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THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

2017 KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK

STATE TRENDS IN CHILD WELL-BEING

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The Foundation wishes to thank our outreach partners for their support in promoting the *2017 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. To learn more about the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2017 KIDS COUNT Outreach Partners, please visit www.aecf.org/outreachpartners.

The *2017 KIDS COUNT Data Book* can be viewed, downloaded or ordered at www.aecf.org/databook.

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FOREWORD

BY PATRICK T. MCCARTHY, PRESIDENT AND CEO,
THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

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As the entrepreneurs, leaders and workers of tomorrow, children are vital to our country's growth, prosperity and well-being. When children thrive, our nation thrives. That's why we have produced the *KIDS COUNT Data Book* every year for nearly three decades: It provides an annual snapshot of how America's children and families are faring in every state and across the nation.

Current trends highlight notable progress but also areas of concern. Parental employment and wages are up, and a record number of children have health insurance. Teenagers are more likely to graduate high school and less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol. But child poverty rates remain high and more families live in neighborhoods with a high concentration of poverty. Despite modest gains in academic performance, far too many children are below grade level in reading and math. Even where we see improvements, deep racial and ethnic disparities remain.

Although trends in child well-being are shaped by many forces, it's indisputable that good public policy makes a tremendous difference. We know that a failure to invest wisely — or to not invest at all — negatively affects children's opportunities to reach their full potential.

WHY IT'S ESSENTIAL FOR OUR NATION'S CHILDREN TO SUCCEED

The indicators tracked by KIDS COUNT® reflect a range of milestones and supportive conditions that young people need to succeed as adults. While all our indicators are important, the child poverty rate demands immediate action given the role that economic hardship plays in nearly every other indicator. When young children grow up in poverty, they are at high risk of experiencing difficulties later in life — having poor physical and mental health, becoming teen parents, dropping out of school and facing limited employment opportunities. African-American, Latino and American Indian children are at far greater risk of these negative outcomes than their white or Asian-American peers.

By not prioritizing poverty reduction and by failing to adequately ameliorate its effects when children are young and intervention has the biggest payoff, we waste an unconscionable amount of individual human potential. And the collective toll on our country is enormous.

A decade ago, researchers found child and youth poverty cost the country an estimated $500 billion a year in reduced economic output and increased health and criminal justice expenditures.[1] These costs are undoubtedly higher today. But far beyond wasted dollars, failing to provide children with opportunities to reach their potential jeopardizes our nation's prosperity and economic position in the world.

Providing individuals with opportunities to achieve based on their abilities and efforts — regardless of family background — spurs innovation, entrepreneurship and overall economic growth. These have long been the engines of American success. Yet economic mobility in the United States has stagnated.[2] The American Dream that talent and hard work will lead to a steady climb up the economic ladder has become largely out of reach for people starting at the bottom of the income scale.

Strengthening our economy for the long run cannot happen without adequate investment in the education, health and social well-being of our children. The economist and Nobel Laureate James Heckman asserts that achieving better outcomes for children is the single most effective way to create greater economic productivity and prosperity in the United States.[3]

But leadership and public calls for investing in the next generation are lacking. Rarely do we have serious discussions about prioritizing the needs of children, even though failing to do so threatens America's future.

To increase opportunity for the next generation, we need only increase our public and political will to elevate the interests of children among our national priorities. We have tremendous knowledge about what children need to succeed and many examples of proven supports and interventions that help children achieve their full potential, regardless of race, ethnicity or zip code. In the sections that follow, we highlight trends in child well-being and discuss key examples of public investments that work.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Unemployment Is Down and Wages Are Up, yet Child Poverty Remains High

Children's economic status is based on their parents' earnings. The unemployment rate, 4.5 percent, is at its lowest level in a decade.[4] Although post-recession job growth peaked in 2014 and was lower than expected last year, the economy still generated 2.2 million new jobs in 2016.[5] Between November 2016 and February 2017, 46 states added jobs.[6]

Perhaps the best economic news is that most workers at all income and education levels finally began to see wage increases in 2016.[7] Nonetheless, these positive trends haven't necessarily translated into economic gains for low-income families. Because of rising inequality, last year's broad-based wage growth means that most workers are simply making up lost ground rather than getting ahead.[8]

Most jobs that pay decent wages require postsecondary education and skills, often leaving workers with only a high school education stuck in jobs that pay low wages. Yet only a third of Americans have a four-year college degree.[9] Even though high school graduation is at an all-time high,[10] and far more young people are attending college, the college completion rate has stalled.[11] Among younger cohorts — 25- to 44-year-olds — only 36 percent have a four-year college degree.[12] This means large numbers of American children have parents without the education necessary to obtain jobs that pay family-sustaining wages.

In 2015, nearly three in 10 children (29 percent) lacked a parent with full-time, year-round employment. Although still high, that figure declined 4 percentage points between 2010 and 2015. During the same period, the percentage of children whose families have a high housing cost burden (that is, they spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing) decreased substantially, from 41 percent to 33 percent.

Despite these improvements, too many children are growing up in households with insufficient financial resources. In 2015, the

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child poverty rate stood at 21 percent — 3 percentage points higher than at the start of the recession.[13] The racial disparities are stark: Among white children, 12 percent lived in poor families, compared with 36 percent of African-American and 31 percent of Latino children. We simply can't afford to leave this many children behind.

Tax Credits for Working Families: A Proven Strategy for Improving Results for Children

The federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is one of our most effective policies for reducing child and family poverty. In 2015, the EITC — combined with the Child Tax Credit (CTC) — lifted 5.1 million children out of poverty, and it also brought the families of 8 million children closer to escaping poverty.[14]

As a refundable tax credit, the EITC allows low- to moderate-income workers to keep more of their earnings. The credit benefits working families with children that have annual incomes up to roughly $39,000 to $54,000, depending on family size, yielding an average credit of $3,200 for the 2015 tax year.[15] Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia offer a state-level earned income tax credit.[16] The CTC provides another important resource for low-income working families with children, providing up to $1,000 per child.[17]

Children in families receiving the EITC and CTC perform better in school, are more likely to attend college and can be expected to earn more as adults.[18] The EITC is also associated with improved maternal and infant health.[19]

As federal and state legislators make budget and tax decisions, the EITC and CTC are vitally important programs to sustain and broaden. For example, we recommend expanding the EITC for workers who are not the primary caregivers for children. Many adults treated as "childless" for tax purposes are noncustodial parents. Expanding their EITC benefits would promote work and help them better meet their obligations as parents.[20]

EDUCATION

Modest Academic Gains, but Too Many Students Lag Behind

Educational success provides the foundation for future employment and earnings. Over the past decade, students have demonstrated modest gains in reading and math, but the majority of children are not performing at grade level. Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of fourth graders scored below proficiency in reading in 2015 and 68 percent of eighth graders scored below proficiency in math.

The reading figures are particularly alarming given that a child's reading level in third grade is a crucial marker for future educational development. Children who fail to read proficiently by the end of third grade are more likely to drop out of high school, reducing their earning potential and chances for long-term success.[21]

Early Childhood Programs Can Yield Lifelong Benefits

We can help children succeed in school by giving them a strong start as preschoolers. Yet more than half of young children are not enrolled. From 2013 to 2015, 53 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds were not in school.

Extensive research provides definitive evidence that well-implemented, high-quality prekindergarten for at-risk kids can help narrow the achievement gap, reduce grade repetition and special education placements, increase high school graduation rates, reduce crime and lead to greater employment and higher earnings as adults.[22]

The federal government provides two important early childhood programs for children in low-income families. Early Head Start provides child development and parental support services to families with children from birth to age 3. Head Start, which serves 3- and 4-year-olds in low-income families, provides prekindergarten along with health, nutritional, social and emotional services.

In the 1990s, states ramped up efforts to adopt and expand child development and parent support programs for young children and their low-income families.[23] By 2012, states provided prekindergarten to 30 percent of 4-year-olds, serving more than twice as many 4-year-olds as Head Start.[24]

Evaluations of state-funded pre-K, Head Start and Early Head Start show they successfully promote children's school readiness. In comparison to older, experimental programs, the long-term effects of federal and state programs have been smaller — largely because these programs don't always provide the quality and intensity of services needed to maximize long-term benefits.[25] Policymakers can build on the progress made to date by enhancing program quality while continuing to expand access.

Further, two-generation approaches that coordinate preschool with services to put parents on more stable footing have shown promising results. Programs that provide parents with postsecondary education, workforce development, income supports and parenting assistance can strengthen and stabilize families, providing a sturdier foundation for the most vulnerable children.[26]

HEALTH

Improved Health Outcomes and Near-Universal Health Insurance Coverage for Children

For children to succeed in school, they need to be born healthy, and as they grow, they need to receive early diagnosis and treatment of developmental issues, ongoing management of chronic health conditions and preventive care. The past couple of decades have brought important gains in child health and safety. Mortality rates for children of all ages have steadily fallen because of medical advances and increased safety measures. Drug and alcohol abuse among teenagers has declined significantly. The prevalence of babies born with a low birthweight has been fairly level for the past decade.

Of the child health trends tracked by KIDS COUNT, the most remarkable is the tremendous increase in health insurance coverage: 95 percent of American children

now have health insurance. In 1997, 15 percent of children lacked health insurance, compared with 5 percent in 2015.

Government Programs Have Substantially Reduced the Number of Uninsured Children

Near-universal health insurance coverage for children represents an undeniable success for public investment: Health insurance leads to better health outcomes for children,[27] while protecting families financially. Over the past two decades, as the prevalence of employer-sponsored health insurance coverage has declined, several expansions of public coverage have benefited children.

Erasing racial inequities, creating pathways to opportunity and making sound investments in our youth will benefit all Americans.

The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), enacted in 1997, provides health insurance for children in low- to middle-income families. Despite CHIP, 10 percent of children remained uninsured a decade after its passage. The 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA) made health insurance more accessible to both children and adults by subsidizing the cost of health insurance purchased on the private market for those with incomes up to about $96,000 for a family of four.

The ACA also subsidizes state expansions of Medicaid. States that expanded Medicaid in recent years have half the rate of uninsured working-age adults as states that chose not to expand Medicaid.[28] When parents are insured, their children are more likely to be insured.[29]

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Mixed Trends, but a Dramatic Decline in Teenage Births

KIDS COUNT indicators in this domain focus on family formation, parental education and community resources that affect child outcomes. We see negative trends as well as reasons for optimism. Over the past decade, the percentage of children in single-parent families has increased from 32 percent to 35 percent, although the percentage has remained stable since 2011. There also has been a gradual increase in the percentage of children growing up in concentrated poverty. From 2011 to 2015, 14 percent of children lived in census tracts with poverty rates of 30 percent or more.

One trend, however, stands out far above the rest: The teen birth rate declined by 63 percent between 1990 and 2015 and is now at a record low. In 1990, the teen birth rate was 60 births per 1,000 teenage girls. By 2015, the rate had dropped to 22 births per 1,000 teenage girls.

