

2021 KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK

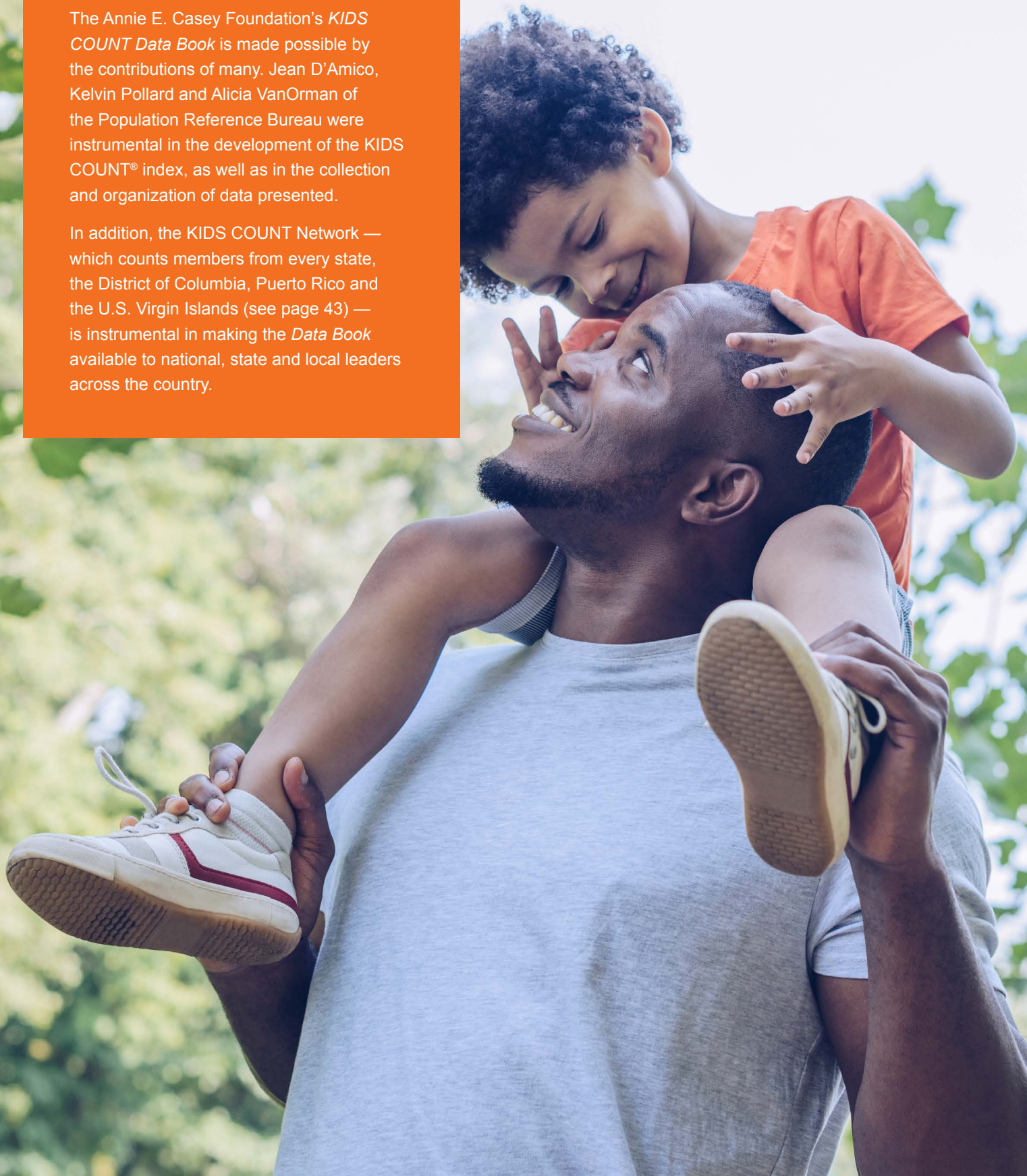
STATE TRENDS IN CHILD WELL-BEING



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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In addition, the KIDS COUNT Network — which counts members from every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (see page 43) — is instrumental in making the *Data Book* available to national, state and local leaders across the country.



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FOREWORD

—LISA M. HAMILTON

President and Chief Executive Officer
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The nation is slowly and unevenly emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, which had taken nearly 600,000 lives and infected over 4 million children by June 2021 in the United States alone.^{1,2} The coronavirus crisis has been the most extraordinary public health catastrophe in a century, shocking the economy, forcing shifts to remote learning and work and widening racial and economic disparities already endemic to American life.

We cannot talk about child well-being in any meaningful way in this moment — or address the considerable challenges America's children and families now face — without discussing the effects of the coronavirus. For that reason, my primary focus in this foreword is how households with kids have fared during the pandemic, complementing the annual data found in the *KIDS COUNT Data Book*, which represent the most recent information available but do not capture the impact of the past year.

In a December 2020 KIDS COUNT® policy report, we offered policy recommendations for addressing the critical needs of young people, families and communities during the pandemic and implored elected leaders to act quickly.³ Congress did just that in March 2021, passing the American Rescue Plan, which incorporates

many of those ideas and is delivering much-needed relief to people as well as governments at all levels.⁴

Some of that relief — an additional direct payment for most families, for example — came immediately.⁵ The coming months will reveal whether the cumulative effects of policy, improved economic responses and a reduction in COVID-19 cases combine to spark a recovery. Future editions of the *KIDS COUNT Data Book* will provide further context as more data become available, continuing the Foundation's commitment of more than three decades to monitor the well-being of America's children, families and communities to help inform our nation's leaders and decision makers.

HOW KIDS AND FAMILIES HAVE WEATHERED THE PANDEMIC

At all times, but particularly during a crisis, every child needs food, health care and safe and stable housing. Millions of households with children already lacked these necessities before the pandemic, and this economic and public health catastrophe brought millions more face-to-face with challenges ranging from lost health insurance and bare pantries to the threat of homelessness due to eviction or foreclosure.



As the pandemic has unfolded, enough data have become available to provide a sense of the conditions that families endured throughout 2020. The data source for this analysis is the Household Pulse Survey, conducted in multiple waves since the onset of the pandemic by the U.S. Census Bureau. Because it is the only source of robust national and state data related to the pandemic, we used the results of this survey to track what kids and families have experienced during this difficult period.⁶

- More than one in eight adults with children in the household (13%) reported a lack of health insurance. This figure was 23% for Latinos, 18% for those of two or more races or another race and 15% for Black households.
- Nearly one in four adults living in households with children (23%) said they felt down, depressed or hopeless, with those of two or more races or another race most affected (28%).
- More than one in five households with children (22%) said they had only slight confidence or no confidence at all that they would be able to make their next rent or mortgage payment on time. More than a third of Black (37%) and Latino (35%) households faced this disastrous challenge.

- About one in seven adults with children (14%) said their household sometimes or always did not have enough to eat in the most recent week. The percentages for Black households (25%), households of two or more races or another race (21%) and Latino households (20%) with children were about twice the rates for their white (10%) and Asian (9%) counterparts.

We are also deeply concerned about how the pandemic is affecting education. Students are completing a second academic year disrupted by COVID-19, undermining academic performance and altering post-high school plans.

- In 2020, when many schools were relying on remote learning, nearly one in six households with children (16%) did not always have access to the internet and a computer for educational purposes. This was the case for one in four Black households (25%) and one in five Latino households (20%).
- About half of adults (48%) who were planning to take postsecondary classes in the fall of 2020 said they would either take fewer classes than anticipated or canceled their postsecondary education plans.⁷

Many of these data expose holes that were already present, newly torn or widened in the safety net of public programs and policies designed to catch families during a crisis. The data also suggest that children of color have been more likely to experience hardship during the pandemic. Children should not go hungry in the richest country in the world. Families should not have to forego medical care. Parents should not endure unceasing anxiety about being evicted.

None of these conditions are acceptable. We must work to help all kids as our nation continues to navigate this crisis and the road to recovery.

Table I: Percentage of Households With Children Reporting Concerns During Pandemic (March 3–March 29, 2021)

	Slight or No Confidence in Paying Rent or Mortgage on Time	Sometimes or Often Do Not Have Enough Food to Eat	Adults Who Currently Do Not Have Health Insurance	Adults Who Felt Down, Depressed or Hopeless	Internet and Computer Not Available for Education	Reduced or Canceled Postsecondary Plans*
United States	18	13	11	22	12	43
Alabama	21	11	11	25	13	43
Alaska	15	10	15	23	10	42
Arizona	19	10	14	27	14	43
Arkansas	21	15	6	33	19	44
California	20	14	11	22	9	48
Colorado	16	10	8	25	9	45
Connecticut	18	12	3	21	6	39
Delaware	22	12	9	17	9	50
District of Columbia	17	12	S	19	9	35
Florida	20	15	13	24	15	46
Georgia	19	14	14	20	17	41
Hawaii	15	9	10	22	8	46
Idaho	11	9	8	17	12	41
Illinois	19	13	8	22	12	43
Indiana	16	10	13	24	11	42
Iowa	14	11	5	24	16	30
Kansas	11	8	10	20	11	40
Kentucky	15	13	5	22	12	42
Louisiana	23	21	11	28	22	45
Maine	12	10	6	16	13	46
Maryland	16	14	7	20	7	40
Massachusetts	12	7	7	18	7	41
Michigan	16	11	6	19	11	39
Minnesota	10	6	5	16	11	36
Mississippi	19	18	15	29	25	44
Missouri	12	8	7	21	11	42
Montana	7	8	9	18	15	40
Nebraska	12	12	8	22	15	33
Nevada	20	14	13	26	10	50
New Hampshire	14	7	3	19	4	39
New Jersey	19	13	11	20	9	39
New Mexico	19	13	11	24	10	53
New York	25	16	10	19	10	41
North Carolina	17	10	8	22	10	41
North Dakota	14	9	14	15	19	39
Ohio	14	13	10	24	10	42
Oklahoma	15	14	17	25	18	43
Oregon	18	11	7	20	13	46
Pennsylvania	16	12	7	25	9	37
Rhode Island	26	17	S	14	10	40
South Carolina	16	14	6	23	14	41
South Dakota	11	10	10	11	14	39
Tennessee	16	13	14	24	13	46
Texas	22	16	23	20	16	45
Utah	10	8	8	18	10	40
Vermont	8	7	S	20	8	40
Virginia	15	16	8	20	12	40
Washington	14	7	7	19	7	49
West Virginia	15	11	15	26	15	36
Wisconsin	8	6	6	16	8	35
Wyoming	15	11	22	28	12	53

Source: Population Reference Bureau's analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey (week 26 and week 27).

Note: Only respondents who provided a valid response are included.

* Data for households who reported that at least one household member was planning on attending postsecondary classes in fall 2020.

S: Data are suppressed.

