



**UNDER EMBARGO Until June 10, 2024 at 12:01 a.m. ET**

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**2024 KIDS COUNT® DATA BOOK REPORTS CHILD  
WELL-BEING IMPROVES FOR NEW YORK CHILDREN**

*New York prioritizes education: making historic investments in reading, learning, and youth mental health*

**ALBANY, NY** – Each year, the *Data Book* presents national and state data from 16 indicators in four domains — economic well-being, education, health, and family and community factors — and ranks the states according to how children are faring overall. This year’s *KIDS COUNT® Data Book* focuses on students’ lack of basic reading and math skills, a problem that has been decades in the making but brought to light by the focus on learning loss during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unprecedented drops in learning from 2019 to 2022 amounted to decades of lost progress. Chronic absence has soared, with children living in poverty especially unable to resume their school day routines on a regular basis.

The *2024 KIDS COUNT Data Book* revealed that New York’s overall child well-being ranking improved from last year. New York ranks eighth in the nation in children’s health and 12th in education when compared to other states according to the **2024 KIDS COUNT® Data Book**, released today by Annie E. Casey Foundation. The state’s overall ranking is 29th .

While New York’s overall educational ranking is among the top tier, the state’s reading and math proficiency rates are concerning and disaggregated data reveals profound racial disparities among student results. To promote and support equitable educational opportunities, this year’s enacted New York State budget includes record investments in education, including an increase in school aid by \$1.3 billion to nearly \$36 billion. The Governor also increased NYS’s investment in My Brother’s Keeper, whose mission is to improve outcomes for boys of color and community schools to provide students with more academic and comprehensive support.

Key data findings are as follows:

- The rate of New York fourth graders who scored at or above proficient reading level has decreased for the past decade from 37% to 30%. The racial and ethnic disparities in fourth graders with proficient reading level are 14% for Black students, 20% for Hispanic, and 38% for White.
- The rate of New York eighth graders who scored at or above proficient math level has decreased from 34% pre-pandemic to 28% coming out of pandemic. The racial and ethnic disparities in eighth graders with proficient math level are 10% for Black students, 15% for Hispanic, and 37% for White.
- The rate of New York high school students graduating on time has improved steadily for the past decade from 77% to 85%. However, there are racial and ethnic disparities in high schoolers graduating on time with rates of 78% for Black students, 77% for Hispanic, and 91% for White.

Of note, New York stands out in the nation in its efforts to support learning, with its commitment and investment in the [“Back to Basics Initiative”](#) to improve reading proficiency. This crucial initiative will ensure that every New York classroom uses evidence-based instruction to improve reading proficiency rates in New York State. As Governor Hochul has said, “Reading is one of the most fundamental skills students need to

learn, but currently our kids are not meeting basic reading proficiency levels.” Failure to ensure reading proficiency at an early age has a cascading effect, derailing a student’s academic trajectory, impacting future earning potential, health, and well-being.

In addition, in a continued effort to support the well-being of students, New York is building on its historic investment to expand access to mental health services for youth and to assess and increase access to quality afterschool and expanded learning programs. The current state budget includes \$20 million for school-based mental health clinics, making it easier for students and families and their children to access services. It also includes a total of \$103.2 million for After School Programs and calls for a study to evaluate the feasibility of providing after school programming to every school-aged child in New York State.

“Children cannot learn if they don’t attend school.” The percentage of New York students who are chronically absent from school has increased from 20% in the 2019-20 school year to 37% in the 2021-22 school year. With absentee rates significantly increasing, [The Every Student Present Campaign](#), developed by the New York State Council on Children and Families, provides many helpful resources for families, schools, and communities to support school attendance.

Finally, it is important to note that the percentage of children living in high-poverty areas (census tracts with poverty rates  $\geq 30\%$ ) has declined from 19% in year 2011-2015 to 13% 2018-2022 in New York State. Governor Hochul has declared that poverty is a problem and a policy priority in New York State. Reflecting this priority, the recently enacted New York State budget includes anti-poverty funding for nine of the top ten New York State zip codes with the highest child poverty rates in three communities (Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse). The enacted budget also includes a supplemental Empire State Tax Credit to provide direct support to working families. In addition, the Governor’s Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council continues to analyze and will issue recommendations to reduce child poverty by 50 percent by 2031 – recommendations are scheduled to be released by the end of this calendar year.

More detailed information about child well-being at the state and national level is provided in the *2024 KIDS COUNT® Data Book*.

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#### **RELEASE INFORMATION**

The *2024 KIDS COUNT® Data Book* will be available at [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). Additional information is available at [www.aecf.org/databook](http://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.aecf.org](http://datacenter.aecf.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. For more information, visit <http://www.ccf.ny.gov>.

#### **ABOUT THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation’s young people 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](http://www.aecf.org). KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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