



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

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**Tennessee Ranks 37th in 2025 KIDS COUNT Data Book
as Academic Achievement Improves, Health Metrics Decline**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (June 9, 2025) — Tennessee ranks 37th in overall 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 across the country are faring. The data show Tennessee students have made significant gains since the pandemic—particularly compared to students across the nation. Yet opportunities remain for improvements in other areas.

Tennessee's overall ranking in education was 14th. The state achieved its highest rankings ever in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math proficiency on national assessments, and Tennessee tied for the number two spot for on-time high school graduation. Meanwhile, Tennessee's rankings slipped for several key health measures—including child and teen deaths, which reached a 14-year low at #46.

"Tennessee increasingly stands out for its gains in educational attainment," said Brian Straessle, President of The Sycamore Institute, Tennessee's member of the Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT network. "At the same time, there are other indicators where we lag our peers. Together, these paint a complex picture of youth wellbeing in our state."

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 report ranks Tennessee 35th in economic well-being, 14th in education, 41st in health, and 43rd in family and community.

Even with Tennessee's academic successes, the *Data Book* highlights opportunities to help Tennessee's children and youth thrive. For example, the state's child and teen (ages 1-19) death rate has climbed since the pandemic—pushing Tennessee into the bottom five states in the rankings. A closer look at the underlying data by the Sycamore Institute found these trends were largely driven by unintentional [drug overdoses](#) and [firearm-related deaths](#). These concerning statistics could inform how policymakers approach things like [the allocation of opioid settlement dollars](#) and [state youth mental health efforts](#).

In its 36th year of publication, the *KIDS COUNT® Data Book* provides reliable statewide numbers to help leaders see where progress is being made compared to other states, where greater support is needed, and which strategies are making a difference. The Sycamore Institute encourages leaders from across the state to use this information to better understand how to help kids and young people succeed.

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RELEASE INFORMATION

The *2025 KIDS COUNT Data* 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.aecf.org.

ABOUT THE SYCAMORE INSTITUTE

The Sycamore Institute is an independent, nonpartisan public policy research center that helps Tennesseans identify, understand, and solve big challenges with impartial analysis of data and evidence. With leadership and staff from across the political spectrum, Sycamore provides accessible, reliable information in pursuit of sound, sustainable policies that improve the lives of all Tennesseans. For more information, visit sycamoretn.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.