Table 2: Percentage of Households With Children Reporting Concerns During Pandemic by Race and Ethnicity (March 3–March 29, 2021)

	Total	Asian	Black	Latino	White (non-Hispanic)	Two or More Races/ Other Race
Slight or No Confidence in Paying Rent or Mortgage on Time	18	17	30	30	11	22
Sometimes or Often Do Not Have Enough Food to Eat	13	9	23	20	8	20
Adults Who Currently Do Not Have Health Insurance	11	10	11	24	6	16
Adults Who Felt Down, Depressed or Hopeless	22	19	25	21	21	30
Internet and Computer Not Available for Education	12	9	15	15	10	17
Reduced or Canceled Postsecondary Plans*	43	37	45	49	41	49

Source: Population Reference Bureau's analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey (week 26 and week 27).

Note: Only respondents who provided a valid response are included. Racial and ethnic groups represented in this table are not mutually exclusive. The categories of Black, Asian and Two or More Races include both Hispanics and non-Hispanics. The Latino category includes people who identified as being of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. American Indian or Alaska Native, Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian respondents are included in the Other Race category.

* Data for all households who reported that before the pandemic at least one household member was planning on attending postsecondary classes in fall 2020.

Encouragingly, however, recent data from the survey — shown in Table 1 and Table 2 — appear to offer a glimpse into the beginnings of a recovery, although there is a long way to go and disparities persist.

For example, the share of households indicating a lack of health insurance was 11% in March 2021 (down from 13%), and the figure for Black households was also 11% (down from 15%), while the share of Latino households without insurance in March had grown slightly from 23% to 24%. In addition, the percentage of households worried about making a mortgage or rent payment dropped from 22% to 18% overall and from 31% to 22% for those of two or more races or another race. While the shares of Black and Latino families facing this concern also fell, they remained at 30% for each group.

The challenges are also more acute in certain states.

DIFFERENCES AMONG THE STATES

Although the pandemic has affected every community in every state, it has hit kids and families in some places harder than in others. Variations in the initial spread of the disease; in demographics, population density and income levels; and in the responses of state and local leaders all contributed to this uneven impact.⁸ Another key factor is the well-being of a state's children *before* the pandemic. The state rankings included in the *Data Book*, and the indicators that inform them, consistently reflect differences among the states, with this year's rankings showing where states were just before the onset of the pandemic. Indeed, many states that were lagging before COVID-19 also have struggled to safeguard child well-being during the crisis.

The rankings in this edition of the *Data Book*, which are based on 2019 data, show that despite gains since the Great Recession, the nation was not ensuring every child had the opportunity to thrive. Child poverty remained high. Reading and math proficiency rates were still unacceptably low. Long-standing racial disparities persisted across the board. Moreover, some states consistently fell short. For example, all but three of the states ranked in the bottom 20 in this year's *Data Book* were in that same category a decade ago.⁹

With that in mind, it is worth considering this year's rankings in the context of data from the pandemic. Doing so uncovers a troubling reality for several states in the South and West, which represent the lion's share of those ranked in the bottom 20 for child well-being and are among the worst-performing states for most of the pandemic data highlighted in this foreword.¹⁰

In these states, families with children are more likely to struggle to bounce back from the pandemic — and racial and ethnic disparities are

poised to grow even larger. Additionally, as we highlighted in the *2019 Data Book*, most of the states with the fastest-growing populations are in the South and West, and that shift appeared to continue in 2020.^{11,12} In other words, the states adding the most children are also the places least prepared to help kids and families succeed.

HOW STATES CAN HELP FAMILIES

The federal government has responded to COVID-19 with legislation aiming to address the effects of the pandemic on families, providing resources and needed relief to state and local jurisdictions. This began with the coronavirus relief bill known as the CARES Act¹³ and other legislation in 2020 and continued with the American Rescue Plan, which included \$350 billion to offset losses and unexpected costs borne by state, local, tribal and territorial governments.¹⁴ It is also delivering \$123 billion to school districts, the largest one-time federal investment ever in K–12 education.¹⁵





One component of the March 2021 rescue package warrants specific mention: the historic expansion of the federal child tax credit. The legislation is expected to cut the child poverty rate by more than half, largely through this expansion, which will provide eligible parents \$3,600 for each child under age 6 and \$3,000 for each older child, up to age 18.¹⁶ Unfortunately, the legislation authorized this expansion for only one year, and it is unclear whether Congress will consider making it permanent.

Ultimately, state and local leaders must direct resources to families, as well as schools and public services that are essential for children's well-being. States are still in the early stages of developing comprehensive strategies for recovery, with many having faced unanticipated budget shortfalls that stood to decimate even the most critical programs and services prior to receiving federal relief funds.¹⁷ Now, operating from steadier financial footing, state leaders can and should be deliberate and bold in implementing policy solutions to repair the damage wrought by both the pandemic and long-standing inequities.

TAKING ACTION IN UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

The nation will not recover from this crisis without innovative public policy. Our leaders must act to strengthen the social safety net and to weave in new safeguards for children, families and communities. Several of the Foundation's federal policy recommendations have already been enacted, and the rest remain relevant to this moment.¹⁸ We also offer additional policy suggestions that we urge officials to consider in the months ahead.

MAKE THE EXPANSION OF THE FEDERAL CHILD TAX CREDIT PERMANENT

We must not overlook the magnitude of the expansion of the federal child tax credit: This single change to the law will lift more than 4 million children above the poverty line in 2021.¹⁹ Many of them will be Black and Latino kids and families, enabling even more families of color to move out of poverty, too.

Lawmakers should be able to find common cause in making this policy — which has long had bipartisan support — permanent, thereby ensuring the largest one-year drop ever in child poverty is not immediately followed by the largest-ever one-year surge.

STRENGTHEN STATE AND LOCAL POLICIES AFFECTING KIDS AND FAMILIES

The American Rescue Plan has created several specific opportunities for state and local governments not only to rebuild but also to reimagine how they support the well-being of children and families. For example, the legislation includes new incentives for the 14 states that have not yet done so to enact Medicaid expansion authorized by the Affordable Care Act. This step alone would open access to health care for 5.7 million people.²⁰

To support the economic recovery, states should expand income protection that helps workers provide for themselves and their children, including the 55 million individuals who are now part of the gig economy.²¹ Permanently extending eligibility for unemployment insurance to gig workers, who now represent 34% of the U.S. workforce, would provide additional stability for families doing what they can to make ends meet in a turbulent economy. Increasing access to high-quality child care would also benefit working parents.

Many children have experienced the pandemic most acutely as a disruption in education, and school will be an important way to get kids back on track. State policymakers should prioritize school funding as they rework budgets, taking particular care to address inequities. States can address the lost learning opportunity kids experienced during the pandemic by making sure every child has broadband internet access at home and investing in evidence-based tutoring programs.

Lastly, states have opportunities to expand tax credits that benefit parents and children and enact or expand paid leave programs that bring job stability for working parents and workplace stability for employers.

PRIORITIZE RACIAL AND ETHNIC EQUITY IN POLICYMAKING

Governors and state legislatures should address the disparate effects of the pandemic on communities of color, as well as inequities — deeper in some states than others — that existed long before the crisis began.

The most immediate steps are ensuring the equitable distribution of federal relief funds to help the communities facing the biggest challenges and facilitating the most effective use of these resources. This should include establishing mechanisms for accountability that enable state and local leaders to assess and adjust their decision making as unprecedented resources are directed toward the recovery.

Broad national prosperity does not automatically yield conditions in which all children can thrive, and recoveries have historically been uneven, widening disparities and leaving children and families of color behind.²² We hope the data and analysis in this year's *Data Book* — from 2019 and from the 2020–21 Household Pulse Survey — inform policymakers' responses to these unsettling times. Together, these two sets of data tell one story: Our leaders must act swiftly and boldly to craft equitable policy solutions so that all children have every opportunity to succeed.

TRENDS



Since 1990, the Casey Foundation has ranked states annually on overall child well-being using an index of key indicators.

The KIDS COUNT index captures what children need most to thrive, using four domains: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health and (4) Family and Community. Each domain includes four indicators, for a total of 16. These indicators represent the best available data to measure the status of child well-being at the state and national levels. (For a more thorough description of the KIDS COUNT index, visit www.aecf.org/resources/the-new-kids-count-index.)

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had a negative effect on child well-being in the United States. This year's *Data Book* presents the most recent available data and multiyear trends, which — whenever possible — compare data from 2010 with those from 2019, providing a picture of child well-being prior to the pandemic. As the nation recovers from the coronavirus crisis, the latest data on the well-being of young people, including any post-pandemic data that are made available, will be in the KIDS COUNT Data Center (datacenter.kidscount.org).



TABLE 3: NATIONAL TRENDS**16 Key Indicators of Child Well-Being by Domain****ECONOMIC WELL-BEING**

CHILDREN IN POVERTY US: 12,000,000	22% 2010	17% 2019	BETTER
CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK SECURE EMPLOYMENT US: 18,833,000	33% 2010	26% 2019	BETTER
CHILDREN LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH A HIGH HOUSING COST BURDEN US: 21,570,000	41% 2010	30% 2019	BETTER
TEENS NOT IN SCHOOL AND NOT WORKING US: 1,115,000	9% 2010	6% 2019	BETTER

EDUCATION

YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 3 AND 4) NOT IN SCHOOL US: 4,205,000	52% 2009-11	52% 2017-19	SAME
FOURTH-GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN READING US: N.A.	68% 2009	66% 2019	BETTER
EIGHTH-GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN MATH US: N.A.	67% 2009	67% 2019	SAME
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME US: N.A.	21% 2010-11	14% 2018-19	BETTER

N.A.: Not available

HEALTH

LOW BIRTH-WEIGHT BABIES US: 311,245	8.1% 2010	8.3% 2019	WORSE
CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE US: 4,375,000	8% 2010	6% 2019	BETTER
CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS PER 100,000 US: 19,431	26 2010	25 2019	BETTER
CHILDREN AND TEENS (AGES 10 TO 17) WHO ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE US: N.A.	31% 2016-17	31% 2018-19	SAME

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

CHILDREN IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES US: 23,756,000	34% 2010	34% 2019	SAME
CHILDREN IN FAMILIES WHERE THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD LACKS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA US: 8,907,000	15% 2010	12% 2019	BETTER
CHILDREN LIVING IN HIGH-POVERTY AREAS US: 6,712,000	13% 2008-12	9% 2015-19	BETTER
TEEN BIRTHS PER 1,000 US: 171,674	34 2010	17 2019	BETTER

N.A.: Not available



NATIONAL TRENDS IN CHILD WELL-BEING

Data over the past decade reveal encouraging trends in child well-being nationally, with improvements in 11 out of the 16 indicators (see pages 11 and 12). The 2019 data show that more parents were economically secure and lived without a high housing cost burden, and more teens graduated from high school and delayed childbearing. Broadly speaking, the nation helped children experience gains in the Economic Well-Being domain, with promising but mixed results in the Health, Education and Family and Community domains.

All four Economic Well-Being indicators improved. In 2019, fewer children were living in poverty, more parents were employed and fewer families were spending a disproportionate amount of their income on housing costs. Nonetheless, in 2019, nearly one in six children lived in poverty. After seeing progress stall between 2017 and 2018, improvement in all four economic well-being indicators continued into 2019, tracking with the steady decline of

the national unemployment rate.²³ Between 2019 and 2020 the unemployment rate increased from 3.7% to 8.1%, the first increase since 2010.²⁴ This increase signals that the economic progress made over the past decade might stall or move family financial well-being in the wrong direction.