Public Programs Have Played an Important Role in Reducing Teen Births

Experts believe teen births have declined largely because of greater and more effective contraceptive use and delayed sexual activity, which have been facilitated by public awareness campaigns and programs that make contraceptives available at no or low cost.[30]

Delayed childbearing has many positive benefits. When young women postpone having children, they are more likely to complete high school and obtain postsecondary education or training, and they are more likely to be employed. However, it's not just maternal age that matters: Outcomes for children are better when pregnancy is planned and parents are emotionally and economically prepared to raise a child. Yet nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of pregnancies among unmarried women ages 20 to 24 are unintended.[31]

Researchers have found that long-acting reversible contraceptives, such as intrauterine devices (IUDs) and hormonal implants, are substantially more effective at preventing pregnancy than short-term methods that require frequent compliance. But only a small fraction of women in the United States use long-acting birth control.[32] Expanding public awareness of and access to these types of contraceptives could substantially reduce the rate of unintended pregnancy and promote a culture of active decision making about when to become a parent.[33]

AN URGENT CALL TO OUR LEADERS: INVEST IN THE NEXT GENERATION NOW

Our nation faces a pressing challenge: We need to invest in the future. For nearly a decade, we've had a national conversation about the need to shore up our aging physical infrastructure: Bridges are crumbling, lead pipes carry water into homes and public transportation is in disrepair. But we are also, finally, having an overdue conversation about the consequences of failing to invest adequately in our human infrastructure.

For decades, low-income Latinos and African Americans have made slow economic progress, but they still lag far behind whites. And now, low-income and middle-class whites — as well as people of color — are watching gains made by previous generations slip away. Many of the secure, well-paying, unionized jobs that used to provide family-supporting wages for high school graduates are gone. Young people see fewer opportunities, and many are losing hope. At the same time, our nation's enormous wealth and income gap continues to grow.

Today, we are witnessing a huge failure of public and political will. Research and evidence point clearly to investments that would help parents get ahead economically, prepare children for school, improve child and family health, stabilize families and put children on a path to success. We have provided just a few examples, but there are many other programs and policies that lead to positive results.

Most important, smart and targeted government investments aimed at those most in need can work to eliminate long-standing barriers that limit success for many children of color and immigrants, correcting for a lack of equity that affects us all. Erasing racial inequities, creating pathways to opportunity and making sound investments in our youth will benefit all Americans.

Frederick Douglass famously said, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."[34] His prescient words need to be taken seriously — and acted upon — in 2017. The consequences of not investing wisely in children will be higher costs down the road.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation urges policymakers to make wise public investments and to take a long view. Understandably, legislators and administrators want expenditures to show immediate returns. But we know it takes sustained investment over time to make meaningful improvements for children and to maintain that progress. We know what to do. Now we need to act. ■

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TRENDS

THE STATUS OF CHILDREN

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Since 1990, KIDS COUNT has ranked states annually on overall child well-being, using an index of key indicators. The KIDS COUNT index uses four domains to capture what children need most to thrive: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health and (4) Family and Community. Each domain includes four indicators, for a total of 16. These indicators represent the best available data to measure the status of child well-being at the state and national levels. (For a more thorough description of the KIDS COUNT index, visit www.aecf.org/databook.)

This year's *Data Book* presents both current data and multiyear trends, which whenever possible compare data from 2010 with those from 2015, the most recent year available. They allow us to assess how the country's children have fared during the economic recovery after the Great Recession. State rankings focus only on the most recent data.

NATIONAL TRENDS IN CHILD WELL-BEING

Comparing data during the past five or so years reveals positive developments in child well-being nationally (see page 14). Broadly speaking, children experienced gains in the Economic Well-Being and Health domains, but setbacks in the Education and Family and Community domains.

Although families have not fully recovered from the Great Recession, all four Economic Well-Being indicators improved. Fewer children are living in poverty, more parents are employed and fewer families are living with a housing cost burden. Nonetheless, in 2015, one in five children lived in poverty.

In 2015, the year of our most recent data, the national unemployment rate was 5.3 percent; it has since declined to 4.5 percent.[35] Given this change — one of the key factors to improving the economic stability of families — we expect to see ongoing progress in the Economic Well-Being domain data moving forward.

Meanwhile, two of the four Education indicators — which cover preschool enrollment and high school graduation — showed some improvement. Notably, with 83 percent of high school students graduating on time in 2014/15, the U.S. high school graduation rate is at an all-time high. However, two Education indicators have worsened over the past five or so years; for example, a larger share of eighth graders scored below the proficient math level in 2015 than in 2009.

Similarly, child health continued to improve, with gains in three indicators and no change in the fourth. The largest improvement was in the rate of children without health insurance. Fewer children lacked access to health insurance coverage in 2015 than before the recession. This drop in the number of uninsured children is largely attributed to expanded public health coverage.

Trends in the Family and Community domain were mixed. The teen birth rate continued its dramatic decline, reaching a new all-time low. And a smaller percentage of children were living with parents who lack a high school diploma. However, the percentage of children living in single-parent families, where resources tend to be fewer, was higher in 2015 than in 2010.

Especially troubling is the number of children growing up in a high-poverty neighborhood.

NATIONAL TRENDS

16 Key Indicators of Child Well-Being by Domain

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

CHILDREN IN POVERTY NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **15,000,000**	22% 2010	21% 2015	BETTER
CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK SECURE EMPLOYMENT NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **21,363,000**	33% 2010	29% 2015	BETTER
CHILDREN LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH A HIGH HOUSING COST BURDEN NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **24,646,000**	41% 2010	33% 2015	BETTER
TEENS NOT IN SCHOOL AND NOT WORKING NUMBER OF TEENS: **1,191,000**	9% 2010	7% 2015	BETTER

EDUCATION

YOUNG CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **4,344,000**	52% 2009–11	53% 2013–15	WORSE
FOURTH GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN READING NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **NOT AVAILABLE**	68% 2009	65% 2015	BETTER
EIGHTH GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN MATH NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **NOT AVAILABLE**	67% 2009	68% 2015	WORSE
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME NUMBER OF TEENS: **NOT AVAILABLE**	21% 2010/11	17% 2014/15	BETTER

HEALTH

LOW-BIRTHWEIGHT BABIES NUMBER OF BABIES: **320,869**	8.1% 2010	8.1% 2015	SAME
CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **3,534,000**	8% 2010	5% 2015	BETTER
CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS PER 100,000 NUMBER OF DEATHS: **19,562**	26 2010	25 2015	BETTER
TEENS WHO ABUSE ALCOHOL OR DRUGS NUMBER OF TEENS: **1,276,000**	7% 2009–10	5% 2013–14	BETTER

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

CHILDREN IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **24,444,000**	34% 2010	35% 2015	WORSE
CHILDREN IN FAMILIES WHERE THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD LACKS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **10,137,000**	15% 2010	14% 2015	BETTER
CHILDREN LIVING IN HIGH-POVERTY AREAS NUMBER OF CHILDREN: **10,032,000**	13% 2008–12	14% 2011–15	WORSE
TEEN BIRTHS PER 1,000 NUMBER OF BIRTHS: **229,715**	34 2010	22 2015	BETTER

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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
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING								
Children in Poverty	2015	21%	36%	34%	13%	31%	12%	21%
Children Whose Parents Lack Secure Employment	2015	29%	45%	47%	21%	34%	23%	33%
Children Living in Households With a High Housing Cost Burden	2015	33%	47%	32%	32%	45%	24%	35%
Teens Not in School and Not Working	2015	7%	10%	13%	3%	9%	6%	7%
EDUCATION								
Young Children Not in School[#]	2011–15	53%	49%	56%	46%	60%	51%	52%
Fourth Graders Not Proficient in Reading	2015	65%	82%[*]	78%[*]	47%[*]	79%	54%	62%[*]
Eight Graders Not Proficient in Math	2015	68%	88%[*]	81%[*]	42%[*]	81%	58%	65%[*]
High School Students Not Graduating on Time	2014/15	17%	25%[*]	28%[*]	10%[*]	22%	12%	N.A.
HEALTH								
Low-Birthweight Babies	2015	8.1%	13.0%	7.5%	8.4%	7.2%	6.9%	N.A.
Children Without Health Insurance	2015	5%	4%	13%	4%	8%	4%	4%
Child and Teen Deaths per 100,000	2015	25	36	28	15	20	24	N.A.
Teens Who Abuse Alcohol or Drugs	2014^	5%	4%[*]	5%[*]	2%[**]	6%	5%	3%[*]
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY								
Children in Single-Parent Families	2015	35%	66%	52%	16%	42%	25%	41%
Children in Families Where the Household Head Lacks a High School Diploma	2015	14%	12%	19%	10%	33%	6%	9%
Children Living in High-Poverty Areas	2011–15	14%	32%	31%	7%	23%	5%	12%
Teen Births per 1,000	2015	22	32	26	7	35	16	N.A.

[#] Data are from 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) data and are not comparable to the national average using 3 years of pooled 1-year ACS data.
[*] Data are for non-Hispanics.
^ These are single-year race data for 2014. Data in index are 2013–14 multiyear estimates.
[+] Data results do not include Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders.
N.A. = Data not available.

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At the national level, 14 percent of children lived in communities where poverty rates were at or above 30 percent in 2011–15. This is an increase from 13 percent in 2008–12 and 9 percent in 2000.

Overall, developments in child well-being since 2010 demonstrated important progress in some areas while highlighting the substantial work necessary to improve the prospects for the next generation.

RACIAL GAPS IN CHILD WELL-BEING

Despite tremendous gains during the economic recovery for children of all races and income levels, inequities among children remain deep and stubbornly persistent (see page 16). On nearly all the measures that we track, African-American, American Indian and Latino children continued to experience negative outcomes at rates that were higher than the national average. There are a few notable exceptions. African-American children had the worst outcomes on half of the indicators. And yet they were more likely than the national average to be in school as young children, to have health insurance coverage, to abuse alcohol or drugs at lower rates and to live in families where the household head has a high school diploma. American Indian families with children were less likely to experience a high housing cost burden, and both American Indian and Latino children were more likely to be born at a healthy birthweight. Latino children and teens also had a lower death rate than the national average.

As the result of generational inequalities and systemic barriers, on many indicators, children of color continued to face steep barriers to success. African-American children were significantly more likely to live in single-parent families and high-poverty neighborhoods. American Indian children were more than twice as likely to live in neighborhoods with limited resources and lack health insurance. And Latino children were the most likely to abuse alcohol and drugs, live with a household head who does not have a high school diploma and not be in school when they are young. Latinas also have the highest teen birth rate.

Today, in 13 states and the District of Columbia, children of color are the majority of the child population, and demographers predict that children of color will be the majority of all children in America by 2020. The future success of our nation depends on our ability to ensure that all children have the chance to be successful.

In October 2017, the Foundation will release the second edition of *Race for Results*®,[36] which explores what it takes for all children to become successful adults and the barriers to opportunity that persist for many children of color and those living in immigrant families. This KIDS COUNT policy report will compare how children are progressing on key milestones across racial and ethnic groups at the national and state levels. For more information, access the 2014 report at www.aecf.org/race4results.

NATIONAL AND STATE DATA FACT SHEETS ONLINE

National and state profiles providing current and trend data for all 16 indicators are available at www.aecf.org/databook. National and state data are also available in Appendix 2, on page 54. ■

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OVERALL CHILD WELL-BEING

National data mask a great deal of state and regional variations in child well-being. 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 and investments 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. Due to a change in the data source for on-time high school graduation, the 2017 Overall and Education rankings cannot be compared with rankings from previous *Data Books*.

This year, three New England states hold the top spots for overall child well-being. New Hampshire ranked first among the states, followed by Massachusetts and Vermont. Louisiana, New Mexico and Mississippi were the three lowest-ranked states.

