.5437

### Oregon

Children First for Oregon  
[www.cffo.org](http://www.cffo.org)  
503.236.9754

### Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Partnerships  
for Children  
[www.papartnerships.org](http://www.papartnerships.org)  
717.236.5680

### Puerto Rico

National Council of La Raza  
[www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org)  
787.963.0156

### Rhode Island

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT  
[www.rikidscount.org](http://www.rikidscount.org)  
401.351.9400

### South Carolina

The Children's Trust  
of South Carolina  
[www.scchildren.org](http://www.scchildren.org)  
803.744.4035

### South Dakota

SD KIDS COUNT Project  
[www.usd.edu/sdkidscount](http://www.usd.edu/sdkidscount)  
605.677.6432

### Tennessee

Tennessee Commission  
on Children & Youth  
[www.tn.gov/tccy](http://www.tn.gov/tccy)  
615.741.2633

### Texas

Center for Public Policy Priorities  
[http://forabettertexas.org/  
childwellbeing.html](http://forabettertexas.org/childwellbeing.html)  
512.320.0222

### U.S. Virgin Islands

Community Foundation  
of the Virgin Islands  
[www.cfvi.net](http://www.cfvi.net)  
340.774.6031

### Utah

Voices for Utah Children  
[www.utahchildren.org](http://www.utahchildren.org)  
801.364.1182

### Vermont

Voices for Vermont's Children  
[www.voicesforvtkids.org](http://www.voicesforvtkids.org)  
802.229.6377

### Virginia

Voices for Virginia's Children  
[www.vakids.org](http://www.vakids.org)  
804.649.0184

### Washington

Children's Alliance  
<http://childrensalliance.org>  
206.324.0340

### West Virginia

West Virginia KIDS COUNT Fund  
[www.wvkidscountfund.org](http://www.wvkidscountfund.org)  
304.345.2101

### Wisconsin

Wisconsin Council  
on Children & Families  
[www.wccf.org](http://www.wccf.org)  
608.284.0580

### Wyoming

Wyoming Children's  
Action Alliance  
[www.wykids.com](http://www.wykids.com)  
800.400.3999

**ABOUT THE  
ANNIE E. CASEY  
FOUNDATION  
AND KIDS COUNT**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private philanthropy that creates a brighter future for the nation's children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow.

KIDS COUNT®, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. By providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks of child well-being, KIDS COUNT seeks to enrich local, state and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children.

At the national level, the initiative develops and distributes reports on key areas of well-being, including the annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book*. The initiative also maintains the KIDS COUNT Data Center, which uses the best available data to measure the educational, social, economic and physical well-being of children. Additionally, the Foundation funds a nationwide network of state-level KIDS COUNT projects that provide a more detailed, community-by-community picture of the condition of children.

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THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION



701 ST. PAUL STREET  
BALTIMORE, MD 21202  
410.547.8600  
[WWW.AECF.ORG](http://WWW.AECF.ORG)