Meanwhile, two of the four Education indicators — fourth-grade reading proficiency and high school graduation — showed improvement. Notably, with 86% of high school students graduating on time in the 2018–19 school year, the nation’s graduation rate reached an all-time high.

The Health domain saw mixed results. Far fewer children lacked access to health insurance coverage in 2019 than in 2010. The Foundation attributes this drop to expanded public health coverage. Even with these advancements, between 2016 and 2019 the number of children without health insurance increased by 726,000 children. And 2019 witnessed the first increase in the percentage of uninsured children in a decade. Data also show that after seeing increases three years straight, the percentage of babies born with low birth weight leveled off at 8.3%. These recent trends are something to watch.

Trends in the Family and Community domain, for the most part, were encouraging. Improvements were seen in the teen birth rate, a smaller percentage of children were living with parents who lacked a high school diploma and the percentage of children living in high-poverty communities declined for the fourth year in a row. After a steady decline since 2010, the teen birth rate remained unchanged between 2018 and 2019; another trend to keep an eye on.

RACIAL INEQUITIES IN CHILD WELL-BEING

Despite gains for children of all races and income levels during the reporting period, the nation's racial inequities remain deep, systemic and stubbornly persistent (see page 15). Data suggest that we as a nation fail to provide children of color with the opportunities and support they need to thrive. States are failing to dismantle barriers that African American, American Indian and Latino children especially encounter. As a result, nearly all index measures show that children experience disparate outcomes in spite of their potential. A few notable exceptions: African American kids were more likely than the national average to be in school as young children, to have health insurance and to live in families in which the head of the household has at least a high school diploma. American Indian families with children were less likely to be burdened with high housing costs. American Indian and Latino kids were more likely to be born at a healthy birth weight. Latino children and teens had a lower death rate than the national average.

As the result of generations-long inequities and systemic barriers that persist, children of color face high hurdles to success on many indicators. Black children were significantly more likely to live in single-parent families and in communities where poverty is concentrated. American Indian kids were more than twice as likely to lack health insurance and almost three times as likely to live in neighborhoods with more limited resources than the average child. And Latino children were the most likely to live with a head of household who lacked a high school diploma and to not be in school when they were young.

Although Asian and Pacific Islander children tend to fare better than their peers, disaggregated data show that stark differences exist within this population. For example, 35% of Burmese, 27% of Hmong and 25% of Bangladeshi children lived in poverty compared with 10% of Asian and Pacific Islander children overall. And 60% of Burmese children lived in a family where the head of household lacked a high school diploma — five times higher than the national average.²⁵

In 14 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, kids of color were the majority of the child population in 2019. The future success of our nation depends on our ability to ensure all children have the chance to be successful.



TABLE 4**Key Indicators by Race and Hispanic Origin**

		National Average	African American	American Indian	Asian and Pacific Islander	Latino	White (non- Hispanic)	Two or More Races
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING								
Children in poverty	2019	17%	31%	30%	10%	23%	10%	17%
Children whose parents lack secure employment	2019	26%	40%	41%	17%	30%	20%	29%
Children living in households with a high housing cost burden	2019	30%	43%	27%	28%	39%	21%	31%
Teens not in school and not working	2019	6%	10%	11%	3%	8%	5%	7%
EDUCATION								
Young children (ages 3 and 4) not in school	2015–19†	52%	48%	55%	45%	58%	50%	51%
Fourth-graders not proficient in reading	2019	66%	82%*	80%*	45%*	77%	56%	60%*
Eighth-graders not proficient in math	2019	67%	87%*	85%*	39%*	81%	57%	64%*
High school students not graduating on time	2018–19	14%	20%*	26%*	7%*	18%	11%	N.A.
HEALTH								
Low birth-weight babies	2019	8.3%	13.8%	8.1%	8.6%	7.6%	6.9%	9.0%
Children without health insurance	2019	6%	5%	14%	4%	9%	4%	4%
Child and teen deaths per 100,000	2019	25	41	32	15	21	23	15
Children and teens (ages 10 to 17) who are overweight or obese	2018–19^	31%	40%*	N.A.	18%*	38%	26%	N.A.
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY								
Children in single-parent families	2019	34%	64%	52%	15%	42%	24%	40%
Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma	2019	12%	10%	17%	9%	29%	5%	7%
Children living in high-poverty areas	2015–19	9%	23%	25%	4%	14%	3%	8%
Teen births per 1,000	2019	17	26	21	4	25	11	17

† Data are from five-year American Community Survey (ACS) data and are not comparable to the national average using three years of pooled one-year ACS data.

* Data are for non-Hispanic children.

^ The response option "some other race" was removed in 2019.

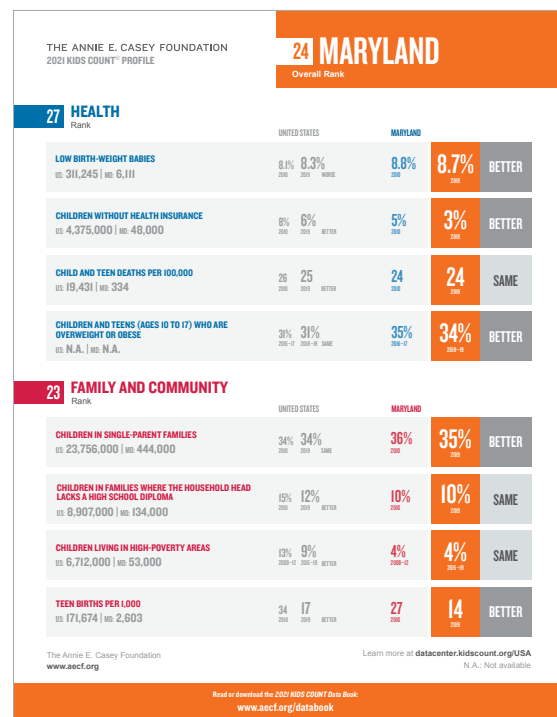
N.A.: Data not available.



NATIONAL AND STATE DATA PROFILES ONLINE

National and state profiles providing current and trend data for all 16 indicators, as well as an interactive look at the *Data Book*, are available at

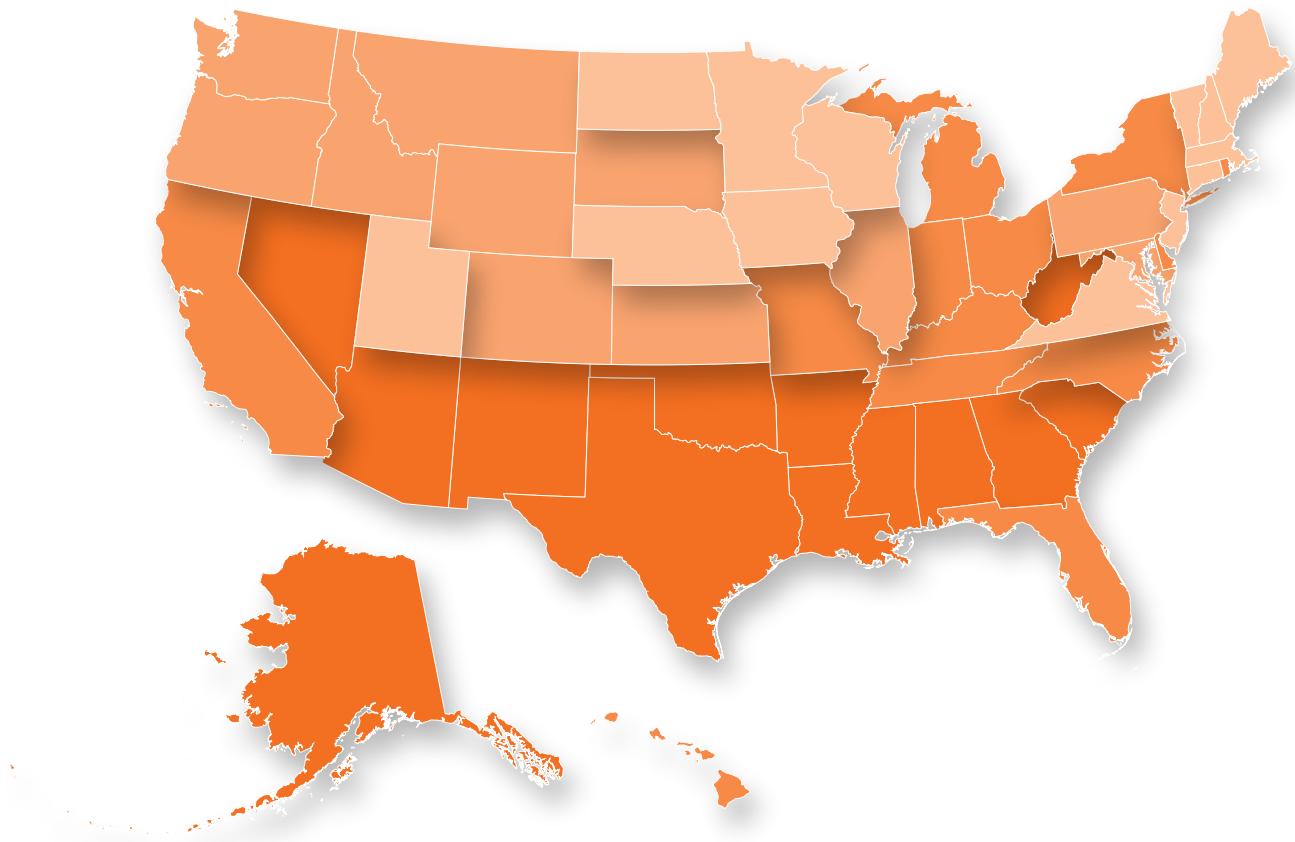
www.aecf.org/databook. In addition, thousands of child well-being indicators, including those cited in the *Data Book*, are available on the KIDS COUNT Data Center at www.datacenter.kidscount.org.



OVERALL CHILD WELL-BEING

The Foundation derives a composite index of overall child well-being for each state by combining data across four domains: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health and (4) Family and Community. These composite scores are then translated into a state ranking for child well-being.

A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF OVERALL CHILD WELL-BEING (2021)



RANKINGS AND KEY

1. Massachusetts	14. Washington	26. Hawaii	38. Georgia
2. New Hampshire	15. Colorado	27. New York	39. Arkansas
3. Minnesota	16. Idaho	28. Michigan	40. Arizona
4. Vermont	17. Wyoming	29. Indiana	41. South Carolina
5. Utah	18. Kansas	30. Missouri	42. Oklahoma
6. New Jersey	19. Pennsylvania	31. Ohio	43. Alaska
7. Nebraska	20. South Dakota	32. Delaware	44. West Virginia
8. Connecticut	21. Illinois	33. California	45. Nevada
9. Iowa	22. Montana	34. North Carolina	46. Texas
10. Wisconsin	23. Rhode Island	35. Florida	47. Alabama
11. Maine	24. Maryland	36. Tennessee	48. Louisiana
12. North Dakota	25. Oregon	37. Kentucky	49. New Mexico
13. Virginia			50. Mississippi



National data mask a great deal of state and regional variations in child well-being. A child's chances of thriving depend not only on individual, family and community characteristics but also on the state in which they are born and raised. States vary considerably in their wealth and other resources. Policy choices and investments by state officials and lawmakers also strongly influence children's chances for success.