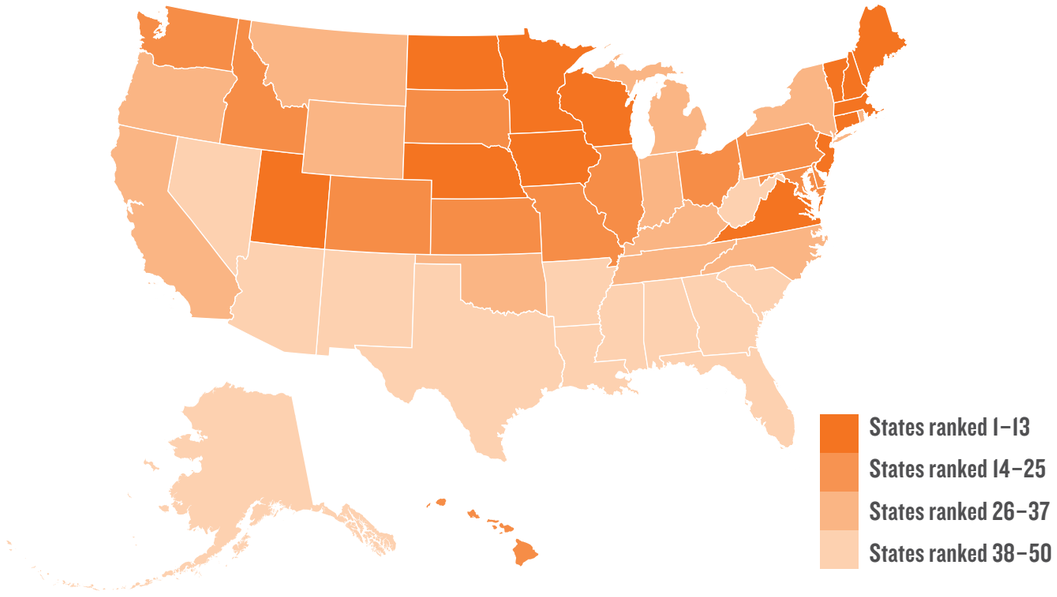
The map on page 21 shows the distinct regional patterns that emerged from the state rankings. Northeastern states composed half of the top 10 in terms of overall child well-being; excluded were Maine, New York, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island. Most of the states in the Midwest and Mountain regions ranked in the middle on overall child well-being, except for Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota and Utah, which were in the top 10. Nebraska followed closely in 11th place, with Wisconsin right behind in 12th.

States in the Southeast, Southwest and Appalachia — where states have the lowest levels of household income — populated the bottom of the Overall rankings. In fact, except for California and Alaska, the 18 lowest-ranked states were in these regions. States in the Southwest occupied three of the five lowest rankings for child well-being.

Although they are not ranked against states, children in the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico experienced some of the worst outcomes on many of the indicators we track. When available, the data for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are included in Appendix 2.

The Overall rankings obscure some important variations within states. Although most states' rankings did not vary dramatically across domains, there were a few exceptions. For example, Idaho ranked 11th in the Family and Community domain, but placed 43rd in the Education domain. California ranked 9th for Health, but was 46th in Economic Well-Being. For all states, the index identifies bright spots and room for improvement.

A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF OVERALL CHILD WELL-BEING*: 2017



2017 OVERALL RANK

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

*Due to changes in the on-time graduation indicator, Overall rankings cannot be compared with previous years.

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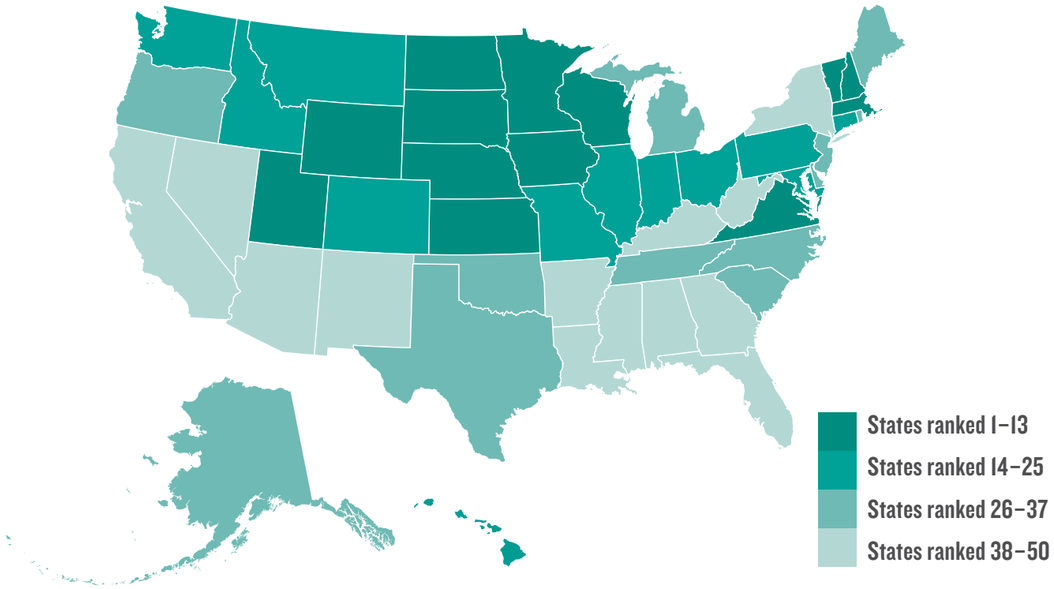
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

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 earn low wages, they are limited in the investments they can make in their children's development, which can undermine their children's prospects of success in school and later economic success as adults.[37] The negative effects of poverty on children also increase the chances of poor outcomes for youth and young adults, such as teen pregnancy and failure to graduate from high school.[38]

A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF ECONOMIC WELL-BEING: 2017



2017 ECONOMIC WELL-BEING DOMAIN RANK

1. North Dakota	11. Wyoming	21. Missouri	31. Michigan	41. New York
2. Minnesota	12. Virginia	22. Ohio	32. Texas	42. West Virginia
3. Iowa	13. Massachusetts	23. Hawaii	33. South Carolina	43. Arizona
4. New Hampshire	14. Idaho	24. Washington	34. Rhode Island	44. Georgia
5. Utah	15. Maryland	25. Illinois	35. Tennessee	45. Florida
6. Nebraska	16. Colorado	26. New Jersey	36. Alaska	46. California
7. Kansas	17. Connecticut	27. Maine	37. North Carolina	47. Arkansas
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CHILDREN IN POVERTY

Growing up in poverty is one of the greatest threats to healthy child development. It increases the likelihood that a child will be exposed to factors that can impair brain development and lead to poor cognitive, health and academic outcomes. It also can lead to higher rates of risky health-related behaviors among adolescents.[39] The child poverty rate in the United States increased dramatically because of the economic crisis and has yet to return to pre-recession levels. The official poverty level in 2015 was $24,036 for a family of two adults and two children. The risks posed by economic hardship are greatest among children who experience poverty when they are young and among those who experience persistent and deep poverty.[40]

Data Highlights

- Nationally, 21 percent of children (15.0 million) lived in families with incomes below the poverty line in 2015, down from 22 percent (15.7 million) in 2010, representing nearly 749,000 fewer children in poverty. After climbing for several years, the child poverty rate in 2015 continued the drop that had begun between 2012 and 2013.
- The rate of child poverty for 2015 ranged from a low of 11 percent in New Hampshire to a high of 31 percent in Mississippi.
- The child poverty rate among African Americans (36 percent) was three times the rate for non-Hispanic whites (12 percent) in 2015. The rates for American Indians (34 percent) and Hispanics (31 percent) were also significantly higher.

CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK SECURE EMPLOYMENT

Secure employment can contribute to the financial stability and well-being of families. Unfortunately, since 2000, many middle- and low-income families have experienced high rates of employment insecurity.[41] Too many parents lack the education and skills needed to secure a family-supporting job and are forced to piece together part-time or temporary work that does not provide sufficient or stable income. Even a full-time job at a low wage does not necessarily lift a family out of poverty. Without access to benefits and tax credits, a single parent with two children would need to earn $9.55 per hour — $2.30 more than the current federal minimum wage — working full time just to reach the poverty level.

Data Highlights

- In 2015, 29 percent of children (21.4 million) lived in families where no parent had full-time, year-round employment. The rate of parents without secure employment has steadily declined since 2010. Despite this positive trend, many families are still struggling economically.
- At 20 percent, North Dakota and Utah had the lowest percentage of children in families without secure parental employment in 2015. Mississippi and West Virginia had the highest rates (37 percent).
- Roughly half of all American Indian children (47 percent) and African-American children (45 percent) had no parent with full-time, year-round employment in 2015, compared with 34 percent of Latino children, 33 percent of multiracial children, 23 percent of non-Hispanic white children and 21 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander children.

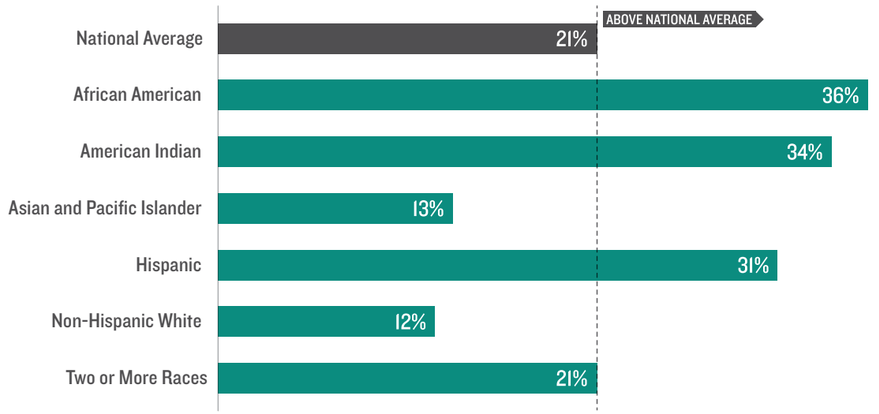
CHILDREN LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH A HIGH HOUSING COST BURDEN

Family income is only one component of financial security; the cost of basic expenses also matters. Housing is typically one of the largest expenses that families face. Rising housing costs and stagnant or falling incomes have increased the burden that housing cost is placing on family finances.[42] Low-income families are more likely to experience a housing affordability problem (spending more than 30 percent of pretax income on housing, whether they rent or own). Paying too much for housing limits the resources families have for other necessities like food, health care, transportation and child care.[43]

Data Highlights

- Across the nation, 33 percent of children (24.6 million) lived in households with a high housing cost burden in 2015, compared with 41 percent (30.1 million) in 2010. The rate of families with disproportionately high housing costs is much higher than it was in 1990. It peaked in 2010, at the height of the recent housing crisis, and has steadily declined since. The rate is now below pre-recession levels.
- At 45 percent, California had the highest rate of children living in households that spent more than 30 percent of income on housing in 2015. North Dakota had the lowest rate, at 17 percent.
- Fewer children are living in households with high housing costs today across all racial and ethnic groups. Yet even with these improvements, disparities still exist. Roughly half of African-American children (47 percent) and Hispanic children (45 percent) lived in households with a high housing cost burden in 2015, compared with 24 percent of non-Hispanic white children.
- Between 2010 and 2015, children living in households with a high housing cost burden improved in all but two states.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN POVERTY: 2015

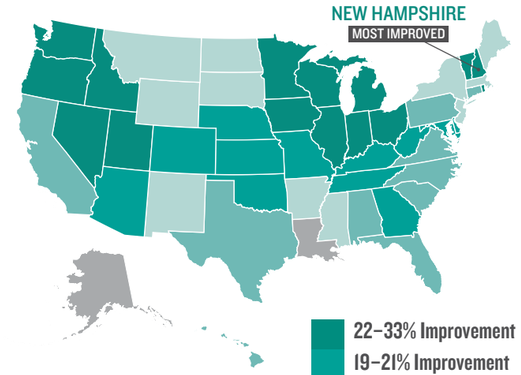


SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey.

