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## **Texas Sees Drop in Child Poverty, Yet Remains Among Nation's Lowest Ranked in Child Well-Being, According to 2025 KIDS COUNT Data Book**

*New report shows significant progress in reducing poverty, yet urges renewed focus as gaps and challenges remain for Texas children and families*

**AUSTIN, TEXAS** — Texas has made meaningful progress in reducing child poverty over the past decade but remains one of the lowest-performing states in overall child well-being, according to the 2025 KIDS COUNT® Data Book released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Texas ranks 44th nationally in overall child well-being, slipping from last year's ranking. Despite gains, the report underscores the persistent challenges Texas' children face.

In Texas, the share of children living in poverty fell from 27% in 2011 to 18% in 2023, reflecting over 400,000 fewer children growing up in poverty despite statewide population growth. However, nearly 1.4 million Texas children still live below the poverty line. Texas also continues to rank poorly overall, underscoring the urgent need for policies that address persistent gaps in opportunity.

"Texas families have worked hard and shown remarkable resilience, and the decline in child poverty reflects real progress," said Coda Rayo-Garza, Director of Research and Data at Every Texan, a member of the KIDS COUNT network. "However, this progress remains fragile. More than one million children in Texas continue to face barriers to health care, stable housing, and educational attainment. Sustained, evidence-based policy action is essential to ensure that improvements reach all communities and that these gains are not temporary."

Experts emphasize that children need more than economic stability to succeed. The Data Book highlights a decline in education indicators, with 72% of 4<sup>th</sup> graders scoring below proficient reading level in 2024, an increase from 70% in 2022. Additionally, the percentage of high school students not graduating on time has remained at 10% since the 2016–17 school year. Similarly, the state has not seen a significant change in the number of Texan children without health insurance. In 2023, 12% of Texan children remain uninsured, presenting an 8% decrease from 2019 but matching the rate in 2014, putting Texas in 50th place for uninsured children. These statistics demonstrate the need for continued attention and investment in learning recovery and academic achievement.



“As the Texas legislative session comes to a close, this is the time to take stock of where we stand and how far we still have to go,” said Luis Figueroa, Chief Legislative Affairs Officer for Every Texan. “The data clearly show that while targeted policies and investments have made a difference, there’s much more progress to be made to ensure Texas leaders fully invest in every Texan child’s future—especially in light of the state’s high rate of uninsured children and potential Medicaid cuts that could further jeopardize children’s health and well-being.”

Now in its 36th year, the KIDS COUNT Data Book serves as a vital resource for policymakers and advocates. It offers national and state-by-state data on 16 indicators of child well-being and helps identify areas of success as well as gaps where greater investments are needed.

Every Texan urges state and local officials to use this data to inform future policy decisions, unite across party lines, and build a Texas where all young people can grow up healthy, secure, and prepared for the future.

#### RELEASE INFORMATION

The 2025 KIDS COUNT Data Book will be available at [www.aecf.org/databook](http://www.aecf.org/databook). Additional information and interactive data tools are also available through the KIDS COUNT Data Center at [datacenter.aecf.org](http://datacenter.aecf.org). You can access Every Texan’s Kids Count data dashboard and report at <https://everytexan.org/research-data/kids-count/>.

#### 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 communities. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). KIDS COUNT is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

#### ABOUT EVERY TEXAN

Every Texan believes that *social justice requires public policy*. Since its founding in 1985, Every Texan has leveraged public policy to expand opportunity and equity for Texans of all backgrounds. Every Texan is an independent nonprofit organization that researches, analyzes, and advocates for public policies to achieve equitable access to quality health care, food security, education, and good jobs. Our bold, research-driven legislative priorities dare Texas leaders to make Texas the best state for hard-working people and their families. Learn more at [everytexan.org](http://everytexan.org).