This year, New England states hold the top two spots for overall child well-being. Massachusetts ranks first, followed by New Hampshire and Minnesota. Louisiana (at 48th place), New Mexico (49th) and Mississippi (50th) are the three lowest-ranked states.

The map on page 18 shows the distinct regional patterns that emerge from the state rankings. Five of the top 10 states in terms of overall

child well-being are in the Northeast, including Vermont (fourth), New Jersey (sixth) and Connecticut (eighth). States rounding out the top 10 are Utah (fifth), Nebraska (seventh), Iowa (ninth) and Wisconsin (10th).

States in Appalachia, as well as the Southeast and Southwest — where families have the lowest levels of household income — populate the bottom of the overall rankings. In fact, except for Alaska, the 17 lowest-ranked states are in these regions.

Although they are not ranked against states, children in the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico experienced some of the worst outcomes on many of the indicators the Foundation tracks. When available, the data for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are included on pages 33–36.

In addition to differences across states, the overall rankings obscure important variations within states. Although most state rankings did not vary dramatically across domains, there are a few exceptions. For example, Oregon ranks 40th for Education but eighth for Health.

Wyoming ranks fourth in Economic Well-Being and 45th for Health. For all states, the index identified bright spots and room for improvement. See maps in this section to review variation in your state.

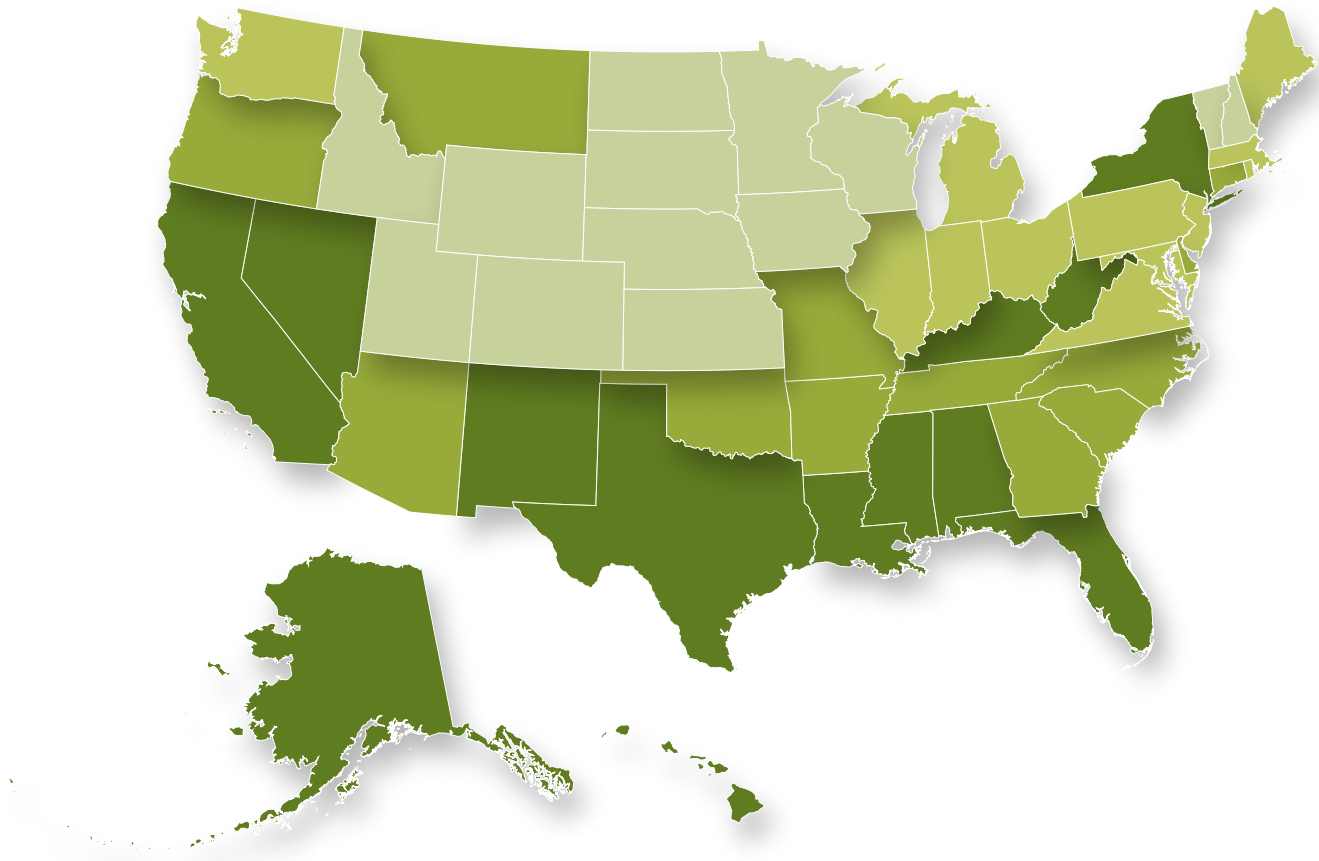


ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

To help children grow into prepared, productive adults, parents need jobs with family-sustaining pay, affordable housing and the ability to invest in their children's future. When parents are unemployed or earn low wages, their access to resources to support their kids' development is more limited, which can undermine their children's health and prospects for success in school and beyond.²⁶ The negative effects of poverty on kids can extend into their teenage years and young adulthood, as they are more likely to contend with issues such as teen pregnancy and failing to graduate from high school.²⁷



A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF ECONOMIC WELL-BEING (2021)



RANKINGS AND KEY

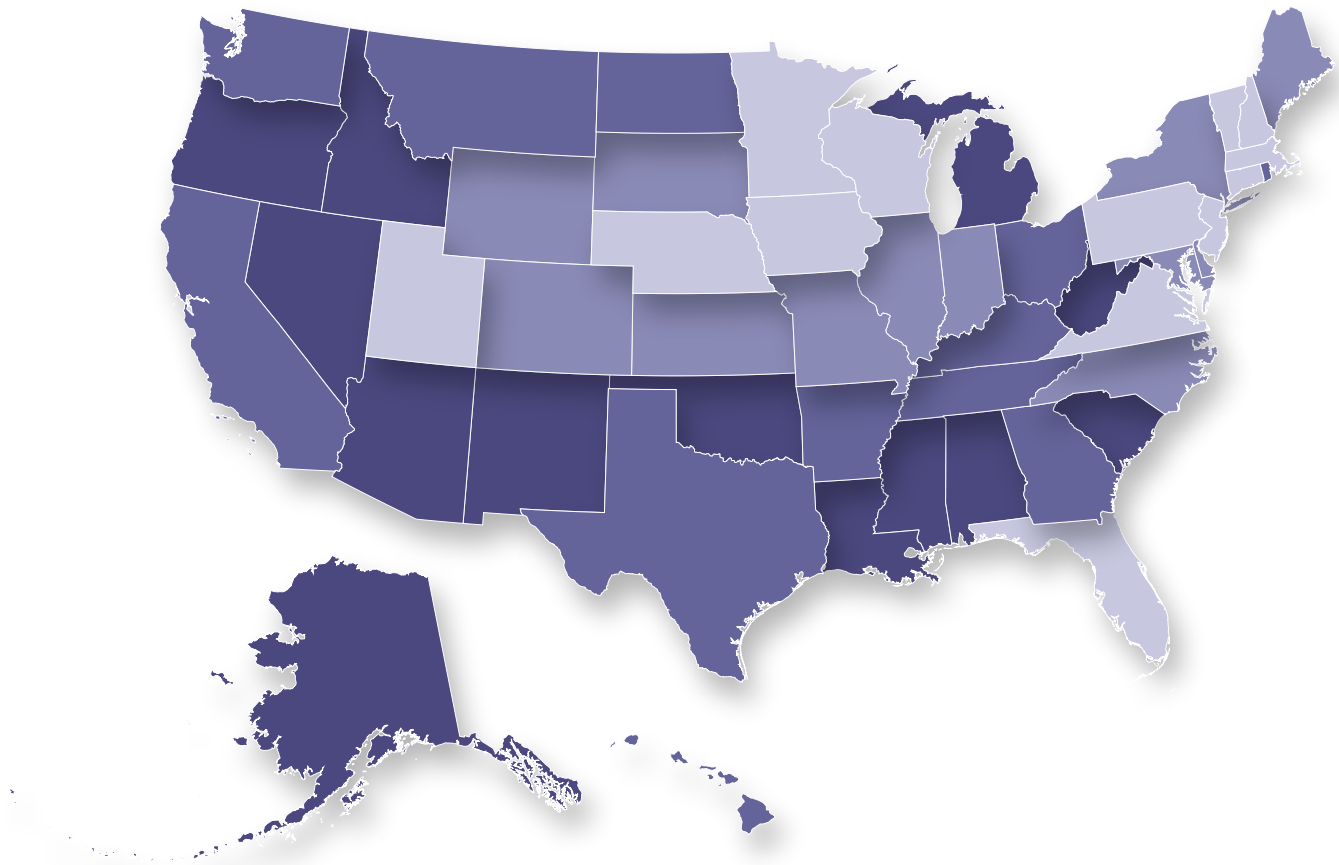
- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. North Dakota | 14. Virginia | 26. Missouri | 38. Texas |
| 2. Nebraska | 15. Maine | 27. Connecticut | 39. Alabama |
| 3. Minnesota | 16. Massachusetts | 28. Montana | 40. Kentucky |
| 4. Wyoming | 17. Rhode Island | 29. Delaware | 41. Nevada |
| 5. Utah | 18. Indiana | 30. Tennessee | 42. Florida |
| 6. New Hampshire | 19. Washington | 31. Oregon | 43. California |
| 7. Iowa | 20. Pennsylvania | 32. North Carolina | 44. Hawaii |
| 8. Wisconsin | 21. New Jersey | 33. Oklahoma | 45. New York |
| 9. Vermont | 22. Illinois | 34. Arkansas | 46. West Virginia |
| 10. South Dakota | 23. Maryland | 35. Arizona | 47. Alaska |
| 11. Kansas | 24. Michigan | 36. Georgia | 48. New Mexico |
| 12. Idaho | 25. Ohio | 37. South Carolina | 49. Louisiana |
| 13. Colorado | | | 50. Mississippi |

EDUCATION

The early years of a child's life lay the foundation for lifelong success. Establishing the conditions that promote educational achievement for children is critical, beginning with quality prenatal care and continuing through the early elementary years. With a strong and healthy beginning, children can more easily stay on track to remain in school and graduate on time, pursue postsecondary education and training and successfully transition to adulthood. Yet our country continues to have significant gaps in educational achievement by race and income along all age groups of child development.²⁸ Closing these gaps will be key to ensuring the nation's future workforce can compete on a global scale.