TEENS NOT IN SCHOOL AND NOT WORKING

Teens ages 16 to 19 who are not in school and who are not part of the workforce (referred to as "opportunity" or "disconnected" youth) are at high risk of experiencing negative outcomes as they transition to adulthood. Youth who drop out of high school, who are involved in the justice system, who become teen parents or who age out of foster care comprise part of this population. Limited skills and work history, combined with limited financial resources to invest in the development of these skills, restrict access to good jobs, as well as future higher wages and employment opportunities.[44] While those individuals who have dropped out of school are clearly vulnerable, many young people who have finished high school but are not working are also at a disadvantage in terms of achieving economic success in adulthood.

CHILDREN LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH A HIGH HOUSING COST BURDEN: PERCENT CHANGE 2010–15



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2015 American Community Surveys.

Data Highlights

- Nationally, 7 percent of youth were disconnected from both work and school in 2015. About 1.2 million teens between the ages of 16 and 19 were neither enrolled in school nor employed.
- At 4 percent, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire and Vermont had the lowest rate of teens not in school and not working in 2015. In contrast, Louisiana had the highest rate, at 11 percent.
- American Indian, African-American and Latino teens had considerably higher rates of neither being in school nor working than their non-Hispanic white and Asian and Pacific Islander counterparts.

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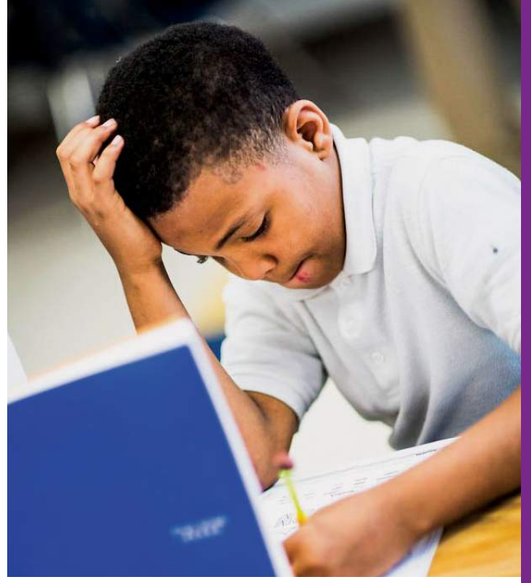

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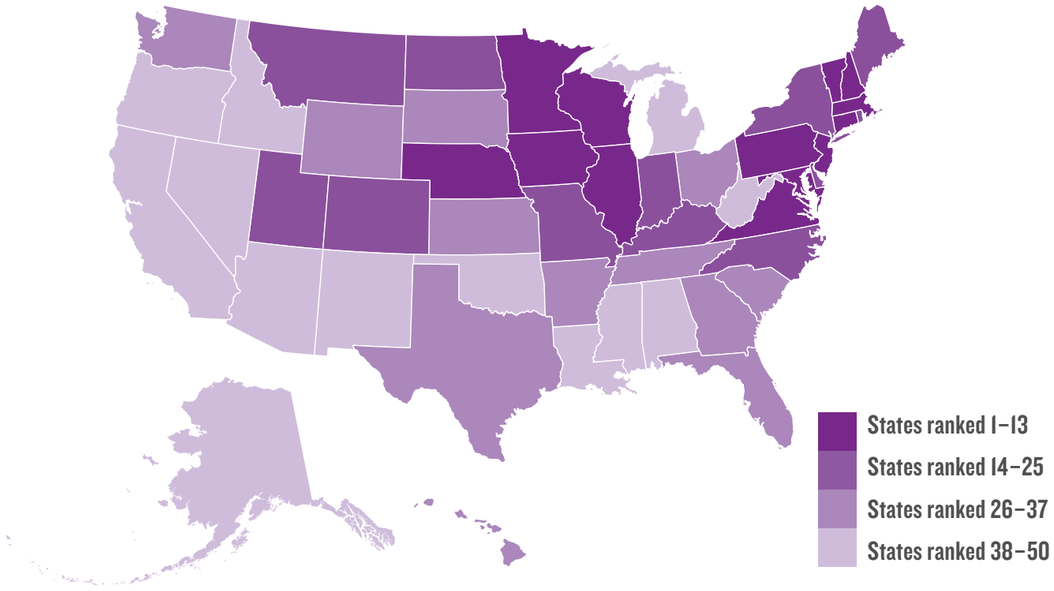
EDUCATION

The early years of a child's life lay the foundation for future success. Establishing the conditions that promote educational achievement for children is critical, beginning with quality prenatal care and continuing 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.[45] Addressing the achievement gap will be key to ensuring our future workforce can compete on a global scale.

A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF EDUCATION*: 2017



2017 EDUCATION DOMAIN RANK

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

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YOUNG CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

The foundation of brain architecture and subsequent lifelong developmental potential are laid down in a child's early years.[46] High-quality prekindergarten programs for 3- and 4-year-olds play an important role in preparing children for success and lead to higher levels of educational attainment, career advancement and earnings. Although Head Start and the expansion of state-funded programs since the 1990s have greatly increased access to preschool and kindergarten,[47] many children — especially 3-year-olds and children living in low-income families — continue to be left out, exacerbating socioeconomic differences in educational achievement.

Data Highlights

- During 2013–15, 4.3 million 3- and 4-year-olds were not in school, representing more than half (53 percent) of all children in that age group. The rate of attendance has remained virtually unchanged since 2009–11, when 52 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds did not participate in any school programs.
- In 2013–15, Connecticut and New Jersey, at 36 percent and 37 percent, respectively, had the lowest shares of 3- and 4-year-olds not in school. The states with the highest percentages of young children not in school in 2013–15 were Idaho (69 percent) and Nevada (66 percent).
- Roughly half of African-American, non-Hispanic white and multiracial 3- and 4-year-olds were not in any school programs; the percentage was nearly the same for Asian and Pacific Islander children (46 percent). The rates were noticeably higher for Latinos (60 percent) and American Indians (56 percent).

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. By fourth grade, children use reading to learn other subjects. Therefore, mastery of reading is critical for them to keep up academically. Children who reach fourth grade without being able to read proficiently are more likely to become frustrated and drop out of school. Low reading proficiency also reduces their earning potential and chances for career success as adults.[48] Although improvements in reading proficiency have occurred since the early 1990s, progress has been slow, and race and income gaps remain.

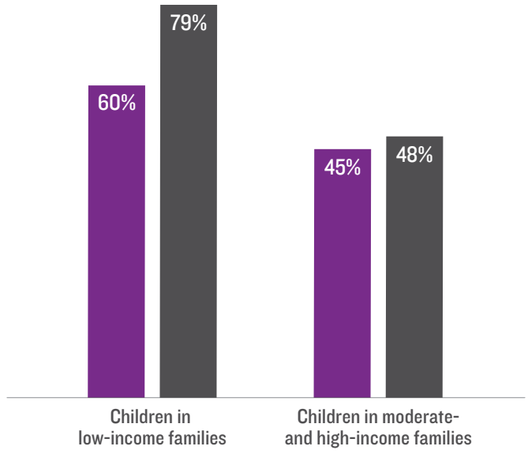
Data Highlights

- An alarming 65 percent of fourth graders in public school were reading below the proficient level in 2015, a slight improvement from 2009, when the figure was 68 percent.
- State differences in fourth-grade reading levels among public school students were wide. In 2015, Massachusetts had the lowest percentage of public school fourth graders not proficient in reading, 50 percent, compared with a high of 77 percent in New Mexico.
- In 2015, 82 percent of African-American, 79 percent of Latino, 78 percent of American Indian and 62 percent of multiracial fourth graders were not proficient in reading, compared with 54 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 47 percent of Asian and Pacific Islanders. Although these figures are deeply troubling, fourth-grade reading levels have improved since 2009 for all groups.

EIGHTH GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN MATH

Competence in mathematics is essential for success in the workplace, which increasingly requires higher-level technical skills. Students who take advanced math and science courses are more likely to graduate from high school, attend and complete college and earn higher incomes.[49] Even for young people who do not attend college, basic math skills help with everyday tasks and improve employability. Ensuring that children have early access to high-quality mathematics education is critical for their success in school and life.

PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL (2011–15) AND FOURTH GRADERS WHO SCORED BELOW PROFICIENT READING LEVEL (2015) BY FAMILY INCOME



SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–15 American Community Survey and U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress.

NOTES: For young children not in school, low income is defined as children living below 200 percent of poverty. For fourth graders who scored below proficient reading level, low income is defined as those eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, which is 185 percent of poverty.

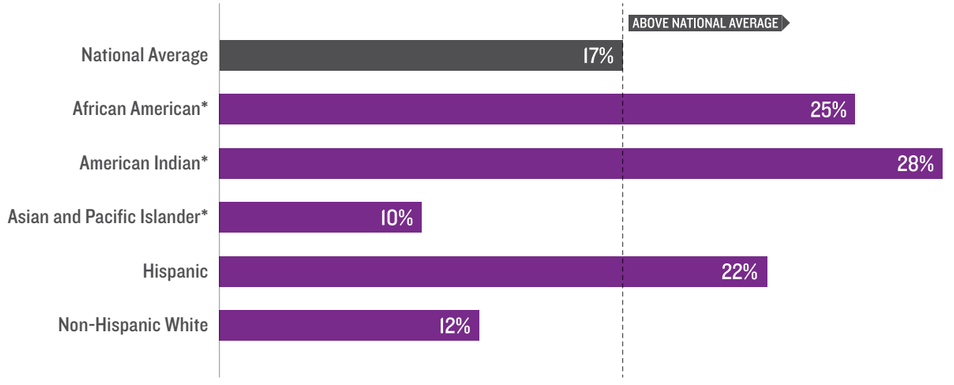
Data Highlights

- Nationwide, more than two-thirds (68 percent) of public school eighth graders were not proficient in math in 2015. This represents a slight increase from the 2009 rate of 67 percent.
- At 49 percent, Massachusetts had the lowest percentage of eighth graders not proficient in math in 2015. Alabama had the highest rate, at 83 percent. Massachusetts was the only state in which more than half of eighth graders were proficient in math.
- In 2015, 58 percent of non-Hispanic white eighth graders were below the proficient level, compared with 88 percent of African Americans and 81 percent of both Latinos and American Indians. And although eighth-grade math achievement improved for Latino, Asian and Pacific Islander and multiracial students between 2009 and 2015, it remained the same for African Americans and got slightly worse for whites and American Indians.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME

A high school diploma opens doors that lead to long-term career opportunities. Students who graduate from high school on time have many more choices in young adulthood. They are more likely to pursue postsecondary education and training, make healthier decisions and engage in less risky behaviors. They are also more employable and have higher incomes than students who fail to graduate.[50] In 2015, median annual earnings for someone without a high school diploma ($21,300) were 73 percent of those of a high school graduate ($29,000) and 42 percent of the median earnings of someone with a bachelor's degree ($50,900).[51]

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME: 2014/15



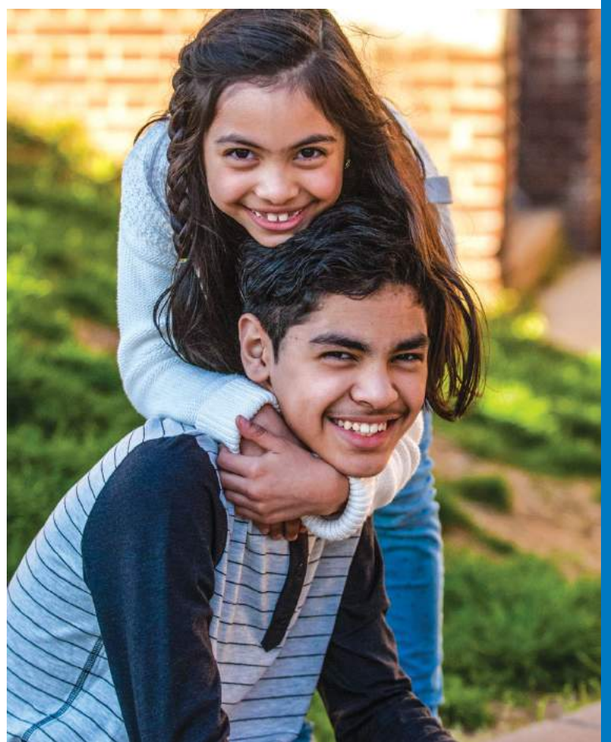
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2014/15 Common Core of Data.

