

PRESS RELEASE

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NEW HAMPSHIRE IS THE NUMBER ONE STATE FOR CHILD WELL-BEING

National data mask a great deal of state and regional variations in child well-being

CONCORD — New Hampshire ranks number one in the United States for overall child well-being, according to the *2019 KIDS COUNT® Data Book* released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. But the state lost ground in several important metrics, leaving room to improve the support of our children, local advocates say.

“New Hampshire is consistently ranked a top state to raise a family, but we cannot become complacent,” said Rebecca Woitkowski, early childhood policy coordinator at New Futures Kids Count. “In order to continue to promote equity and reduce the negative impacts of our child protection, mental health and substance use crises, lawmakers must continue to prioritize family support services, like home visiting and other services offered at family resource centers.”

In New Hampshire and across the country, child well-being has broadly improved in the three decades since the first *Data Book* was released. Still, national data mask a great deal of state and regional variations in child well-being. A child’s chances of thriving depend not only on individual, family and community characteristics but also on the state in which she or he is born and raised.

The annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book* uses 16 indicators to rank each state across four domains — health, education, economic well-being and family and community — that represent the supports children need most to thrive.

Some of the report’s key takeaways include:

- **New Hampshire’s economic well-being rank plunged from third to 10th in 2019.** Even with this significant drop, the number of children in poverty doesn’t necessarily consider that New Hampshire’s cost of living is 21 percent above the national average, putting even more children and families living at near-poor levels. Growing up in poverty or at near-poor levels can both adversely impact children’s life trajectories.
- **New Hampshire ranked fourth in education, but 10th in the nation for the number of 3- and 4-year-olds not attending school.** Fifty percent of young children in the Granite State are not receiving early education, which research has demonstrated is critical for development and long-term success. Currently, New Hampshire does not have universal state funded public prekindergarten programs and 50 percent of the state’s young children do not have access to this vital support.
- **The Granite State ranks second for health outcomes.** Six thousand Granite State children do not have health insurance. Children with health insurance are more likely to get the health care needed to identify and address health issues sooner rather than later.

- **The number of children living in single-parent families, 29 percent, and the number of children living in high-poverty areas, 2 percent, have both shown negative trends since 2010, when those were 27 percent and 1 percent, respectively.**

Supplementing the national *Data Book* from the Casey Foundation is the recently [released 2019 New Hampshire Kids Count Data Book](#), which examines state- and county-level data to paint a more granular picture of child health and well-being in the Granite State. The report shows a lack of equal access to high-quality support services across the state.

Family support services, like home visiting and other services offered at family resource centers, are proven to mitigate adverse childhood experiences, help children's brains develop on track, and set up kids for success later in life.

"Both reports show that lawmakers must pass policies that support families. Together, we can continue to ensure New Hampshire children are given what they need to thrive and keep New Hampshire a great state to raise a family," said Woitkowski.

Release Information

The 2019 KIDS COUNT® Data Book will be available June 17 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at www.aecf.org. Additional information is available at www.aecf.org/databook. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about the Data Book can use the KIDS COUNT Data Center at datacenter.kidscount.org.

About New Futures

New Futures is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that advocates, educates and collaborates to improve the health and wellness of all New Hampshire residents. Learn more at new-futures.org.

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation 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. For more information, visit www.aecf.org. KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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