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2021 KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK FINDS CHILD WELL-BEING IMPROVES FOR NEW YORK CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND EDUCATION

ALBANY —According to the 2021 KIDS COUNT Data Book released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, New York ranks 27th overall in child well-being among other states, 10th in the nation in children's health and 16th in education.

Rankings are based on 16 measures in the areas of health, education, economic security and family and community and were measured before the COVID-19 pandemic. In December 2020, challenges faced by kids and families during the crisis were identified to provide a comprehensive picture of child well-being, supplementing the customary annual state rankings.

Before the pandemic in 2019, the latest year for which data was available, New York's childhood poverty rate was 18.2%. Following the start of the pandemic, between March 13, 2020, and July 21, 2020, more than 50% of New York families with children lost their jobs. By October 26, 2020, six times more women than men in New York families cited caring for children not in school or day care as their main reason for not working.

Robust federal interventions, from the CARES Act to the American Rescue Plan 2021, helped keep families afloat during the crisis. "Deliberate policy decisions can rescue families, and we are already seeing the beginnings of that," stated Lisa Hamilton, president and CEO of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. New York state implemented an unprecedented amount of relief in the form of unemployment insurance and child care scholarships for essential workers in 2020, providing a lifeline for children and families.

The Casey Foundation offers several recommendations based on shared values of opportunity, responsibility and security.

- **Education:** Increase opportunity by expanding access to high-quality prekindergarten and other early childhood services so that all children are prepared to succeed in school.
 1. New York will leverage new opportunities created by the American Rescue Plan to expand prekindergarten, higher education and need-based scholarships.
 2. The adverse impact of the pandemic on lost instructional time, especially among students with disabilities, English language learners and economically disadvantaged students, are being addressed with historic investments in education by New York to ensure that all students receive high-quality education and that all teachers receive the support they need, with targeted investments. In spring of 2020, more than one-third of families in New York state were able to get a computer or digital device from their child's school to be used for educational purposes and by the fall of 2020, this percentage increased to 55%.
- **Economics:** Increase opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow.
 1. New York allocated new funding for the creation of more affordable housing, relocation expenses for survivors of domestic violence, diaper allowances for low-income families and emergency food assistance.
 2. Child care subsidies are being raised and co-pays capped at 10% over the federal poverty level and the duration of subsidy certification is being extended to 12 months, rather than six, statewide.
 3. Several tax credits are available to low-income working families in New York state. There is a refundable state Earned Income Tax Credit that is equal to 30% of allowable federal

earned income credit. Up to \$2,310 may be credited under the New York State Child and Dependent Care Credit, and the Empire State Child Credit allows for tax reductions based on income and marital status for families with children older than four.

4. New York state does not charge personal income tax for single-parent families of three below the federal poverty level.
- **Family:** Ensure American families have a measure of security, particularly low-income parents of young children.
 1. New York will leverage new opportunities created by the American Rescue Plan to expand broadband access by mandating internet companies offer \$15/month plans to low-income families and providing low-income students with free internet access.
 2. An historic \$2.4 billion in federal child care stimulus funds awarded to New York will allow for expanded access to quality child care, stabilization of the child care sector with provider grants and mental health and technical assistance and other critical supports for those serving the state's youngest children.
 3. Responding to the increased mental health challenges associated with the pandemic, New York is expanding community-based mental health crisis response, developing crisis stabilization centers and increasing funding for counseling services.
 - **Hunger:** Ensure access to healthy, high-quality foods, which are key to children's development and well-being.
 1. School meals and other programs aimed at children were the most common way families in need were able to get food during the pandemic. Unprecedented assistance for food was earmarked for New Yorkers across multiple programs, including the School Lunch Program, SNAP and the Emergency Assistance Program.
 2. In New York in 2020, the estimated number of children receiving Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) relief was \$2.4 million, and the total estimated issuance was \$1 billion.
 3. In early 2021, almost one in five New York families with children sometimes or often did not have enough food to eat according to Census Household Pulse Survey results.
 4. NOURISH NY launched at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020 and enabled 21 million pounds of surplus agricultural products to be purchased from New York farmers and delivered to more than 1.3 million households in need across New York State.

Information

The 2021 KIDS COUNT Data Book will be available June 21, 2021, at 12:01 a.m. EDT at www.aecf.org/databook, which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of indicators of child well-being. 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.

The Council on Children and Families

The Council on Children and Families is authorized to coordinate the state health, education and human services systems to provide more effective systems of care for children and families. Follow the Council on Twitter @nysccf and bookmark our website, <http://www.ccf.ny.gov>.

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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