*Data are for non-Hispanics.

Data Highlights

- Nationally, about one in six (17 percent) of high school students did not graduate on time in the 2014/15 school year. Steady improvements have occurred since 2010/11, when 21 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 Iowa to a high of 31 percent in New Mexico. The District of Columbia, at 32 percent, had the highest rate.
- In 2014/15, 12 percent of non-Hispanic white students did not graduate from high school on time. The rates for African-American and American Indian students were more than twice as high. And the rate for Latino students was also significantly higher.

**Estimates represent the average cohort graduation rate, which is a change from the average freshman graduation rate included in the *2012–16 Data Books*.



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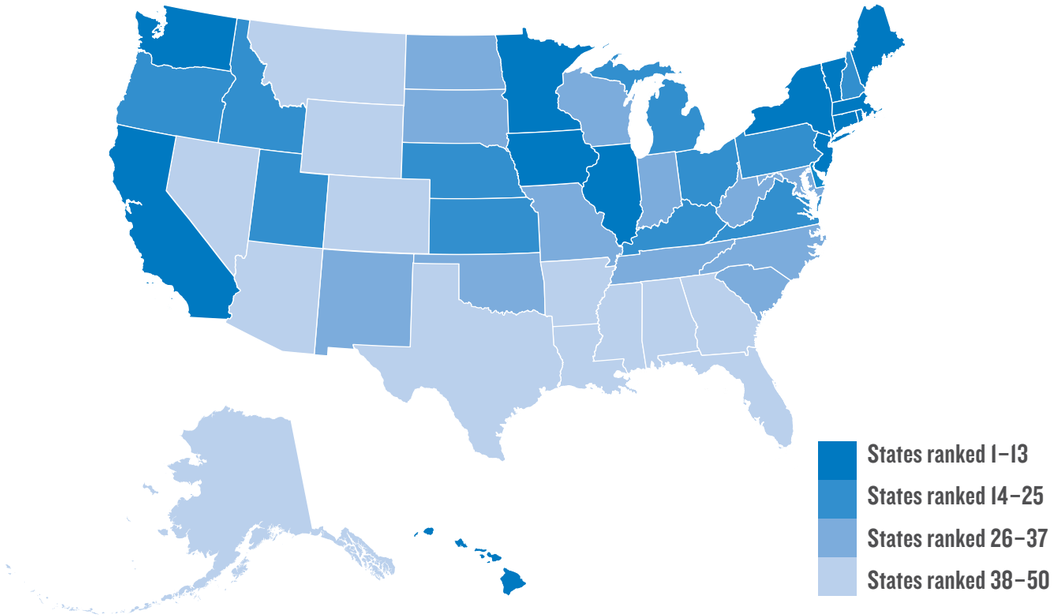
HEALTH

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, inadequate housing, lack of preventive health care, substance abuse, maternal depression and family violence put children's health at risk. Poor health in childhood affects 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.

A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF HEALTH: 2017



2017 HEALTH DOMAIN RANK

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

LOW-BIRTHWEIGHT BABIES

Babies born with a low birthweight (less than 5.5 pounds) have a high probability of experiencing developmental problems and short- and long-term disabilities. They are also at a greater risk of dying within the first year of life. Smoking, poor nutrition, poverty, stress, infections, obesity, multiple births and violence can increase the risk of a baby being born with a low birthweight.[52] Compared with other affluent countries, the United States has among the highest percentage of babies born with a low birthweight.[53]

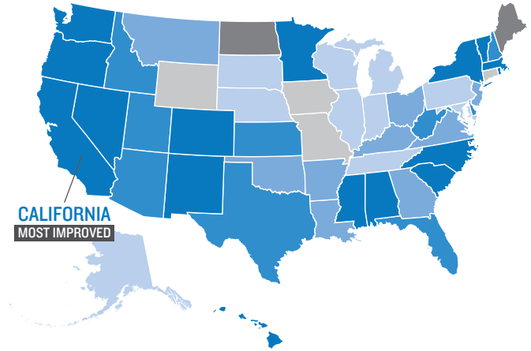
Data Highlights

- Nationally, low-birthweight babies represented 8.1 percent of all live births in 2015. After gradually increasing over time, the percentage of low-birthweight babies has remained relatively stable for the past several years and is now slightly below the four-decade high of 8.3 percent reached in 2006.[54]
- Alaska had the lowest percentage of low-birthweight babies in 2015 — 5.8 percent of live births — while Mississippi had the highest, 11.4 percent.
- Among racial and ethnic groups, African-American babies were most likely to be born with a low birthweight, 13.0 percent of live births in 2015. Although this represents a decline from 13.2 percent in 2010, it is still close to twice the low-birthweight rates for Latinos (7.2 percent) and for non-Hispanic whites (6.9 percent).

CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE

Children without health insurance are less likely than insured children to have a regular health care provider and to receive care when they need it, putting them at greater risk of hospitalization. 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. Having health insurance can protect families from financial devastation when a child experiences a serious or chronic illness and can help children remain healthy, active and in school.

CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE: PERCENT CHANGE 2010–15



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2015 American Community Surveys.

NOTE: The rates of uninsured children improved in 44 states between 2010 and 2015. Thirty-four of these states have rates at or below 5 percent.

Data Highlights

- Across the nation, 5 percent of children (3.5 million) lacked health insurance in 2015. That is a 38 percent improvement from 2010, which means that 2.4 million more children were insured in 2015.
- In 34 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, the percentage of children without health coverage was 5 percent or less in 2015. Massachusetts and Vermont had the lowest rate, 1 percent, compared with a high of 11 percent in Alaska.
- The likelihood of being uninsured has declined for all racial groups. The uninsured rate was just 4 percent for Asian and Pacific Islander, African-American, multiracial and non-Hispanic white children. The rate was much higher for American Indian (13 percent) and Latino (8 percent) children.

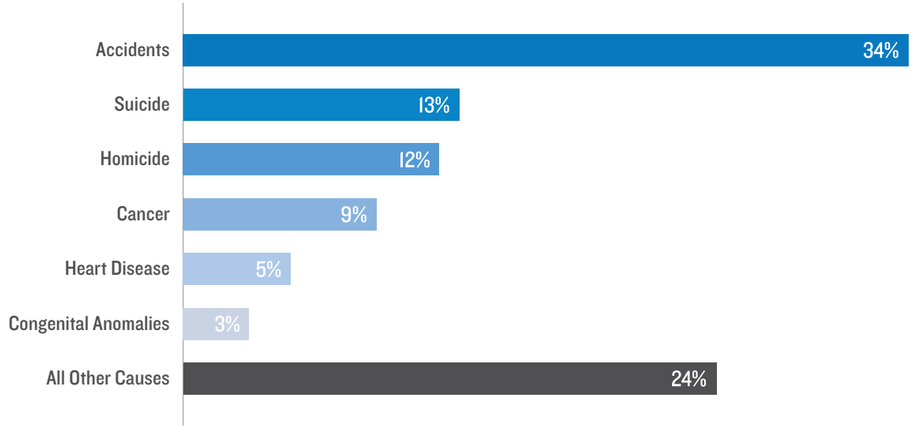
CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS

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 29 percent of all deaths among children ages 1 to 14.[55] As children move into their mid- and late-teenage years, they encounter new risks that can be deadly. In 2015, accidents, homicides and suicides accounted for 74 percent of deaths to teens ages 15 to 19.[56]

Data Highlights

- In 2015, 19,562 children and youth ages 1 to 19 died in the United States, which translates into a mortality rate of 25 per 100,000 children and teens. The rate declined dramatically from 1990, when it was 46 per 100,000, resulting in roughly 11,516 fewer deaths in 2015.
- Connecticut had the lowest rate, 15 deaths per 100,000 children and youth in 2015. Montana fell at the other end of the spectrum, with a child and teen death rate of 43 per 100,000.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS BY THE SIX LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH: 2015



SOURCE: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 2015 Vital Statistics.

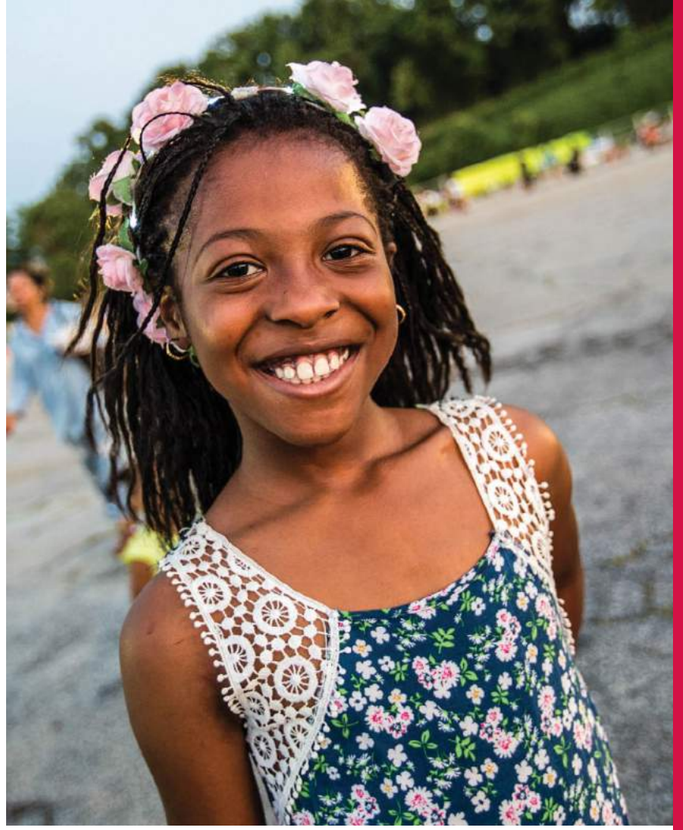
- The 2015 mortality rate for African-American children and teens (36 per 100,000) was noticeably higher than the death rates for children and youth of other racial and ethnic groups.

TEENS WHO ABUSE ALCOHOL OR DRUGS

Abuse of alcohol and drugs can negatively impact cognitive growth of the teenage brain during a critical time of development.[57] Teens who abuse these substances are more likely to engage in risky sexual activity, drive under the influence, abuse multiple substances and commit crimes. Abuse of alcohol and drugs is also linked to physical and mental health problems, poor academic performance and disengagement from peers, family, schools and community. The negative consequences of teen alcohol and drug abuse can carry over into adulthood. Overall, alcohol and drug use by adolescents have declined during the past decade, although patterns vary by substance.