A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF EDUCATION (2021)



RANKINGS AND KEY

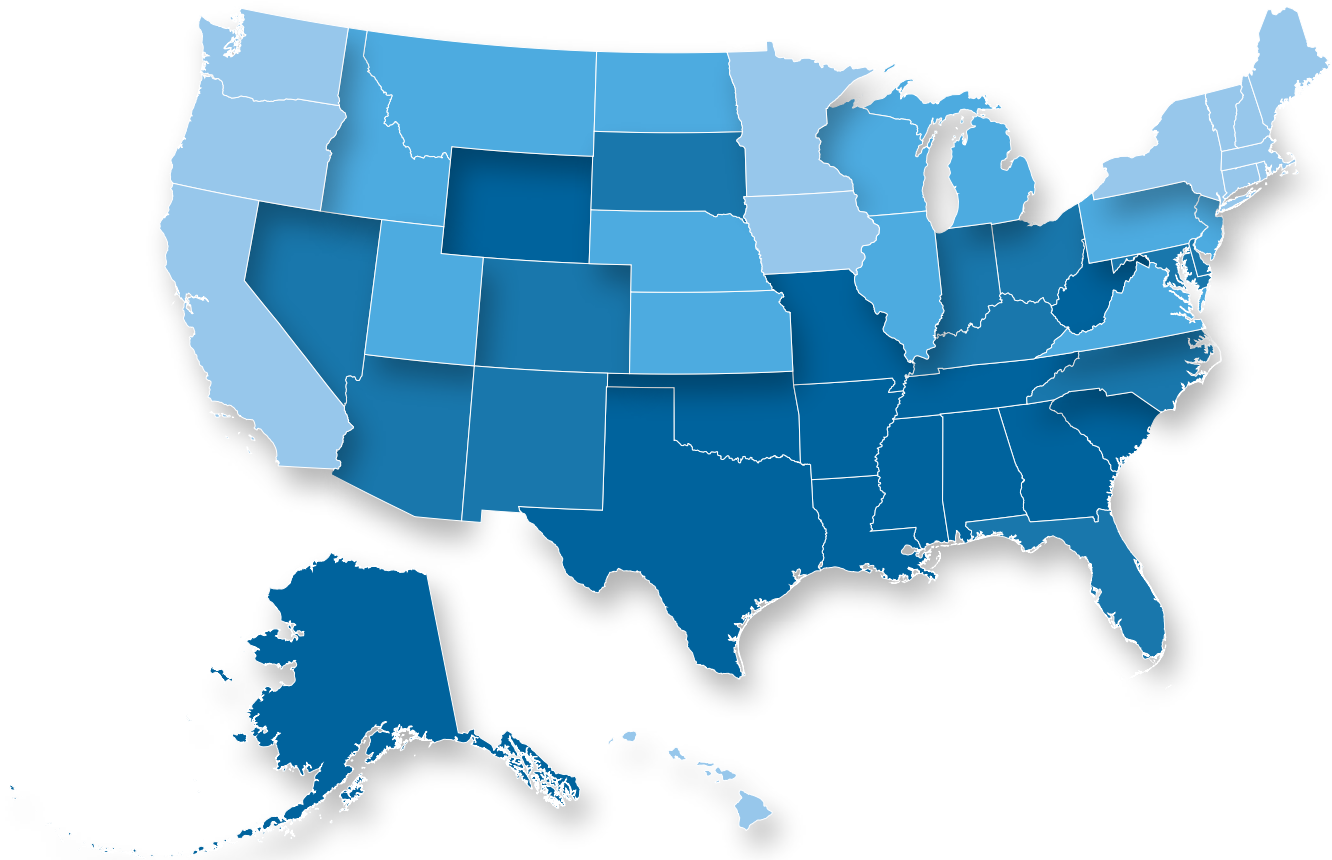
1. New Jersey	14. Illinois	26. Montana	38. Idaho
2. Massachusetts	15. Colorado	27. Washington	39. Mississippi
3. Connecticut	16. New York	28. Ohio	40. Oregon
4. Vermont	17. Indiana	29. Tennessee	41. Michigan
5. New Hampshire	18. Maine	30. Kentucky	42. Alabama
6. Virginia	19. North Carolina	31. North Dakota	43. West Virginia
7. Minnesota	20. Maryland	32. Hawaii	44. South Carolina
8. Pennsylvania	21. Missouri	33. Texas	45. Oklahoma
9. Wisconsin	22. Wyoming	34. Rhode Island	46. Nevada
10. Utah	23. Kansas	35. Arkansas	47. Arizona
11. Nebraska	24. South Dakota	36. California	48. Louisiana
12. Florida	25. Delaware	37. Georgia	49. Alaska
13. Iowa			50. New Mexico

HEALTH

Children's good health is fundamental to their overall development, and ensuring kids are born healthy is the first step toward improving their life chances. Exposure to violence, family stress, inadequate housing, lack of preventive health care, poor nutrition, poverty and substance abuse undermine children's health. Poor health in childhood affects other critical aspects of a child's life, such as school readiness and attendance, and can have lasting consequences on their future health and well-being.



A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF HEALTH (2021)



RANKINGS AND KEY

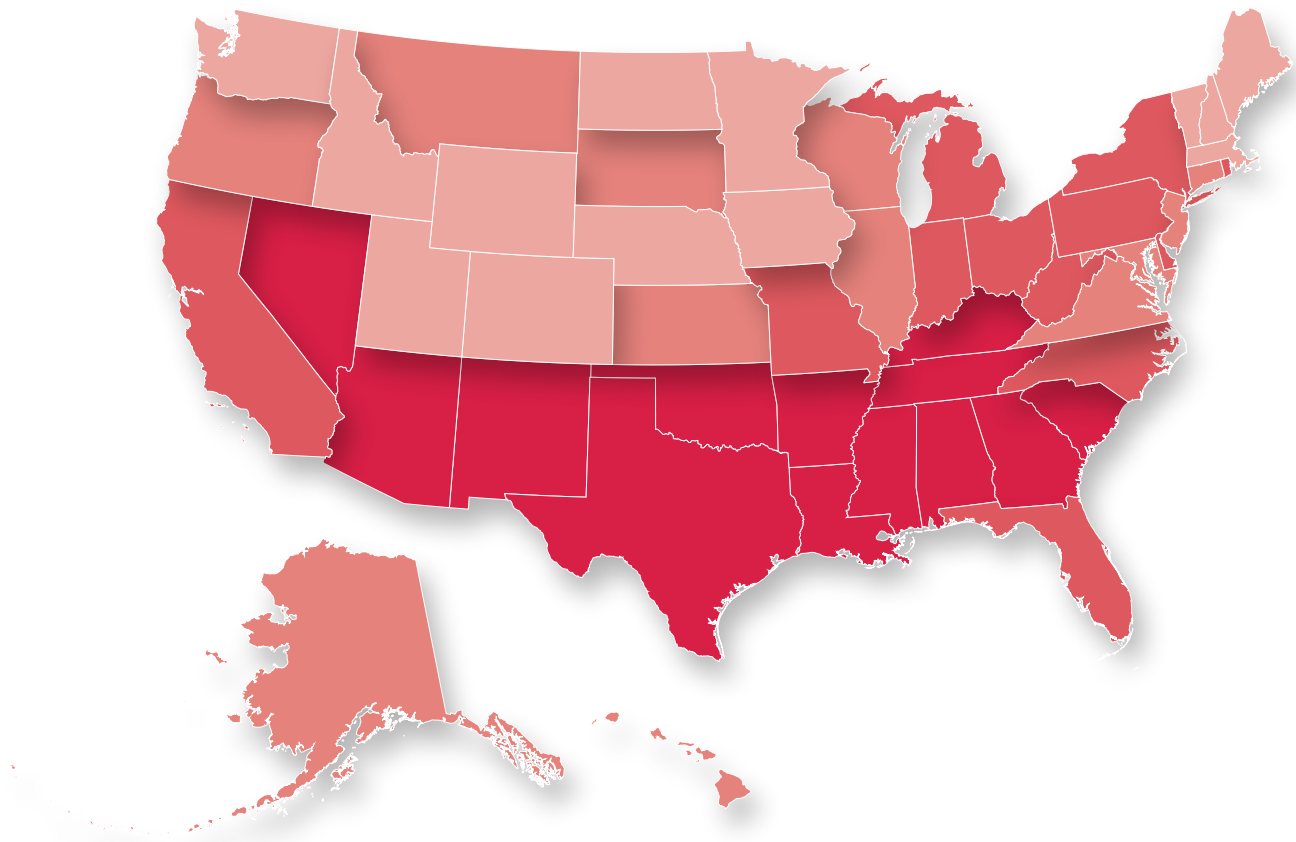
1. Massachusetts	14. New Jersey	26. Colorado	38. Missouri
2. Minnesota	15. Nebraska	27. Maryland	39. Tennessee
3. New Hampshire	16. Wisconsin	28. Arizona	40. Georgia
4. Vermont	17. Pennsylvania	29. Ohio	41. Arkansas
5. Washington	18. Utah	30. Delaware	42. Oklahoma
6. Hawaii	19. Idaho	31. Florida	43. West Virginia
7. Connecticut	20. Illinois	32. North Carolina	44. Alaska
8. Oregon	21. Montana	33. South Dakota	45. Wyoming
9. Rhode Island	22. Michigan	34. Nevada	46. South Carolina
10. New York	23. North Dakota	35. Kentucky	47. Alabama
11. California	24. Virginia	36. Indiana	48. Louisiana
12. Maine	25. Kansas	37. New Mexico	49. Texas
13. Iowa			50. Mississippi

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Children who live in nurturing families and supportive communities have stronger personal connections and higher academic achievement. Parents struggling with financial hardship have fewer resources available to foster their children's development and are more prone to face severe stress and depression, which can interfere with effective parenting. These findings underscore the importance of two-generation approaches to ending poverty, which address the needs of parents and children to help them succeed together. Where families live also matters. When communities are safe and have strong institutions, good schools and quality support services, families and their children are more likely to thrive.



