



**FOR RELEASE ON:**

June 21, 2016

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JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.—The teenagers of Generation Z, including youth in Missouri, excelled in education and health indicators despite growing up in the midst of the economic downturn, according to the 2016 KIDS COUNT Data Book from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The KIDS COUNT Data Book shows improvement since 2008 in many key areas as it relates to child well-being, including:

- Teen birth rate decreased by nearly 40%
- High school students not graduating on time declined from 20% to 13%
- Child and teen death rate declined from 36 per 100,000 to 28 per 100,000

“We’ve seen improvements in several areas of interest over the past eight years,” said Bill Dent, Executive Director of Missouri Family and Community Trust. “However, many Missouri children are being raised in poverty, or without health care, and this is something that needs to be addressed.”

While advancements have been made, there are still opportunities for improvement in the following areas as highlighted by the KIDS COUNT Data Book:

- One in five children live in poverty
- One in ten children live in neighborhoods where 30% or more of all households are low-income
- As recently as 2014, approximately 100,000 children lack health insurance

“We need to celebrate the choices and changes that teens are making in their families, schools and communities around the state that position them to fully transition to a successful adult,” said Mr. Dent. “We will continue to leverage the Missouri KIDS COUNT resources, including the 20 Community Partnerships around the state and the Family and Community Trust Board.”

To learn more about the issues facing our Missouri youth, view the Missouri KIDS COUNT Data Book and to read the Annie E. Casey Foundation Data Book in its entirety please visit

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

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Missouri Family and Community Trust (FACT) is a non-profit organization serving as the Annie E. Casey sponsored KIDS COUNT organization in Missouri.



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The Annie E. Casey Foundation invests in a network of KIDS COUNT organizations across the country which promotes the Foundation's annual data book.