Data Highlights

- In 2013–14, 5 percent of teens ages 12 to 17 had abused or were dependent on alcohol or drugs during the past year, declining from 7 percent in 2009–10.
- There is little variability in the substance abuse rates across states. Rates range from a low of 4 percent in Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota and Oklahoma to a high of 6 percent in 16 states and the District of Columbia.
- Among racial and ethnic groups Asian teens were the least likely (2 percent) to abuse or be dependent on alcohol or drugs.



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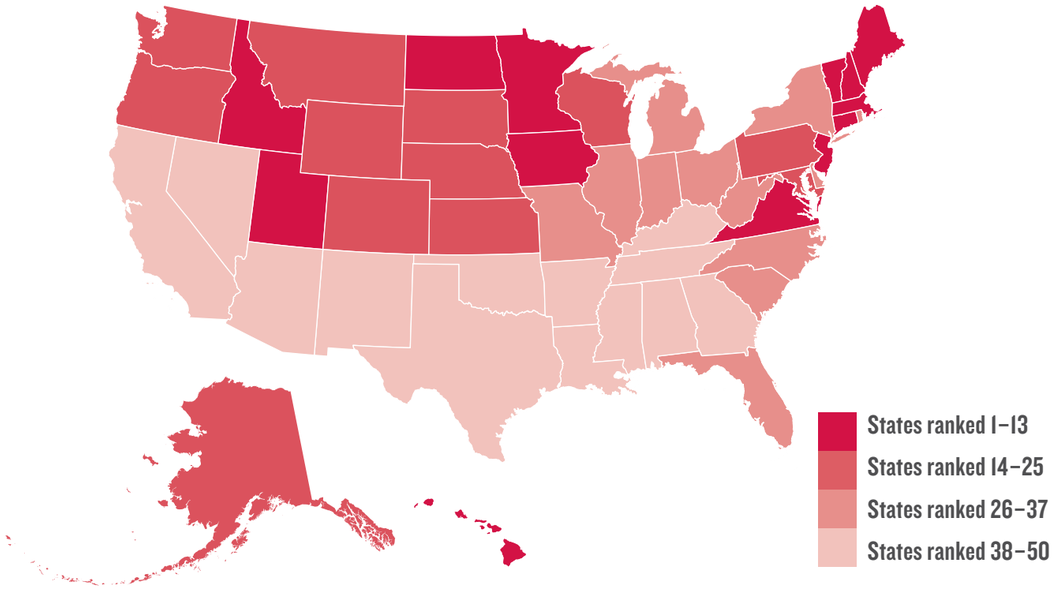
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Children who live in nurturing families and are part of supportive communities have better social-emotional and learning outcomes. Parents struggling with financial hardship have fewer resources to invest in children and are more prone to stress 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, while addressing the well-being of children. Where families live also matters. When communities have strong institutions and the resources to provide safety, good schools and quality support services, families and their children are more likely to thrive.

A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY: 2017



2017 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DOMAIN RANK

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

CHILDREN IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

Children growing up in single-parent families typically have access to fewer economic and emotional resources than children in two-parent families. In 2015, 35 percent of single-parent families had incomes below the poverty line, compared with 8 percent of married couples with children.[58] They also have poorer health and educational outcomes and are more likely to drop out of school, to have or cause a teen pregnancy and to experience a divorce in adulthood.[59] Nearly one in four of the 24.4 million children living with an unmarried parent in 2015 was living with cohabiting domestic partners, compared with only 16 percent in 1990.

Data Highlights

- The percentage of children living in single-parent families remained virtually unchanged between 2010 and 2015. In 2015, 35 percent of children lived in single-parent families.
- At the state level, the percentage of children living in single-parent families in 2015 ranged from a low of 19 percent in Utah to a high of 48 percent in Mississippi. The share was even greater in the District of Columbia (53 percent) and Puerto Rico (59 percent).
- Two-thirds (66 percent) of African-American children, more than half (52 percent) of American Indian children, 42 percent of Latino and 41 percent of multiracial children lived in single-parent families in 2015. By comparison, 25 percent of non-Hispanic white children and 16 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander children lived in single-parent households.

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

Children growing up with parents who have not graduated from high school have fewer socioeconomic advantages and are at greater risk of being born with a low birthweight, having health problems, entering school not ready to learn and having poor educational outcomes.[60] More highly educated parents are better able to provide their children with economic stability and security, which enhances child development. Higher parental education levels also are strongly associated with better outcomes for children, including higher educational attainment and achievement. In fact, bachelor's degree holders typically earn more than workers with only a high school diploma, which no longer guarantees success in the workforce. During the past several decades, parental education levels have steadily increased.

Data Highlights

- In 2015, 14 percent of children lived in households headed by an adult without a high school diploma. While the indicator improved only slightly since 2010, there has been substantial improvement since 1990, when 22 percent of children lived with parents who lacked a high school diploma.[61]
- In Maine and New Hampshire, only 4 percent of children lived in families not headed by a high school graduate, the lowest rate in the country. At 22 percent, California had the highest.
- One-third (33 percent) of Latino children lived in households headed by someone without a high school diploma. That is more than two and a half times the rate

for African-American children (12 percent) and five and a half times the rate for non-Hispanic white children (6 percent).

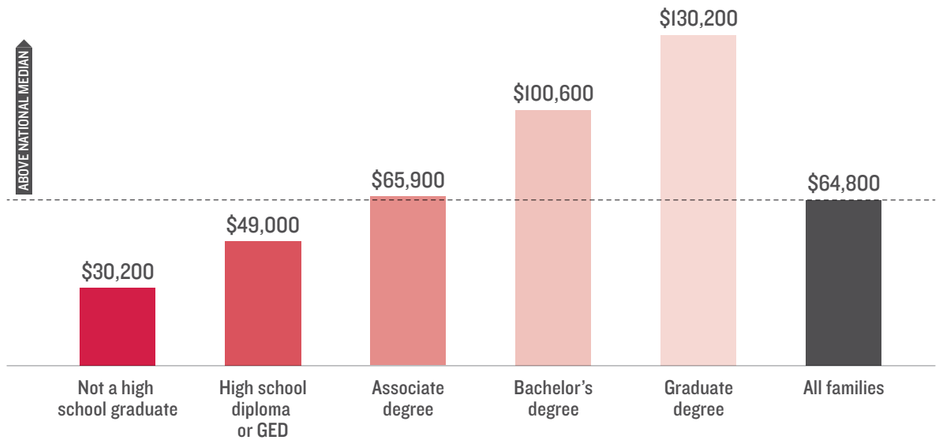
CHILDREN LIVING IN HIGH-POVERTY AREAS

Concentrated poverty puts whole neighborhoods at risk. Residents of high-poverty neighborhoods face worse health outcomes, higher rates of crime and violence, poor-performing schools and limited access to networks and job opportunities. They also experience higher levels of financial insecurity. These barriers make it much harder for families to move up the economic ladder.[62] Concentrated neighborhood poverty negatively affects all children living in the area — not only poor children, but also those who are economically better off.[63] High-poverty areas are defined here as census tracts where the poverty rates for the total population are 30 percent or more.

Data Highlights

- During the period from 2011–15, 14 percent of children lived in high-poverty areas nationwide, a total of 10 million children. Between 1990 and 2000, the likelihood that a child would grow up in an area of concentrated poverty had declined from 11 percent to 9 percent.[64] The rate increased over the next decade, with the biggest increases occurring after the recession. In recent years, the rate has leveled off at 14 percent.

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME BY FAMILY HEAD'S EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: 2015



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey, 1-year PUMS.

- Variation among the states was wide: Only 1 percent of children in Vermont and Wyoming lived in areas of concentrated poverty, while 27 percent of Mississippi's children lived in high-poverty areas. In Puerto Rico, 84 percent of children live in high-poverty areas.
- African-American (32 percent), American Indian (31 percent) and Latino (23 percent) children were much more likely to live in high-poverty areas than their multiracial (12 percent), Asian and Pacific Islander (7 percent) and non-Hispanic white (5 percent) counterparts.

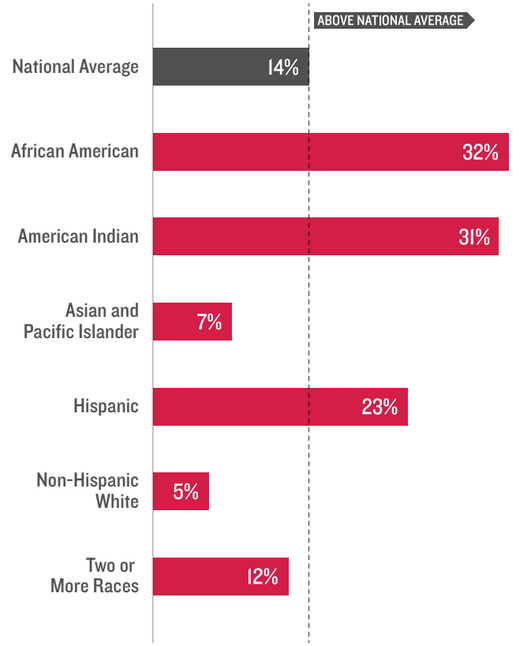
TEEN BIRTHS

Teenage childbearing can have long-term negative effects for both the mother and the newborn. Babies born to teens are far more likely to be born preterm with a low birthweight. Their families are more likely to have limited educational and economic resources, which function as barriers to future earning potential and success.[65] Children born to teen mothers tend to have poorer academic and behavioral outcomes and are more likely to engage in sexual activity and become teen mothers themselves. Although currently at a historic low, the teen birth rate in the United States remains the highest among all affluent countries.[66]

Data Highlights

- In 2015, there were 229,715 babies born to mothers ages 15 to 19. That translates into a birth rate of 22 births per 1,000 teens, which is less than half the rate in 1990, 60 births per 1,000 teens.[67]
- Among the states, the teen birth rate for 2015 ranged from a low of 9 births per 1,000 teens ages 15 to 19 in Massachusetts, to a high of 38 births per 1,000 in Arkansas.
- At 35 births per 1,000 15- to 19-year-old girls, the teen birth rate for Latinas was the highest across major racial and ethnic groups, followed closely by the rate for African Americans (32 per 1,000). Although it remained high, the 2015 teen birth rate was the lowest rate on record for both groups.[68]

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN LIVING IN HIGH-POVERTY AREAS: 2011–15



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–15 American Community Survey.

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KIDS COUNT DATA CENTER

ACCESS DATA ON CHILD WELL-BEING THROUGH THE KIDS COUNT DATA CENTER

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT Data Center provides access to 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. Site features include powerful search options; attractive and easy-to-create tables, maps and graphs; and ways to share information through social media on how children are faring.

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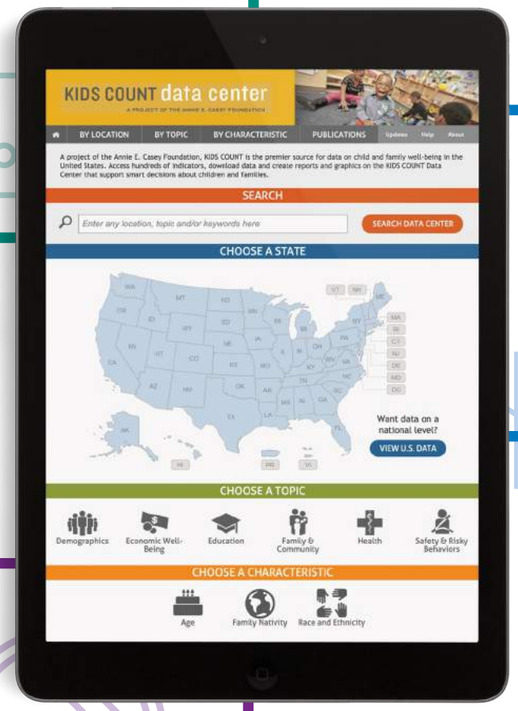
Post data visualizations on Facebook, add custom graphics to Instagram and tweet about how the well-being of your state's children compares with the region and nation.