A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (2021)



RANKINGS AND KEY

- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. New Hampshire | 14. Montana | 26. Pennsylvania | 38. South Carolina |
| 2. Utah | 15. Connecticut | 27. Missouri | 39. Georgia |
| 3. Vermont | 16. Hawaii | 28. Rhode Island | 40. Tennessee |
| 4. Maine | 17. New Jersey | 29. Michigan | 41. Oklahoma |
| 5. Wyoming | 18. Virginia | 30. Delaware | 42. Arkansas |
| 6. Minnesota | 19. Oregon | 31. Indiana | 43. Kentucky |
| 7. North Dakota | 20. Wisconsin | 32. Florida | 44. Nevada |
| 8. Idaho | 21. South Dakota | 33. New York | 45. Alabama |
| 9. Massachusetts | 22. Alaska | 34. Ohio | 46. Arizona |
| 10. Iowa | 23. Maryland | 35. North Carolina | 47. Texas |
| 11. Colorado | 24. Kansas | 36. California | 48. New Mexico |
| 12. Nebraska | 25. Illinois | 37. West Virginia | 49. Louisiana |
| 13. Washington | | | 50. Mississippi |

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The 14 states that rank in the bottom 20 for child well-being in this year's *Data Book* and rank among the worst-performing 20 states for most or all of the pandemic indicators highlighted in this letter are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Child Well-Being Rankings

LOCATION	OVERALL RANK	ECONOMIC WELL-BEING RANK	EDUCATION RANK	HEALTH RANK	FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RANK
Alabama	47	39	42	47	45
Alaska	43	47	49	44	22
Arizona	40	35	47	28	46
Arkansas	39	34	35	41	42
California	33	43	36	11	36
Colorado	15	13	15	26	11
Connecticut	8	27	3	7	15
Delaware	32	29	25	30	30
District of Columbia	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.
Florida	35	42	12	31	32
Georgia	38	36	37	40	39
Hawaii	26	44	32	6	16
Idaho	16	12	38	19	8
Illinois	21	22	14	20	25
Indiana	29	18	17	36	31
Iowa	9	7	13	13	10
Kansas	18	11	23	25	24
Kentucky	37	40	30	35	43
Louisiana	48	49	48	48	49
Maine	11	15	18	12	4
Maryland	24	23	20	27	23
Massachusetts	1	16	2	1	9
Michigan	28	24	41	22	29
Minnesota	3	3	7	2	6
Mississippi	50	50	39	50	50
Missouri	30	26	21	38	27
Montana	22	28	26	21	14
Nebraska	7	2	11	15	12
Nevada	45	41	46	34	44
New Hampshire	2	6	5	3	1
New Jersey	6	21	1	14	17
New Mexico	49	48	50	37	48
New York	27	45	16	10	33
North Carolina	34	32	19	32	35
North Dakota	12	1	31	23	7
Ohio	31	25	28	29	34
Oklahoma	42	33	45	42	41
Oregon	25	31	40	8	19
Pennsylvania	19	20	8	17	26
Puerto Rico	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.
Rhode Island	23	17	34	9	28
South Carolina	41	37	44	46	38
South Dakota	20	10	24	33	21
Tennessee	36	30	29	39	40
Texas	46	38	33	49	47
Utah	5	5	10	18	2
Vermont	4	9	4	4	3
Virginia	13	14	6	24	18
Washington	14	19	27	5	13
West Virginia	44	46	43	43	37
Wisconsin	10	8	9	16	20
Wyoming	17	4	22	45	5

N.R.: Not Ranked

APPENDIX B

Economic Well-Being Indicators

STATE	CHILDREN IN POVERTY (2019)		CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK SECURE EMPLOYMENT (2019)		CHILDREN LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH A HIGH HOUSING COST BURDEN (2019)		TEENS NOT IN SCHOOL AND NOT WORKING (2019)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
United States	12,000,000	17	18,833,000	26	21,570,000	30	1,115,000	6
Alabama	228,000	21	332,000	31	256,000	24	18,000	7
Alaska	23,000	13	52,000	29	53,000	30	5,000	12
Arizona	308,000	19	438,000	27	458,000	28	29,000	8
Arkansas	151,000	22	206,000	29	153,000	22	11,000	7
California	1,364,000	16	2,413,000	27	3,613,000	41	124,000	6
Colorado	135,000	11	280,000	22	374,000	30	15,000	5
Connecticut	101,000	14	197,000	27	244,000	34	8,000	4
Delaware	32,000	16	56,000	28	57,000	28	3,000	6
District of Columbia	24,000	19	41,000	32	43,000	34	3,000	8
Florida	737,000	18	1,135,000	27	1,516,000	36	67,000	7
Georgia	461,000	19	650,000	26	711,000	28	48,000	8
Hawaii	36,000	12	72,000	24	115,000	38	6,000	10
Idaho	58,000	13	96,000	21	109,000	24	5,000	5
Illinois	436,000	16	669,000	24	789,000	28	40,000	6
Indiana	231,000	15	419,000	27	331,000	21	25,000	7
Iowa	92,000	13	141,000	20	143,000	20	12,000	7
Kansas	101,000	15	147,000	21	152,000	22	9,000	5
Kentucky	212,000	22	307,000	31	231,000	23	18,000	8
Louisiana	289,000	27	356,000	33	313,000	29	23,000	9
Maine	33,000	14	67,000	27	56,000	23	3,000	5
Maryland	157,000	12	315,000	24	412,000	31	21,000	7
Massachusetts	154,000	12	334,000	25	419,000	31	15,000	4
Michigan	371,000	18	556,000	26	519,000	24	31,000	6
Minnesota	143,000	11	261,000	20	268,000	21	11,000	4
Mississippi	192,000	28	238,000	34	184,000	26	18,000	10
Missouri	229,000	17	352,000	26	300,000	22	23,000	7
Montana	33,000	15	64,000	28	52,000	23	4,000	7
Nebraska	51,000	11	91,000	19	93,000	20	4,000	4
Nevada	115,000	17	178,000	26	226,000	33	13,000	9
New Hampshire	18,000	7	59,000	23	62,000	24	4,000	5
New Jersey	235,000	12	433,000	22	665,000	34	26,000	6
New Mexico	116,000	25	151,000	32	124,000	26	12,000	11
New York	712,000	18	1,142,000	28	1,479,000	37	58,000	6
North Carolina	440,000	20	607,000	26	598,000	26	41,000	7
North Dakota	18,000	10	37,000	21	28,000	16	2,000	4
Ohio	466,000	18	678,000	26	589,000	23	37,000	6
Oklahoma	186,000	20	244,000	26	234,000	25	18,000	8
Oregon	110,000	13	233,000	27	248,000	29	16,000	8
Pennsylvania	435,000	17	676,000	26	700,000	27	31,000	5
Puerto Rico	323,000	57	300,000	52	152,000	27	21,000	12
Rhode Island	28,000	14	46,000	23	60,000	29	3,000	5
South Carolina	215,000	20	311,000	28	284,000	26	21,000	8
South Dakota	31,000	15	48,000	22	45,000	21	2,000	5
Tennessee	291,000	20	418,000	28	395,000	26	21,000	6
Texas	1,401,000	19	1,864,000	25	2,240,000	30	127,000	8
Utah	91,000	10	173,000	19	227,000	24	12,000	6
Vermont	11,000	10	28,000	25	28,000	24	2,000	4
Virginia	245,000	13	404,000	22	526,000	28	23,000	5
Washington	197,000	12	407,000	24	476,000	29	24,000	7
West Virginia	70,000	20	123,000	34	72,000	20	8,000	9
Wisconsin	168,000	14	266,000	21	275,000	22	16,000	5
Wyoming	15,000	12	25,000	19	23,000	17	2,000	7

Education Indicators

STATE	YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 3 AND 4) NOT IN SCHOOL (2017-19)		FOURTH-GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN READING (2019)		EIGHTH-GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN MATH (2019)		HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME: (2018-19)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
United States	4,205,000	52	N.A.	66	N.A.	67	N.A.	14
Alabama	68,000	56	N.A.	72	N.A.	79	N.A.	8
Alaska	13,000	59	N.A.	75	N.A.	71	N.A.	20
Arizona	111,000	61	N.A.	69	N.A.	69	N.A.	22
Arkansas	41,000	53	N.A.	69	N.A.	73	N.A.	12
California	512,000	50	N.A.	68	N.A.	71	N.A.	16
Colorado	68,000	49	N.A.	60	N.A.	63	N.A.	19
Connecticut	26,000	34	N.A.	60	N.A.	61	N.A.	12
Delaware	11,000	49	N.A.	67	N.A.	71	N.A.	11
District of Columbia	4,000	21	N.A.	70	N.A.	77	N.A.	31
Florida	225,000	48	N.A.	62	N.A.	69	N.A.	13
Georgia	137,000	50	N.A.	68	N.A.	69	N.A.	18
Hawaii	18,000	50	N.A.	66	N.A.	72	N.A.	15
Idaho	32,000	64	N.A.	63	N.A.	63	N.A.	19
Illinois	140,000	45	N.A.	66	N.A.	66	N.A.	14
Indiana	101,000	59	N.A.	63	N.A.	63	N.A.	13
Iowa	44,000	54	N.A.	65	N.A.	67	N.A.	8
Kansas	41,000	52	N.A.	66	N.A.	67	N.A.	13
Kentucky	68,000	60	N.A.	65	N.A.	71	N.A.	9
Louisiana	62,000	48	N.A.	74	N.A.	77	N.A.	20
Maine	14,000	54	N.A.	64	N.A.	66	N.A.	13
Maryland	77,000	51	N.A.	65	N.A.	67	N.A.	13
Massachusetts	58,000	40	N.A.	55	N.A.	53	N.A.	12
Michigan	125,000	53	N.A.	68	N.A.	69	N.A.	19
Minnesota	74,000	52	N.A.	62	N.A.	56	N.A.	16
Mississippi	35,000	46	N.A.	68	N.A.	76	N.A.	15
Missouri	82,000	54	N.A.	66	N.A.	68	N.A.	10
Montana	15,000	60	N.A.	64	N.A.	64	N.A.	13
Nebraska	29,000	55	N.A.	63	N.A.	63	N.A.	12
Nevada	49,000	62	N.A.	69	N.A.	74	N.A.	16
New Hampshire	12,000	46	N.A.	62	N.A.	62	N.A.	12
New Jersey	74,000	35	N.A.	58	N.A.	56	N.A.	9
New Mexico	27,000	55	N.A.	76	N.A.	79	N.A.	25
New York	190,000	41	N.A.	66	N.A.	66	N.A.	17
North Carolina	140,000	56	N.A.	64	N.A.	63	N.A.	14
North Dakota	14,000	68	N.A.	66	N.A.	63	N.A.	12
Ohio	154,000	54	N.A.	64	N.A.	62	N.A.	18
Oklahoma	59,000	57	N.A.	71	N.A.	74	N.A.	15
Oregon	52,000	54	N.A.	66	N.A.	69	N.A.	20
Pennsylvania	154,000	53	N.A.	60	N.A.	61	N.A.	14
Puerto Rico	23,000	39	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	99	N.A.	23
Rhode Island	13,000	55	N.A.	65	N.A.	71	N.A.	16
South Carolina	65,000	55	N.A.	68	N.A.	71	N.A.	19
South Dakota	14,000	58	N.A.	64	N.A.	61	N.A.	16
Tennessee	100,000	60	N.A.	65	N.A.	69	N.A.	10
Texas	474,000	57	N.A.	70	N.A.	70	N.A.	10
Utah	58,000	56	N.A.	60	N.A.	63	N.A.	13
Vermont	4,000	36	N.A.	63	N.A.	62	N.A.	16
Virginia	104,000	51	N.A.	62	N.A.	62	N.A.	13
Washington	103,000	54	N.A.	65	N.A.	60	N.A.	19
West Virginia	26,000	66	N.A.	70	N.A.	76	N.A.	9
Wisconsin	78,000	57	N.A.	64	N.A.	59	N.A.	10
Wyoming	9,000	59	N.A.	59	N.A.	63	N.A.	18

