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Mississippi Education Ranking Continues to Improve, Ranked 16th in the Nation.

Data shows that Mississippi's education rankings are significantly up, but indicators regarding health show concerning trends, the Annie E. Casey Foundation finds.

Jackson, MS — Mississippi ranks 16th in education, according to the 2025 KIDS COUNT Data Book, a 50-state report of data developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, analyzing how children and youth are faring across the nation. 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.

Dr. Carla J. Evers, Superintendent of Education, Pass Christian School District and board member of the Children's Foundation of Mississippi (CFM), shared "I am excited each year when the Kids Count Data Book is released. The report provides important data about the well-being of our children, which we use to guide decisions both at CFM and within our school community."

"Mississippi's momentum in education is the result of strong policies and dedicated, effective educators," said Dr. Lance Evans, state superintendent of education. "Our students' achievements have made the state a national leader in improving academic outcomes. I am tremendously proud that our national ranking for education has steadily climbed from 48th in 2014 to 16th in 2025. Mississippi students have proven once again that there is no limit to what they can accomplish with the strong support of Mississippi educators."

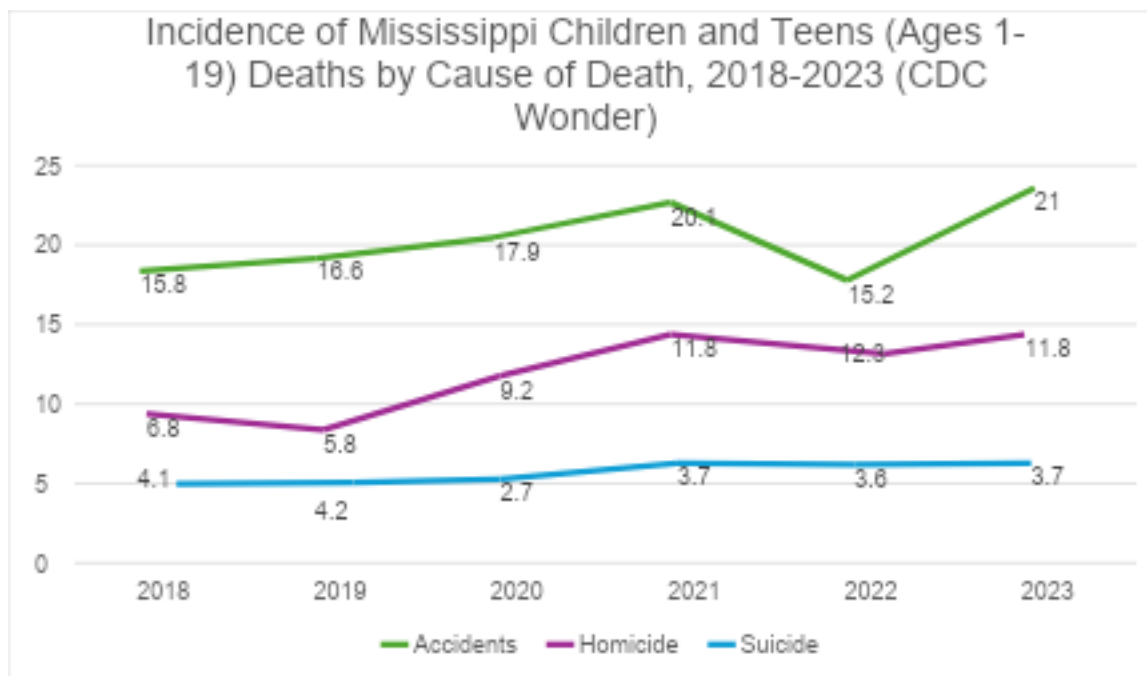
Mississippi's top-tier ranking for education is based on students' continuous academic improvement. Over the past decade, the statewide graduation rate has risen from 75% to 89%, higher than the national average.

"We know what children and youth need to grow up healthy and connected so they can thrive as adults: Stable homes, strong schools, nutritious food, meaningful relationships and opportunities to learn, play, and grow. Communities that meet these needs are investing wisely, fostering long-term gains like employment and economic growth. Despite the state's overall ranking of 48th, we are extremely encouraged that Mississippi now ranks 16th in education. The recruitment and retention of high-quality educators (childcare through secondary education) is vital to continuing education improvements," notes Linda Southward, Executive Director of the CFM.

While our Kids Count ranking in education has seen tremendous improvement over the past few years, some other areas had slight improvements. Children in Poverty (from 26% in 2022 to 23% in 2023) and Percent of Disengaged Teens (not working and not in school) (from 10% in 2022 to 8% in 2023).

The health of children in Mississippi continues to be an area of concern for our state's rankings. Mississippi ranks 50th in Child & Teen Death Rate and Percent of Low-Birthweight Babies. Mississippi has long-ranked last in Percent of Low-Birthweight Babies, the causes of which can be linked to a lack of or inadequate prenatal care, few birthing hospital options, and a lack of health insurance. The Mississippi State Department of Health is to be commended for developing a new Obstetrics System of Care plan to include both public and private sectors in determining ways to reverse the trend.

Child and teen death rates for those ages 1-19 have increased due to a significant uptick in homicide and accident-related deaths. In 2023, Mississippi saw a rate of 21 per 100,000 children and youth die in accidents, as compared to 15.2 in the year prior. Homicide is now a leading cause of child and teen deaths, doubling since 2019.



In its 36th year of publication, the *KIDS COUNT® Data Book* provides reliable statewide numbers to help leaders see where progress is being made, where greater support is needed, and which strategies are making a difference. By offering a local road map, the *Data Book* equips policymakers, advocates and communities with the information they need to make decisions that help kids and young people thrive.

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RELEASE INFORMATION

The 2025 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* will be 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.aecf.org.

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. KIDS COUNT is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION OF MISSISSIPPI

The Children's Foundation of Mississippi is focused on improving the policies and systems that affect the well-being of children in our state. We were founded in 2019 to serve as a convener, facilitator, advocate, and catalyst for positive change. In addition to signature initiatives, the Children's Foundation of Mississippi is the home of Mississippi KIDS COUNT, the premier data resource for child well-being in the state of Mississippi. For more information, please visit childrensfoundationms.org.