



UNDER EMBARGO Until June 9, 2025 at 12:01 a.m. ET

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Pennsylvania Ranks 20th in 2025 KIDS COUNT Data Book as Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children Urges Federal Focus on Supporting Thriving Kids and Families

Data shows that child poverty in PA affects child well-being, the Annie E. Casey Foundation finds

HARRISBURG, PA — Pennsylvania ranks 20th in child well-being, according to the **2025 KIDS COUNT Data Book**, a 50-state report of recent data developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation analyzing how kids are faring in post-pandemic America. The data show Pennsylvania leaders — particularly its congressional delegation — must do more to protect critical safety net programs that help children thrive.

In the *Data Book's* economic well-being domain, which examines child poverty among other indicators, Pennsylvania ranks 22nd. In 2023, approximately 16%, or 404,000 of the state's children, lived in poverty (defined as yearly income below \$30,900 for a family of two adults and two children).

"Experiencing poverty during childhood poses a significant risk to healthy development," said Kari King, President and CEO of Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, Pennsylvania's member of the Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT network. "The impact of economic hardship, especially severe and lasting poverty, can hinder children's cognitive growth and physical and mental well-being. Unfortunately, the political landscape at the federal level means more children could lose access to vital safety net programs that help address these hardships."

According to the *Data Book*, Pennsylvania ranks 20th in the health domain, with 147,000 uninsured children in the commonwealth. In every community across Pennsylvania, Medicaid plays a significant role in keeping kids covered and healthy. As families grapple with the rising costs of everyday expenses, it's more important than ever that they have access to high-quality, affordable health care for both physical and mental health.

Congress is considering the largest cuts to Medicaid in the program's history, which would jeopardize coverage for more than 1.2 million children (39% of the state's child population) who rely on it. This includes children with special health care needs, those living in the foster care system, children in rural areas, children from military families, and those in low-income working families.

Funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides food benefits to low-income families to supplement their grocery budgets and afford nutritious food essential to health and well-being, is also on the chopping block as Congress considers massive federal cuts to the program. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, 24% of all Pennsylvania children and young adults under 21 (or nearly 760,000) are enrolled in SNAP.

"The elimination of health care and food benefits will have immediate adverse effects on the health and well-being of the children and families who depend on them," King said. "Policymakers must consider that in their communities, hundreds of thousands of children and families are at risk of falling deeper into poverty if they do not protect Medicaid and SNAP."

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.

King said for Pennsylvania to be the top-ranked state for children’s health insurance coverage, an additional 119,000 children would need health care coverage. Pennsylvania needs 198,000 fewer children living in poverty to be ranked 1st in having the lowest rate of child poverty.

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. Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children encourages lawmakers and officials to use this detailed information to unite across party lines and respond with initiatives that invest in young people. 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.

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 PENNSYLVANIA PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children is a strong, effective and trusted voice to improve the health, education and well-being of children and youth in the commonwealth. Since 1992 its public policy victories have helped countless children learn, thrive and succeed, regardless of circumstances. PPC is statewide, independent, non-partisan and non-profit. Learn more at www.papartnerships.org.