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APPENDICES

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CHILD WELL-BEING RANKINGS

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

N.R. = NOT RANKED

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING INDICATORS

State	Children in poverty: 2015		Children whose parents lack secure employment: 2015		Children living in households with a high housing cost burden: 2015		Teens not in school and not working: 2015	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
United States	15,000,000	21	21,363,000	29	24,646,000	33	1,191,000	7
Alabama	291,000	27	370,000	33	321,000	29	19,000	7
Alaska	28,000	15	64,000	34	58,000	31	3,000	9
Arizona	394,000	25	484,000	30	550,000	34	34,000	9
Arkansas	188,000	27	243,000	34	203,000	29	15,000	9
California	1,902,000	21	2,884,000	32	4,128,000	45	140,000	7
Colorado	183,000	15	320,000	25	385,000	31	20,000	7
Connecticut	109,000	15	204,000	27	280,000	37	10,000	5
Delaware	39,000	19	58,000	28	65,000	32	4,000	8
District of Columbia	30,000	26	50,000	43	45,000	38	2,000	5
Florida	932,000	23	1,263,000	31	1,656,000	40	73,000	8
Georgia	603,000	24	755,000	30	830,000	33	55,000	9
Hawaii	43,000	14	82,000	26	119,000	38	4,000	6
Idaho	76,000	18	109,000	25	107,000	25	6,000	7
Illinois	559,000	19	810,000	27	961,000	32	43,000	6
Indiana	323,000	21	447,000	28	399,000	25	23,000	6
Iowa	106,000	15	158,000	22	154,000	21	9,000	5
Kansas	122,000	17	167,000	23	170,000	24	9,000	5
Kentucky	256,000	26	342,000	34	267,000	26	20,000	9
Louisiana	313,000	28	380,000	34	353,000	32	28,000	11
Maine	43,000	17	81,000	32	76,000	30	4,000	7
Maryland	175,000	13	336,000	25	457,000	34	20,000	7
Massachusetts	203,000	15	385,000	28	473,000	34	15,000	4
Michigan	486,000	22	697,000	32	622,000	28	40,000	7
Minnesota	165,000	13	292,000	23	308,000	24	11,000	4
Mississippi	224,000	31	272,000	37	229,000	31	17,000	10
Missouri	276,000	20	378,000	27	367,000	26	23,000	7
Montana	43,000	19	64,000	28	58,000	26	3,000	7
Nebraska	78,000	17	99,000	21	106,000	22	6,000	6
Nevada	137,000	21	211,000	32	231,000	35	12,000	9
New Hampshire	28,000	11	62,000	24	68,000	26	3,000	4
New Jersey	308,000	16	494,000	25	837,000	42	27,000	6
New Mexico	141,000	29	170,000	34	153,000	31	10,000	9
New York	910,000	22	1,311,000	31	1,766,000	42	70,000	7
North Carolina	530,000	23	682,000	30	724,000	32	45,000	8
North Dakota	20,000	12	35,000	20	30,000	17	2,000	5
Ohio	550,000	21	775,000	29	720,000	27	34,000	5
Oklahoma	209,000	22	279,000	29	249,000	26	17,000	8
Oregon	171,000	20	256,000	30	295,000	34	14,000	7
Pennsylvania	513,000	19	776,000	29	799,000	30	38,000	5
Puerto Rico	428,000	58	422,000	57	232,000	31	21,000	11
Rhode Island	41,000	19	64,000	30	75,000	35	4,000	7
South Carolina	256,000	24	332,000	31	321,000	29	19,000	7
South Dakota	37,000	18	50,000	24	43,000	21	3,000	6
Tennessee	355,000	24	466,000	31	448,000	30	24,000	7
Texas	1,637,000	23	1,993,000	28	2,309,000	32	121,000	8
Utah	116,000	13	184,000	20	234,000	26	10,000	6
Vermont	15,000	13	31,000	26	36,000	30	1,000	4
Virginia	273,000	15	461,000	25	592,000	32	25,000	6
Washington	246,000	16	444,000	28	527,000	33	25,000	7
West Virginia	94,000	25	139,000	37	82,000	22	9,000	10
Wisconsin	207,000	16	322,000	25	328,000	25	14,000	5
Wyoming	18,000	13	30,000	21	31,000	22	3,000	10

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EDUCATION INDICATORS

State	Young children not in school: 2013–15		Fourth graders not proficient in reading: 2015		Eighth graders not proficient in math: 2015		High school students not graduating on time: 2014/15	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
United States	4,344,000	53	N.A.	65	N.A.	68	N.A.	17
Alabama	69,000	57	N.A.	71	N.A.	83	N.A.	11
Alaska	14,000	62	N.A.	70	N.A.	68	N.A.	24
Arizona	114,000	63	N.A.	70	N.A.	65	N.A.	23
Arkansas	42,000	52	N.A.	68	N.A.	75	N.A.	15
California	541,000	52	N.A.	72	N.A.	73	N.A.	18
Colorado	65,000	48	N.A.	61	N.A.	63	N.A.	23
Connecticut	29,000	36	N.A.	57	N.A.	64	N.A.	13
Delaware	12,000	53	N.A.	63	N.A.	70	N.A.	14
District of Columbia	3,000	20	N.A.	73	N.A.	81	N.A.	32
Florida	223,000	50	N.A.	61	N.A.	74	N.A.	22
Georgia	136,000	50	N.A.	66	N.A.	72	N.A.	21
Hawaii	19,000	52	N.A.	71	N.A.	70	N.A.	18
Idaho	32,000	69	N.A.	64	N.A.	66	N.A.	21
Illinois	152,000	46	N.A.	65	N.A.	68	N.A.	14
Indiana	106,000	60	N.A.	60	N.A.	61	N.A.	13
Iowa	41,000	52	N.A.	62	N.A.	63	N.A.	9
Kansas	45,000	56	N.A.	65	N.A.	67	N.A.	14
Kentucky	68,000	60	N.A.	60	N.A.	72	N.A.	12
Louisiana	63,000	50	N.A.	71	N.A.	82	N.A.	23
Maine	15,000	58	N.A.	64	N.A.	65	N.A.	13
Maryland	77,000	50	N.A.	63	N.A.	65	N.A.	13
Massachusetts	62,000	41	N.A.	50	N.A.	49	N.A.	13
Michigan	127,000	54	N.A.	71	N.A.	71	N.A.	20
Minnesota	80,000	56	N.A.	61	N.A.	52	N.A.	18
Mississippi	42,000	50	N.A.	74	N.A.	78	N.A.	25
Missouri	84,000	56	N.A.	64	N.A.	69	N.A.	12
Montana	14,000	60	N.A.	63	N.A.	61	N.A.	14
Nebraska	31,000	59	N.A.	60	N.A.	62	N.A.	11
Nevada	49,000	66	N.A.	71	N.A.	74	N.A.	29
New Hampshire	13,000	47	N.A.	54	N.A.	54	N.A.	12
New Jersey	81,000	37	N.A.	57	N.A.	54	N.A.	10
New Mexico	32,000	58	N.A.	77	N.A.	79	N.A.	31
New York	209,000	43	N.A.	64	N.A.	69	N.A.	21
North Carolina	141,000	57	N.A.	62	N.A.	67	N.A.	14
North Dakota	12,000	64	N.A.	63	N.A.	61	N.A.	13
Ohio	158,000	55	N.A.	62	N.A.	65	N.A.	19
Oklahoma	61,000	57	N.A.	67	N.A.	77	N.A.	18
Oregon	55,000	57	N.A.	66	N.A.	66	N.A.	26
Pennsylvania	159,000	54	N.A.	59	N.A.	64	N.A.	15
Puerto Rico	31,000	39	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Rhode Island	12,000	54	N.A.	60	N.A.	68	N.A.	17
South Carolina	68,000	55	N.A.	67	N.A.	74	N.A.	20
South Dakota	15,000	61	N.A.	65	N.A.	66	N.A.	16
Tennessee	99,000	61	N.A.	67	N.A.	71	N.A.	12
Texas	470,000	58	N.A.	69	N.A.	68	N.A.	11
Utah	59,000	58	N.A.	60	N.A.	62	N.A.	15
Vermont	6,000	51	N.A.	55	N.A.	58	N.A.	12
Virginia	110,000	53	N.A.	57	N.A.	62	N.A.	14
Washington	110,000	60	N.A.	60	N.A.	61	N.A.	22
West Virginia	27,000	64	N.A.	70	N.A.	79	N.A.	14
Wisconsin	80,000	56	N.A.	63	N.A.	59	N.A.	12
Wyoming	10,000	59	N.A.	59	N.A.	65	N.A.	21

N.A. = DATA NOT AVAILABLE

HEALTH INDICATORS

State	Low-birthweight babies: 2015		Children without health insurance: 2015		Child and teen deaths per 100,000: 2015		Teens who abuse alcohol or drugs: 2013–14	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	RATE	NUMBER	PERCENT
United States	320,869	8.1	3,534,000	5	19,562	25	1,276,000	5
Alabama	6,218	10.4	34,000	3	407	35	20,000	5
Alaska	653	5.8	20,000	11	78	40	3,000	5
Arizona	6,128	7.2	134,000	8	418	24	33,000	6
Arkansas	3,564	9.2	35,000	5	252	34	13,000	6
California	33,666	6.8	302,000	3	1,885	19	167,000	5
Colorado	6,001	9.0	52,000	4	329	25	26,000	6
Connecticut	2,836	7.9	25,000	3	124	15	13,000	5
Delaware	1,036	9.3	6,000	3	48	22	3,000	5
District of Columbia	959	10.0	2,000	2	42	32	2,000	6
Florida	19,306	8.6	284,000	7	4,165	27	80,000	6
Georgia	12,464	9.5	166,000	7	777	29	40,000	5
Hawaii	1,531	8.3	5,000	2	67	21	5,000	5
Idaho	1,501	6.6	25,000	6	112	25	8,000	6
Illinois	13,069	8.3	75,000	3	768	24	49,000	5
Indiana	6,725	8.0	106,000	7	515	31	28,000	5
Iowa	2,663	6.7	26,000	4	199	26	11,000	4
Kansas	2,672	6.8	37,000	5	198	26	12,000	5
Kentucky	4,846	8.7	43,000	4	330	31	15,000	4
Louisiana	6,839	10.6	40,000	4	462	40	20,000	6
Maine	871	6.9	14,000	6	59	21	5,000	5
Maryland	6,297	8.6	52,000	4	363	25	26,000	6
Massachusetts	5,312	7.5	16,000	1	261	17	25,000	5
Michigan	9,612	8.5	68,000	3	641	27	38,000	5
Minnesota	4,494	6.4	39,000	3	291	21	18,000	4
Mississippi	4,387	11.4	29,000	4	308	40	12,000	5
Missouri	6,248	8.3	80,000	6	476	32	23,000	5
Montana	887	7.1	17,000	8	103	43	4,000	6
Nebraska	1,893	7.1	25,000	5	127	26	8,000	6
Nevada	3,093	8.5	50,000	8	212	30	12,000	5
New Hampshire	852	6.9	7,000	3	51	18	6,000	6
New Jersey	8,345	8.1	75,000	4	375	18	36,000	5
New Mexico	2,244	8.7	22,000	4	178	34	9,000	5
New York	18,507	7.8	104,000	2	795	18	71,000	5
North Carolina	11,023	9.1	99,000	4	636	26	40,000	5
North Dakota	700	6.2	13,000	8	52	28	3,000	5
Ohio	11,807	8.5	115,000	4	731	26	45,000	5
Oklahoma	4,172	7.9	71,000	7	364	36	13,000	4
Oregon	2,919	6.4	31,000	4	186	20	18,000	6
Pennsylvania	11,453	8.2	111,000	4	699	24	44,000	5
Puerto Rico	3,282	10.5	20,000	3	180	22	N.A.	N.A.
Rhode Island	833	7.6	7,000	3	42	18	4,000	6
South Carolina	5,535	9.5	44,000	4	373	32	18,000	5
South Dakota	754	6.1	14,000	7	91	41	3,000	5
Tennessee	7,460	9.2	62,000	4	470	30	24,000	5
Texas	33,275	8.2	682,000	9	1,905	25	115,000	5
Utah	3,561	7.0	65,000	7	235	25	13,000	5
Vermont	390	6.6	1,000	1	22	16	3,000	6
Virginia	8,111	7.9	91,000	5	476	24	29,000	5
Washington	5,730	6.4	43,000	3	379	22	27,000	5
West Virginia	1,891	9.6	11,000	3	117	29	7,000	6
Wisconsin	4,870	7.3	46,000	4	314	23	28,000	6
Wyoming	666	8.6	11,000	8	54	37	3,000	6

