



UNDER EMBARGO until Monday, June 17 at 12:01 a.m. EDT

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Latest National Rankings for Child Well-Being Show Pennsylvania at 17th

*Preventing an Undercount in the 2020 Census Will Help
Social and Economic Outcomes for Children*

HARRISBURG, Pennsylvania — The 30th edition of the *KIDS COUNT*[®] *Data Book*, released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, shows Pennsylvania ranks 17th for overall child well-being.

According to the report – one of the more comprehensive national reviews of child well-being – Pennsylvania made gains in economic well-being, education and health, and is holding steady in family and community, the four domains through which the *Data Book* ranks each state using 16 indicators.

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* shows how essential accurate data are to sound policymaking. The 2010 census missed 2.2 million kids nationally, and the upcoming count may miss even more if young children are not a priority. In Pennsylvania, 15 percent of children under age 5 are at risk of being missed in the 2020 census because they live in hard-to-count neighborhoods. The stakes are high: 55 major federal programs, including Head Start and the Children’s Health Insurance Program, allocate more than \$880 billion each year based on census data, with over \$39 billion received by Pennsylvania.

“When kids are missed by the census, communities face crowded classrooms, underfunded programs and misleading research. Accurate census data mean communities get the support they need,” said Kari King, president and CEO of Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children (PPC). “This year’s *Data Book* shows that a mix of state and federal investments is our best bet to improving outcomes for every child in Pennsylvania, and we’re committed to ensuring their success.”

According to the *Data Book*, Pennsylvania now ranks:

- **25th in the family and community domain:** This domain examines the percentage of children living in high-poverty areas, percentage of children living in single-parent households and education levels among heads of households, as well as teen birth rates. The number of children living in high-poverty neighborhoods increased — by far Pennsylvania’s worst ranking. Since the first *Data Book* was released in 1990, the share of children living in high-poverty areas worsened by 71 percent. More needs to be done to ensure the well-being of our families and communities.
- **20th in economic well-being:** The economic well-being domain examines data related to child poverty, family employment, housing costs and whether older teens are not in school and not working. While Pennsylvania continues to experience slow economic growth, the number of children living in poverty decreased, but has made only an 11 percent improvement since 2010.
- **12th in health:** The health domain looks at the percentage of children who lack health insurance, child and teen death rates, the percentage of low-birth weight babies and alcohol and drug abuse among teens. The number of uninsured children improved by 20 percent since 2010, and, according to the Department of Human Services, 41 percent of children in Pennsylvania have access to affordable, quality health care coverage through Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- **9th in education:** The education domain looks at early education opportunities, reading and math proficiency and whether high school students graduate on time. Pennsylvania ranks above average for on-time graduation rates at 87 percent, which is an improvement of 24 percent when compared to 2011.

“If we want children to be successful, we must provide access to high-quality child care and pre-k programs to build a solid foundation for learning, and adequately invest in public education,” King said. “Voluntary, evidence-based home visiting programs help keep children healthy and protect them from abuse and neglect, and supporting improvements to the child welfare system will keep children with family and better support children in foster care.”

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 Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children (PPC) is a strong, effective and trusted voice to improve the health, education and well-being of children and youth in the commonwealth. Since 1992, our public policy victories have helped countless children learn, thrive and succeed, regardless of circumstances. PPC is statewide, independent, nonpartisan and nonprofit.

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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