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### **Rankings of Child-Well Being Show Mixed Picture**

The rankings in the newly released 2015 *KIDS COUNT® Data Book* from [the Annie. E. Casey Foundation](#) indicate that Wisconsin ranks 13<sup>th</sup> best overall on the child well-being measures of economic well-being, education, health, and family/community, which is the same as last year's ranking.

"While Wisconsin's children fare reasonably well on the KIDS COUNT measures, the overall numbers mask two important concerns", said Ken Taylor, executive director of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. "First, the rate of growth of children in poverty in Wisconsin continues to exceed the national average, raising concerns that we are slipping behind other states, particularly our neighbors in the upper Midwest (Minnesota and Iowa are ranked #1 and #4 respectively). More importantly, these overall numbers mask a very troubling reality for Wisconsin's children of color".

As detailed in the 2014 WCCF Report, [Race for Results: Wisconsin's Need to Reduce Racial Disparities](#), the data shows that the overall well-being of Wisconsin's African American children is the *worst* in the nation and the well-being of our Asian children is also in the bottom tier. A particular concern noted in the Casey Foundation report is the growing number of children growing up in low-income neighborhoods, neighborhoods that often lack the opportunities and supports experienced by others. While less than one in ten Wisconsin white youth live in low-income neighborhoods, six in ten African-American youth reside in those neighborhoods.

"Our challenges also go beyond focusing on just the children in our state," said Taylor. "We know that investing in supports that help a family meet their basic needs is important; and, we know that investing in education and workforce development strategies that provide parents multiple pathways to family-supporting jobs is an investment that pays off for us all".

To reduce poverty and racial disparities, the [Casey Foundation](#) recommends policies that result in higher pay, paid sick leave, flexible scheduling and expanded unemployment benefits that will result in higher family income, reduced parental stress

and an increased capacity of parents to invest in their kids. Taylor said “We know what works. This two-generation approach, making sure we are investing in the future of children by also investing in helping families succeed, is what we need to make sure that we can build a healthy and strong economic future for everyone in Wisconsin”.

The *2015 Data Book* will be available July 21 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). Additional information is available at <http://databook.kidscount.org>, which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of indicators of child well-being. The Data Center allows users to create rankings, maps and graphs for use in publications and on websites, and to view real-time information on mobile devices.

*The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families (WCCF), [www.wccf.org](http://www.wccf.org) is a multi-issue policy research and advocacy organization promoting statewide policies that promote a safe and health future for all children in Wisconsin. WCCF is a member of the KIDS COUNT® network sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org).*

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