N.A. = DATA NOT AVAILABLE

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FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INDICATORS

State	Children in single-parent families: 2015		Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma: 2015		Children living in high-poverty areas: 2011–15		Teen births per 1,000: 2015	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	RATE
United States	24,444,000	35	10,137,000	14	10,032,000	14	229,715	22
Alabama	414,000	40	155,000	14	182,000	16	4,739	30
Alaska	60,000	34	16,000	8	10,000	5	662	29
Arizona	584,000	38	286,000	18	392,000	24	5,910	26
Arkansas	234,000	36	95,000	14	114,000	16	3,677	38
California	2,950,000	34	2,039,000	22	1,518,000	17	24,175	19
Colorado	336,000	28	149,000	12	92,000	7	3,270	19
Connecticut	233,000	32	65,000	8	73,000	9	1,241	10
Delaware	77,000	40	23,000	11	10,000	5	540	18
District of Columbia	59,000	53	17,000	14	28,000	25	501	26
Florida	1,567,000	40	496,000	12	547,000	14	11,957	21
Georgia	915,000	39	348,000	14	428,000	17	8,829	26
Hawaii	90,000	31	24,000	8	12,000	4	789	21
Idaho	103,000	25	42,000	10	25,000	6	1,288	23
Illinois	958,000	34	362,000	12	360,000	12	8,764	21
Indiana	519,000	35	189,000	12	201,000	13	5,813	26
Iowa	210,000	30	56,000	8	30,000	4	1,943	19
Kansas	210,000	30	81,000	11	63,000	9	2,479	25
Kentucky	332,000	36	114,000	11	164,000	16	4,503	32
Louisiana	473,000	45	145,000	13	227,000	20	5,055	34
Maine	83,000	35	11,000	4	14,000	5	603	15
Maryland	461,000	36	136,000	10	54,000	4	3,214	17
Massachusetts	434,000	33	113,000	8	106,000	8	2,140	9
Michigan	734,000	35	213,000	10	380,000	17	6,356	19
Minnesota	352,000	28	104,000	8	70,000	5	2,386	14
Mississippi	324,000	48	91,000	13	198,000	27	3,536	35
Missouri	456,000	35	129,000	9	142,000	10	4,838	25
Montana	59,000	28	14,000	6	19,000	9	770	25
Nebraska	129,000	29	44,000	9	32,000	7	1,388	22
Nevada	250,000	39	128,000	19	88,000	13	2,369	28
New Hampshire	74,000	30	12,000	4	8,000	3	468	11
New Jersey	575,000	30	200,000	10	190,000	9	3,374	12
New Mexico	191,000	41	89,000	18	128,000	25	2,320	35
New York	1,456,000	36	630,000	15	791,000	19	8,961	15
North Carolina	796,000	37	311,000	14	316,000	14	7,641	24
North Dakota	43,000	26	9,000	5	10,000	6	527	22
Ohio	895,000	36	249,000	9	389,000	15	8,755	23
Oklahoma	317,000	35	124,000	13	113,000	12	4,391	35
Oregon	254,000	31	109,000	13	80,000	9	2,284	19
Pennsylvania	914,000	36	264,000	10	337,000	12	7,218	18
Puerto Rico	421,000	59	110,000	15	678,000	84	4,013	34
Rhode Island	81,000	40	25,000	12	37,000	17	530	14
South Carolina	413,000	40	126,000	12	153,000	14	4,021	26
South Dakota	63,000	32	18,000	8	23,000	11	720	26
Tennessee	524,000	37	180,000	12	230,000	15	6,267	31
Texas	2,442,000	36	1,506,000	21	1,251,000	18	32,687	35
Utah	172,000	19	75,000	8	43,000	5	2,021	18
Vermont	31,000	28	7,000	6	2,000	1	245	12
Virginia	573,000	32	175,000	9	93,000	5	4,508	17
Washington	455,000	30	185,000	11	101,000	6	3,773	18
West Virginia	134,000	38	36,000	10	33,000	9	1,719	32
Wisconsin	396,000	32	112,000	9	125,000	10	3,040	16
Wyoming	39,000	29	11,000	8	2,000	1	510	29

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. Due to changes in the on-time graduation indicator, the Overall and Education rankings cannot be compared with previous years.

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 one or more domains. 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. 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 small 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).

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* utilizes rates and percentages because that is the best way to compare states with 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 KIDS COUNT Data Center, which also contains some data for children and families in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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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 the 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. In calendar year 2015, a family of two adults and two children fell in the "poverty" category if their annual income fell below $24,036. 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 parental employment because those children are likely to be economically vulnerable. **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 "opportunity" or "disconnected" youth. **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

EDUCATION INDICATORS

YOUNG CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL is the percentage of children ages 3 and 4 who were not enrolled in school (e.g., nursery school, preschool or kindergarten) during the previous three months. Due to small sample size, these data are based on a pooled three-year average of one-year American Community Survey responses to increase the 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 percentage of an entering freshman class not graduating in four years. The measure is derived from the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) The four-year ACGR is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class. Students entering grade 9 for the first time form a cohort that is "adjusted" by adding any students who subsequently transfer into the cohort and subtracting any students who subsequently transfer out. **SOURCE:** U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD).

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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, Population Estimates.

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. 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 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 rates of the total population are 30 percent or more. In calendar year 2015, a family of two adults and two children fell in the "poverty" category if their annual income fell below $24,036. 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. **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, Population Estimates.

STATE KIDS COUNT ORGANIZATIONS

TRACKING CHILD WELL-BEING IN EVERY STATE

The Annie E. Casey Foundation provides funding and technical assistance for a national network of KIDS COUNT organizations in every state, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. These organizations, 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 organizations 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 organizations are available at datacenter.kidscount.org.

For more information about the network of state KIDS COUNT organizations, including mailing addresses, please visit www.kidscount.org.

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

ALASKA
Alaska Children's Trust
www.alaskachildrenstrust.org
907.248.7676

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.cahs.org
860.951.2212 ext. 246

DELAWARE
University of Delaware
www.dekidscount.org
302.831.3462

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DC Action for Children
www.dcactionforchildren.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
404.507.0488

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

IDAHO
Idaho Voices for Children
www.idahovoices.org
208.336.5533

ILLINOIS
Voices for Illinois Children
www.voices4kids.org
312.516.5557

INDIANA
The 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
www.kyyouth.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
and Youth
www.acy.org
410.547.9200

MASSACHUSETTS
Massachusetts Budget
and 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
Mississippi KIDS COUNT
Social Science
Research Center
Mississippi State University
www.kidscount.ssrc.msstate.edu
662.325.8079

MISSOURI
Family and Community Trust
www.mokidscount.org
573.636.3228

MONTANA
Montana KIDS COUNT
Bureau of Business and
Economic Research
University of Montana
www.montanakidscount.org
406.243.5113

NEBRASKA
Voices for Children in Nebraska
www.voicesforchildren.com
402.597.3100

NEVADA
Center for Business and
Economic Research — UNLV
http://kidscount.unlv.edu
702.895.3191

NEW HAMPSHIRE
New Futures KIDS COUNT
www.new-futures.org
603.225.9540

NEW JERSEY
Advocates for Children
of New Jersey
www.acnj.org
973.643.3876

NEW MEXICO
New Mexico Voices
for Children
www.nmvoices.org
505.244.9505

NEW YORK
New York State Council
on Children and Families
www.ccf.ny.gov
518.473.3652

NORTH CAROLINA
NC Child
www.ncchild.org
919.834.6623

NORTH DAKOTA
North Dakota KIDS COUNT
Center for Social Research
North Dakota State University
www.ndkidscount.org
701.231.1060

OHIO
Children's Defense
Fund — Ohio
www.cdfohio.org
614.221.2244

OKLAHOMA
Oklahoma Institute
for Child Advocacy
www.oica.org
405.236.5437

OREGON
Children First for Oregon
www.cffo.org
503.236.9754

PENNSYLVANIA
Pennsylvania Partnerships
for Children
www.papartnerships.org
717.236.5680

PUERTO RICO
Youth Development Institute
(Instituto del Desarrollo
de la Juventud)
http://juventudpr.org/en
787.728.3939

RHODE ISLAND
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
www.rikidscount.org
401.351.9400

SOUTH CAROLINA
Children's Trust
of South Carolina
www.scchildren.org
803.733.5430

SOUTH DAKOTA
South Dakota KIDS COUNT
Beacom School of Business
University of South Dakota
www.usd.edu/sdkidscount
605.677.6432

TENNESSEE
Tennessee Commission
on Children and Youth
www.tn.gov/tccy
615.741.2633

TEXAS
Center for Public
Policy Priorities
http://cppp.org/kidscount
512.823.2871

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
Community Foundation
of the Virgin Islands
www.cfvi.net
340.774.6031

UTAH
Voices for Utah Children
www.utahchildren.org
801.364.1182

VERMONT
Voices for Vermont's Children
www.voicesforvtkids.org
802.229.6377

VIRGINIA
Voices for Virginia's Children
www.vakids.org
804.649.0184

WASHINGTON
KIDS COUNT in Washington
www.kidscountwa.org
206.324.0340

WEST VIRGINIA
West Virginia KIDS COUNT
www.wvkidscount.org
304.345.2101

WISCONSIN
Wisconsin Council
on Children & Families
www.wccf.org
608.284.0580

WYOMING
Wyoming Community
Foundation
www.wycf.org/partners/
wy-kids-count
307.721.8300

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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.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT® is a national and 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 a better future for all children.

Nationally, KIDS COUNT issues publications on key areas of well-being, including the annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book* and periodic reports on critical child and family policy issues. The Foundation also maintains the KIDS COUNT Data Center (datacenter.kidscount.org), which provides the best available data measuring the educational, social, economic and physical well-being of children. Additionally, the Foundation funds a nationwide network of state-level KIDS COUNT organizations that provide a more detailed, community-by-community picture of the condition of children.

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