N.A.: Not available

Health Indicators

STATE	LOW BIRTH-WEIGHT BABIES (2019)		CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE (2019)		CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS PER 100,000 (2019)		CHILDREN AND TEENS (AGES 10 TO 17) WHO ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE (2018-19)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Rate	Number	Percent
United States	311,245	8.3	4,375,000	6	19,431	25	N.A.	31
Alabama	6,136	10.5	40,000	3	474	41	N.A.	34
Alaska	619	6.3	18,000	9	99	53	N.A.	29
Arizona	5,835	7.4	161,000	9	524	30	N.A.	25
Arkansas	3,380	9.2	43,000	6	259	35	N.A.	34
California	31,699	7.1	334,000	4	1,732	18	N.A.	31
Colorado	5,911	9.4	73,000	5	357	27	N.A.	25
Connecticut	2,657	7.8	27,000	3	128	16	N.A.	29
Delaware	995	9.4	10,000	5	63	29	N.A.	31
District of Columbia	896	9.9	3,000	2	50	36	N.A.	28
Florida	19,231	8.7	343,000	8	1,123	25	N.A.	30
Georgia	12,655	10.0	197,000	7	767	29	N.A.	31
Hawaii	1,410	8.4	9,000	3	75	24	N.A.	23
Idaho	1,519	6.9	24,000	5	138	29	N.A.	29
Illinois	11,779	8.4	120,000	4	696	23	N.A.	29
Indiana	6,607	8.2	119,000	7	494	29	N.A.	37
Iowa	2,543	6.8	22,000	3	186	24	N.A.	34
Kansas	2,685	7.6	43,000	6	211	28	N.A.	29
Kentucky	4,642	8.7	45,000	4	309	29	N.A.	37
Louisiana	6,348	10.8	50,000	4	414	36	N.A.	35
Maine	867	7.4	15,000	6	59	22	N.A.	25
Maryland	6,111	8.7	48,000	3	334	24	N.A.	34
Massachusetts	5,257	7.6	22,000	2	216	15	N.A.	24
Michigan	9,414	8.7	78,000	3	572	25	N.A.	30
Minnesota	4,537	6.9	42,000	3	302	22	N.A.	22
Mississippi	4,510	12.3	46,000	6	321	43	N.A.	38
Missouri	6,356	8.8	95,000	7	470	32	N.A.	35
Montana	804	7.3	15,000	6	90	37	N.A.	23
Nebraska	1,872	7.6	28,000	6	124	25	N.A.	26
Nevada	3,077	8.8	58,000	8	174	24	N.A.	32
New Hampshire	756	6.4	10,000	4	52	19	N.A.	27
New Jersey	7,812	7.9	88,000	4	352	17	N.A.	32
New Mexico	2,126	9.3	29,000	6	181	36	N.A.	32
New York	17,821	8.1	101,000	2	749	17	N.A.	30
North Carolina	11,047	9.3	142,000	6	680	27	N.A.	31
North Dakota	708	6.8	15,000	8	53	28	N.A.	28
Ohio	11,533	8.6	131,000	5	730	27	N.A.	34
Oklahoma	4,045	8.2	86,000	9	329	33	N.A.	35
Oregon	2,801	6.7	38,000	4	186	20	N.A.	29
Pennsylvania	11,255	8.4	128,000	5	646	23	N.A.	28
Puerto Rico	2,054	10.1	24,000	4	125	20	N.A.	N.A.
Rhode Island	796	7.8	4,000	2	34	15	N.A.	33
South Carolina	5,610	9.8	69,000	6	391	33	N.A.	36
South Dakota	802	7.0	18,000	8	87	38	N.A.	29
Tennessee	7,356	9.2	80,000	5	513	32	N.A.	36
Texas	31,802	8.4	995,000	13	2,088	27	N.A.	34
Utah	3,481	7.4	82,000	8	258	26	N.A.	23
Vermont	351	6.6	3,000	2	28	22	N.A.	29
Virginia	8,132	8.4	97,000	5	448	23	N.A.	31
Washington	5,456	6.4	54,000	3	364	21	N.A.	30
West Virginia	1,772	9.8	13,000	4	120	31	N.A.	40
Wisconsin	4,788	7.6	51,000	4	330	24	N.A.	31
Wyoming	643	9.8	15,000	11	51	36	N.A.	26

N.A.: Not available

Family and Community Indicators

STATE	CHILDREN IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES (2019)		CHILDREN IN FAMILIES WHERE THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD LACKS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA (2019)		CHILDREN LIVING IN HIGH-POVERTY AREAS (2015–19)		TEEN BIRTHS PER 1,000 (2019)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Rate
United States	23,756,000	34	8,907,000	12	6,712,000	9	171,674	17
Alabama	396,000	40	123,000	11	130,000	12	3,955	26
Alaska	51,000	30	14,000	8	14,000	8	393	18
Arizona	574,000	37	254,000	15	239,000	15	4,318	18
Arkansas	239,000	37	76,000	11	67,000	10	2,882	30
California	2,776,000	33	1,740,000	20	771,000	9	15,356	12
Colorado	321,000	27	131,000	10	30,000	2	2,471	14
Connecticut	230,000	33	57,000	8	53,000	7	902	8
Delaware	73,000	38	28,000	14	11,000	5	444	15
District of Columbia	63,000	53	12,000	10	26,000	21	323	17
Florida	1,567,000	39	440,000	10	352,000	8	9,541	16
Georgia	894,000	38	316,000	13	236,000	9	7,090	20
Hawaii	88,000	32	18,000	6	15,000	5	584	16
Idaho	106,000	25	39,000	9	14,000	3	917	15
Illinois	920,000	34	292,000	10	217,000	7	5,883	15
Indiana	506,000	35	174,000	11	127,000	8	4,641	21
Iowa	205,000	30	53,000	7	20,000	3	1,460	14
Kansas	200,000	30	67,000	10	37,000	5	1,857	19
Kentucky	325,000	36	113,000	11	146,000	15	3,464	25
Louisiana	469,000	47	135,000	12	208,000	19	4,007	28
Maine	77,000	33	10,000	4	8,000	3	339	9
Maryland	444,000	35	134,000	10	53,000	4	2,603	14
Massachusetts	412,000	32	109,000	8	70,000	5	1,538	7
Michigan	708,000	35	175,000	8	295,000	14	4,758	15
Minnesota	357,000	29	97,000	7	53,000	4	1,791	10
Mississippi	294,000	46	84,000	12	159,000	22	2,869	29
Missouri	430,000	34	118,000	9	109,000	8	3,851	20
Montana	66,000	32	10,000	4	14,000	6	502	16
Nebraska	120,000	27	44,000	9	20,000	4	993	15
Nevada	255,000	39	121,000	18	52,000	8	1,668	19
New Hampshire	68,000	28	10,000	4	1,000	<.5	275	7
New Jersey	564,000	30	178,000	9	145,000	7	2,697	10
New Mexico	195,000	44	69,000	14	96,000	20	1,659	24
New York	1,317,000	35	507,000	13	600,000	15	6,606	11
North Carolina	808,000	37	282,000	12	189,000	8	6,168	18
North Dakota	48,000	28	8,000	5	8,000	5	355	16
Ohio	889,000	37	238,000	9	303,000	12	6,926	19
Oklahoma	310,000	35	116,000	12	95,000	10	3,520	27
Oregon	247,000	30	93,000	11	34,000	4	1,451	12
Pennsylvania	879,000	35	247,000	9	275,000	10	5,264	13
Puerto Rico	348,000	63	70,000	12	536,000	83	1,882	19
Rhode Island	74,000	38	18,000	9	25,000	12	359	10
South Carolina	405,000	39	119,000	11	101,000	9	3,425	22
South Dakota	57,000	29	15,000	7	21,000	10	536	19
Tennessee	516,000	37	169,000	11	146,000	10	4,918	24
Texas	2,474,000	35	1,312,000	18	861,000	12	24,109	24
Utah	168,000	19	55,000	6	17,000	2	1,498	12
Vermont	36,000	33	5,000	4	4,000	3	152	8
Virginia	553,000	32	165,000	9	75,000	4	3,625	14
Washington	466,000	29	174,000	10	42,000	3	2,788	13
West Virginia	114,000	35	33,000	9	39,000	11	1,287	25
Wisconsin	373,000	31	102,000	8	87,000	7	2,318	13
Wyoming	32,000	25	8,000	6	1,000	1	338	19

ABOUT THE INDEX

The KIDS COUNT index reflects child health and education outcomes as well as risk and protective factors, such as economic well-being, family structure and community context. The index incorporates a developmental perspective on childhood and includes experiences across life stages, from birth through early adulthood. The indicators are consistently and regularly measured, which allows for legitimate comparisons across states and over time.

Organizing the index into domains provides a more nuanced assessment of child well-being in each state that can inform policy solutions by helping policymakers and advocates better identify areas of strength and weakness. For example, a state may rank well above average in overall child well-being, while showing the need for improvement in one or more domains. Domain-specific data can strengthen decision-making efforts by providing multiple data points relevant to specific policy areas.

The 16 indicators of child well-being are derived from federal government statistical agencies and reflect the best available state and national data for tracking yearly changes. Many of the indicators are based on samples, and, like all sample data, they contain some random error. Other measures (such as the child and teen death rate) are based on relatively small numbers of events in some states and may exhibit some random fluctuation from year to year.

The Foundation urges readers to focus on relatively large differences across states, as small differences may simply reflect small fluctuations, rather than real changes in the well-being of children. Assessing trends by looking at changes over a longer period of time is more reliable. State data for past years are available on the KIDS COUNT Data Center (datacenter.kidscount.org).

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* uses rates and percentages because that is the best way to compare states and to assess changes over time within a state. However, the focus on rates and percentages may mask the magnitude of some of the problems examined in this report. Therefore, data on the actual number of children or events are provided on pages 33–36 and on the KIDS COUNT Data Center.

The Foundation includes data for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico in the appendices, but not in the state rankings because they are significantly different from any state, and comparisons are not instructive. It is more useful to look at changes for these geographies over time or to compare the District of Columbia with other large cities. Data for many child well-being indicators for the 50 largest cities (including the District of Columbia) are available on the KIDS COUNT Data Center, which also contains statistics for children and families in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

DEFINITIONS AND DATA SOURCES

DOMAIN RANK for each state was determined in the following manner. First, the Foundation converted the state numerical values for the most recent year for each of the four key indicators within every domain into standard scores. It summed those standard scores in each domain to get a total standard score for each state. Finally, Casey ranked the states based on their total standard score by domain in sequential order from highest/best (1) to lowest/worst (50). Standard scores were derived by subtracting the mean score from the observed score and dividing the amount by the standard deviation for that distribution of scores. All measures were given the same weight in calculating the domain standard score.

OVERALL RANK for each state was calculated in the following manner. First, Casey converted the state numerical values for the most recent year for all 16 key indicators into standard scores. It summed those standard scores within their domains to create a domain standard score for each state. The Foundation then summed the four domain standard scores to get a total standard score for every state. Finally, it ranked the states based on their total standard score in sequential order from highest/best (1) to lowest/worst (50). Standard scores were derived by subtracting the mean score from the observed score and dividing the amount by the standard deviation for that distribution of scores. All measures were given the same weight in calculating the total standard score.

PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER TIME ANALYSIS was computed by comparing the most recent year's data for the 16 key indicators with the data for the base year. To calculate percentage change, the Foundation subtracted the rate for the most recent year from the rate for the base year and then divided that quantity by the rate for the base year. The results are multiplied by 100 for readability. The percentage change was calculated on rounded data, and the percentage-change figure has been rounded to the nearest whole number.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING INDICATORS

CHILDREN IN POVERTY is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in families with incomes below 100% of the U.S. poverty threshold, as defined each year by the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2019, a family of two adults and two children lived in poverty if their annual income fell below \$25,926. Poverty status is not determined for people living in group quarters (such as military barracks, prisons and other institutional quarters) or for unrelated individuals under age 15 (such as children in foster care). The data are based on income received in the 12 months prior to the survey.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK SECURE EMPLOYMENT

is the share of all children under age 18 living in families where no parent has regular, full-time, year-round employment. For children living in single-parent families, this means the resident parent did not work at least 35 hours per week for at least 50 weeks in the 12 months prior to the survey. For children living in married-couple families, this means neither parent worked at least 35 hours per week for at least 50 weeks in the 12 months before the survey. Children living with neither parent are also listed as not having secure parental employment because they are likely to be economically vulnerable.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

CHILDREN LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH A HIGH HOUSING COST BURDEN is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in households where more than 30% of monthly household pretax income is spent on housing-related expenses, including rent, mortgage payments, taxes and insurance.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

TEENS NOT IN SCHOOL AND NOT WORKING is the percentage of teenagers between ages 16 and 19 who are not enrolled in school (full or part time) and not employed (full or part time).

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

EDUCATION INDICATORS

YOUNG CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL is the percentage of children ages 3 and 4 who were not enrolled in school (e.g., nursery school, preschool or kindergarten) during the previous three months. Due to small sample size, these data are based on a pooled three-year average of one-year American Community Survey responses to increase the accuracy of the estimates.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

FOURTH-GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT

IN READING is the percentage of fourth-grade public school students who did not reach the proficient level in reading as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. For this indicator, public schools include charter schools and exclude Bureau of Indian Education and Department of Defense Education Activity schools.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress.

EIGHTH-GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT

IN MATH is the percentage of eighth-grade public school students who did not reach the proficient level in math as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. For this indicator, public schools include charter schools and exclude Bureau of Indian Education and Department of Defense Education Activity schools.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING

ON TIME is the percentage of an entering freshman class not graduating in four years. The measure is derived from the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR). The four-year ACGR is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class. Students entering ninth grade for the first time form a cohort that is adjusted by adding any students who subsequently transfer into the cohort and subtracting any students who subsequently transfer out.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data.

HEALTH INDICATORS

LOW BIRTH-WEIGHT BABIES is the percentage of live births weighing less than 5.5 pounds (2,500 grams). The data reflect the mother's place of residence, not the place where the birth occurred.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics.

CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE is the percentage of children under age 19 not covered by any health insurance. The data are based on health insurance coverage at the time of the survey; interviews are conducted throughout the calendar year.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS PER 100,000 is the number of deaths, from all causes, to children between ages 1 and 19 per 100,000 children in this age range. The data are reported by the place of residence, not the place where the death occurred.

SOURCES: Death Statistics: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics. Population Statistics: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates.

CHILDREN AND TEENS WHO ARE OVERWEIGHT

OR OBESE is the percentage of children and teens ages 10 to 17 with a Body Mass Index (BMI)-for-age at or above the 85th percentile. These data are based on a two-year average of survey responses.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, National Survey of Children's Health.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INDICATORS

CHILDREN IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES is the percentage of children under age 18 who live with their own unmarried parents. Children not living with a parent are excluded. In this definition, single-parent families include cohabiting couples. Children living with married stepparents are not considered to be in a single-parent family.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.



CHILDREN IN FAMILIES WHERE THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD LACKS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA is the percentage of children under age 18 living in households where the household head does not have a high school diploma or equivalent.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

CHILDREN LIVING IN HIGH-POVERTY AREAS is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in census tracts where the poverty rates of the total population are 30% or more. In 2019, a family of two adults and two children lived in poverty if their annual income fell below \$25,926. The data are based on income received in the 12 months

prior to the survey. The census tract data used in this analysis are only available in the five-year American Community Survey.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

TEEN BIRTHS PER 1,000 is the number of births to teenagers between ages 15 and 19 per 1,000 females in this age group. Data reflect the mother's place of residence, rather than the place of the birth.

SOURCES: *Birth Statistics*: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics. *Population Statistics*: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates.

HOUSEHOLD PULSE SURVEY INDICATORS

SOMETIMES OR OFTEN DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH

TO EAT is the percentage of households with children who reported that their household sometimes or often did not have enough food to eat in the past week. Only respondents who provided a valid response are included.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey.

SLIGHT OR NO CONFIDENCE IN PAYING RENT

OR MORTGAGE ON TIME is the percentage of households with children who reported that they have slight or no confidence in paying the next rent or mortgage payment on time. Only respondents who provided a valid response are included.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey.

CURRENTLY DO NOT HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE is the percentage of adults living in households with children who reported that they are uninsured. Adults were classified as uninsured if they did not report any private health insurance coverage or public health plan coverage at the time of the interview. Adults were also classified as uninsured if they had only Indian Health Service coverage. Only respondents who provided a valid response are included.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey.

FELT DOWN, DEPRESSED OR HOPELESS is the percentage of adults living in households with children who reported that they felt down, depressed or hopeless for more than half of the days or nearly every day for the past week. Only respondents who provided a valid response are included.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey.

INTERNET AND COMPUTER NOT AVAILABLE FOR

EDUCATION is the percentage of households with at least one child attending public, private or home school for kindergarten through 12th grade who reported that internet and a computer or digital device are not usually or always available to children for educational purposes. Only respondents who provided a valid response are included.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey.

REDUCED OR CANCELED PLANS FOR POST-

SECONDARY CLASSES is the percentage of households where at least one household member planned to take classes from a college, university, community college, trade school or other occupational school this fall and who took fewer classes or canceled their plans. Only respondents who provided a valid response are included.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey.

STATE KIDS COUNT ORGANIZATIONS

ALABAMA

VOICES for Alabama's Children
www.alavoces.org
334.213.2410

ALASKA

Alaska Children's Trust
www.alaskachildrenstrust.org
907.248.7676

ARIZONA

Children's Action Alliance
www.azchildren.org
602.266.0707

ARKANSAS

Arkansas Advocates for Children
& Families
www.aradvocates.org
501.371.9678

CALIFORNIA

Children Now
www.childrennow.org
510.763.2444

COLORADO

Colorado Children's Campaign
www.coloradokids.org
303.839.1580

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut Association for
Human Services
www.cahts.org
860.951.2212 ext. 246

DELAWARE

University of Delaware
www.dekidscount.org
302.831.3462

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DC Action for Children
www.dcactionforchildren.org
202.234.9404

FLORIDA

Florida KIDS COUNT
University of South Florida
www.floridakidscount.org
813.974.7411

GEORGIA

Georgia Family Connection
Partnership
www.gafcp.org
404.507.0488

HAWAII

Center on the Family
University of Hawaii
www.uhfamily.hawaii.edu
808.956.3760

IDAHO

Idaho Voices for Children
Jannus, Inc.
www.idahovoces.org
208.947.4259

ILLINOIS

Voices for Illinois Children
www.voices4kids.org
312.456.0600

INDIANA

The Indiana Youth Institute
www.iyi.org
317.396.2700

IOWA

Common Good Iowa
www.commongoodiowa.org
515.280.9027

KANSAS

Kansas Action for Children
www.kac.org
785.232.0550

KENTUCKY

Kentucky Youth Advocates
www.kyyouth.org
502.895.8167

LOUISIANA

Agenda for Children
www.agendaforchildren.org
504.586.8509

MAINE

Maine Children's Alliance
www.mekids.org
207.623.1868

MARYLAND

Advocates for Children and Youth
www.acy.org
410.547.9200

MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts Budget
and Policy Center
www.massbudget.org
617.426.1228

MICHIGAN

Michigan League for Public Policy
www.mlpp.org
517.487.5436

MINNESOTA

Children's Defense
Fund — Minnesota
www.cdf-mn.org
651.227.6121

MISSISSIPPI

Children's Foundation of Mississippi
www.childrensfoundationms.org
662.648.9371

MISSOURI

Family and Community Trust
www.mokidscount.org
573.636.3228

MONTANA

Montana Budget & Policy Center
www.montanakidscount.org
406.422.5848

NEBRASKA

Voices for Children in Nebraska
www.voicesforchildren.com
402.597.3100

NEVADA

Children's Advocacy Alliance
www.caanv.org
702.228.1869

NEW HAMPSHIRE

New Futures KIDS COUNT
www.new-futures.org
603.225.9540

NEW JERSEY

Advocates for Children of
New Jersey
www.acnj.org
973.643.3876

NEW MEXICO

New Mexico Voices
for Children
www.nmvoices.org
505.244.9505

NEW YORK

New York State Council on Children
and Families
www.ccf.ny.gov
518.473.3652

NORTH CAROLINA

NC Child
www.ncchild.org
919.834.6623

NORTH DAKOTA

Montana Budget & Policy Center
www.ndkidscount.org
406.422.5848

OHIO

Children's Defense
Fund — Ohio
www.cdfohio.org
614.221.2244

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma Policy
Institute
www.okpolicy.org
918.794.3944

OREGON

Our Children Oregon
www.ourchildrenoregon.org
503.236.9754

PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania
Partnerships for Children
www.papartnerships.org
717.236.5680

PUERTO RICO

Youth Development Institute
(Instituto del Desarrollo
de la Juventud)
http://juventudpr.org/index.html
787.728.3939

RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
www.rikidscount.org
401.351.9400

SOUTH CAROLINA

Children's Trust of
South Carolina
www.scchildren.org
803.733.5430

SOUTH DAKOTA

Montana Budget & Policy Center
www.sdkidscount.org
406.422.5848

TENNESSEE

Tennessee Commission
on Children and Youth
www.tn.gov/tccy
615.741.2633

TEXAS

Every Texan
everytexan.org
512.823.2871

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

St. Croix Foundation for Community
Development
www.stxfoundation.org
340.773.9898

UTAH

Voices for Utah Children
www.utahchildren.org
801.364.1182

VERMONT

Voices for Vermont's Children
www.voicesforvtkids.org
802.229.6377

VIRGINIA

Voices for Virginia's Children
www.vakids.org
804.649.0184

WASHINGTON

KIDS COUNT in Washington
www.kidscountwa.org
206.324.0340

WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia KIDS COUNT
www.wvkidscount.org
304.345.2101

WISCONSIN

Kids Forward
www.kidsforward.org
608.284.0580

WYOMING

Wyoming Community Foundation
www.wycf.org/kids-count-data-books
307.721.8300

ABOUT THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private philanthropy that creates a brighter future for the nation's children and 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.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT® is a national and state effort to track the status of children in the United States. By providing policymakers and advocates with benchmarks of child well-being, KIDS COUNT seeks to enrich local, state and national discussions concerning ways to build a better future for all children.

Nationally, KIDS COUNT produces publications on key areas of well-being, including the annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book* and periodic reports on critical child and family policy issues.

The Foundation's KIDS COUNT Data Center (datacenter.kidscount.org) provides the best available data on child well-being in the United States. Additionally, the Foundation funds the KIDS COUNT Network — which counts members from every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands — to provide a more detailed, local picture of how children are faring.



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