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Oregon ranks in bottom half of states in child economic well-being, according to national report

30th *KIDS COUNT*[®] *Data Book* provides the most comprehensive annual report on child well-being in the United States

PORTLAND, Oregon – According to the 30th edition of the *KIDS COUNT*[®] *Data Book* released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Oregon ranks 29th in economic well-being, falling back one spot from 28th the year before, in spite of some positive trends.

Sixteen percent of Oregon children live in poverty, which is a meaningful decrease from 22 percent in 2010 during the height of the Great Recession. Oregon’s rate of improvement has been faster than the nation’s overall, and is the fifth most-improved in the country during that time period. Twenty-seven percent of Oregon children live in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment, the lowest since 2010. The improvement on this measure has been faster than the improvement of the country. Thirty percent of children live in households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing. This percentage has been dropping over the decade up through 2017, the most recent year of data available; however, Oregon is still near the bottom of state rankings on this measure at 39th.

“We know that in order for children to thrive, they need at a minimum safe and stable housing and economic security. While fewer children are living in poverty, too many children in Oregon continue to face the impacts of systemic barriers and inequities both past and present and have been left an uneven playing field. Deep disparities persist for children of color, low-income children, children in immigrant families and children in rural communities,” said Jenifer Wagley, executive director of Children First for Oregon.

The annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book* from the Annie E. Casey Foundation uses 16 indicators across four domains — health, education, economic well-being, and family and community — as an assessment of child well-being. Overall, Oregon ranks 31st nationally and:

- **41st in education**, an improvement from 43rd. The percentage of students not graduating on time has dropped every year since 2010, with 23 percent of high school students not graduating on time in 2017. This is the second lowest rate of on time high school graduation rates in the country.

- **20th in health**, a fall from 16th. The number and percentage of low birth weight babies has been increasing slowly in recent years, and Oregon’s rank dropped to seventh this year, from a high of second in 2012-2014, with 6.8 percent of babies born at low birth weight in 2017. The child and teen death rate (deaths per 100,000 children 1 to 19) is 26, with a national ranking of 19th. The 24 percent rise in this measure from 2010 is the largest of any state.
- **20th in the family and community domain**. Teen birth rates have continued to decrease more quickly than the national rate decreases, with a 46 percent decline since 2010. Oregon ranked in the bottom half of states regarding the percentage of children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma, with 12 percent of children living in these households. Seven percent of children live in high poverty areas (areas with census tracts with poverty rates above 30 percent), showing no improvement on this measure compared to 2010.

“This is a call for decision makers to continue to invest in programs and services that will support the whole child so they have opportunities to grow up in economically secure families, have safe and stable homes and access to a strong education, as well as a community that invests in keeping them safe,” said Wagley. “This is what sets up children to thrive in their childhoods and well into adulthood.”

The *2019 KIDS COUNT Data Book* is the 30th edition of an annual data study that is based on U.S. Census and other publicly available data, representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

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 Children First for Oregon

Children First for Oregon (CFFO) is a statewide, nonprofit organization whose mission is to empower communities to advocate for kids so all children in Oregon can thrive. Since 1991, CFFO has worked across the state to galvanize community support for children and inform decision makers about the solutions kids need. CFFO convenes and engages communities through four program areas: legislative solutions, foster youth advocacy, child abuse prevention, and research and data. Learn more at www.cffo.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.