

KIDS COUNT 2008

A SUMMARY OF THE SECA STATES

USING DATA FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Each year, the Annie E. Casey Foundation sponsors the compilation of data from throughout the United States. This is longitudinal data that reveals how the lives of children and families have progressed over a period of time. The South has lagged behind the rest of the country for many years in these indicators and, unfortunately, with the report for 2008, it appears that much of the progress made over the last two decades is either at a standstill, or we are moving backward in improving the health and well-being of children. A state's overall rank is determined by the sum of the state's standing on each of 10 measures of the condition of children. States in the South and Southwest dominate the lower part of the ranking.

For ideas on how to use the data contained in this summary, go to page 5.

Multi-Year State Trend Data for Overall National Rankings

STATE	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ALABAMA	48	48	48	48	43	48	43	48	47
ARKANSAS	46	46	45	44	45	45	45	45	45
FLORIDA	35	33	35	35	33	32	33	32	35
GEORGIA	44	42	44	39	44	41	44	41	40
KENTUCKY	37	36	39	42	42	40	42	40	41
LOUISIANA	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
MISSISSIPPI	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
NORTH CAROLINA	43	45	41	40	41	39	41	39	38
OKLAHOMA	41	40	40	38	40	42	40	42	43
SOUTH CAROLINA	47	44	46	45	47	46	47	46	46
TENNESSEE	42	47	42	43	46	43	46	43	42
TEXAS	36	35	37	37	39	37	39	37	37
VIRGINIA	19	16	16	13	19	14	19	14	15
WEST VIRGINIA	38	41	38	47	38	44	38	44	44

Source: Kids Count 2008, www.aecf.org

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Child Health

Indicator	AL	AR	FL	GA	KY	LA	MS	NC	OK	SC	TN	TX	VA	WV	USA
Children w/o health insurance 2005	6%	9%	17%	12%	8%	10%	14%	12%	13%	10%	8%	20%	9%	8%	11%
Percent of children with special health care needs 2005-2006	17%	18%	13%	14%	18%	15%	15%	15%	17%	15%	16%	13%	16%	18%	14%

Source: Kids Count 2008, www.aecf.org

Economic Condition of Families

National median income of families with children was \$54,500 in 2006

National percentage of children in extreme poverty was 8% in 2006

State	Median income of families w/children 2006	Median income of families w/children 2005	Children in extreme poverty (below 50% of poverty level) 2005	Children in extreme poverty (below 50% of poverty level) 2006
AL	\$45,500	\$42,000	12%	11%
AR	\$41,700	\$41,000	12%	11%
FL	\$50,800	\$48,000	8%	7%
GA	\$51,100	\$51,000	8%	9%
KY	\$47,100	\$44,000	7%	10%
LA	\$43,100	\$42,000	13%	13%
MS	\$36,500	\$37,000	11%	14%
NC	\$47,500	\$46,000	7%	9%
OK	\$42,700	\$42,000	8%	10%
SC	\$45,900	\$45,000	11%	10%
TN	\$44,800	\$46,000	10%	11%
TX	\$45,500	\$45,000	8%	10%
VA	\$63,800	\$63,000	5%	6%
WV	\$41,700	\$41,000	9%	12%

Source: Kids Count 2008, www.aecf.org

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10 Key Indicators of Child Well-Being

Indicator	AL	AR	FL	GA	KY	LA	MS	NC	OK	SC	TN	TX	VA	WV	USA
#1	10.7%	8.9%	8.7%	9.5%	9.1%	11.5%	11.8%	9.2%	8.0%	10.2%	9.5%	8.3%	8.2%	9.6%	8.2%
#2	9.4	7.9	7.2	8.2	6.6	10.1	11.3	8.8	8.1	9.4	8.9	6.6	7.5	8.1	6.9
#3	26	29	22	22	25	34	33	21	28	25	24	21	19	26	20
#4	88	94	75	71	83	103	101	70	90	84	79	66	57	87	65
#5	50	59	42	53	49	49	61	48	54	51	55	62	34	43	40
#6	9%	6%	8%	9%	9%	11%	10%	7%	8%	8%	6%	7%	5%	8%	7%
#7	11%	9%	9%	9%	10%	12%	12%	8%	9%	10%	9%	9%	6%	10%	8%
#8	36%	36%	32%	34%	37%	43%	42%	34%	36%	36%	36%	34%	27%	39%	33%
#9	23%	24%	17%	20%	23%	28%	30%	20%	24%	22%	23%	24%	12%	25%	18%
#10	37%	35%	35%	36%	33%	41%	45%	35%	34%	40%	35%	33%	29%	31%	32%

Source: Kids Count 2008, www.aecf.org

INDICATORS

- #1 Percentage of low birth weight babies (2005)
- #2 Infant mortality rate, per 1000 live births (2005)
- #3 Child death rate, deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-14 (2005)
- #4 Rate of teen deaths by accident, homicide and suicide, deaths per 100,000 teens ages 15-19 (2005)
- #5 Teen birth rate, births per 100,000 females ages 15-17 (2005)
- #6 Percent of teens who are high school dropouts (2006)
- #7 Percent of teens not attending school and not working, ages 16-19 (2006)
- #8 Percent of children living in families where no parent has full-time, year round employment (2006)
- #9 Percent of children in poverty (2006)
- #10 Percent of families with children headed by a single parent (2006)

To determine how these statistics have improved or worsened over time, go to www.aecf.org and look up your state profile. It contains comparative data from 2000 and 2006.

Demographic Data: Number of Children Under Age 18: 2006

State	All Children 2006	Children 10-17 Years	Children in Immigrant Families
Alabama	1,114,301	512,625	5%
Arkansas	691,186	311,586	8%
Florida	4,021,555	1,838,249	30%
Georgia	2,455,020	1,088,229	16%
Kentucky	999,531	454,121	4%
Louisiana	1,090,001	494,747	4%
Mississippi	759,405	345,660	3%
North Carolina	2,155,387	959,414	13%
Oklahoma	894,034	398,005	10%
South Carolina	1,039,653	478,131	7%
Tennessee	1,442,593	655,800	7%
Texas	6,493,965	2,809,658	31%
Virginia	1,806,847	816,204	17%
West Virginia	389,071	181,170	2%
USA	73,735,562	33,608,039	22%

Source: Kids Count 2008, www.aecf.org

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State KIDS COUNT Contacts

State	Organization	Contact Person	Phone Number	E-mail
<i>Alabama</i>	VOICES for Alabama's Children	Linda Tilly <i>Ex Director</i>	334-213-2410 Ext 106	ltilly@alavoices.org
<i>Arkansas</i>	Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families	Richard Huddleston <i>Ex Director</i>	501-371-9678 Ext 114	rhuddleston@aradvocates.org
<i>Florida</i>	Center for the Study of Children's Futures	Susan Weitzel <i>Director</i>	813-974-7411	weitzel@fmhi.usf.edu
<i>Georgia</i>	Georgia Family Connection Partnership Inc.	Taifa Butler <i>Director, Public Affairs and Policy</i>	404-527-7394 Ext 136	taifa@gafcp.org
<i>Kentucky</i>	Kentucky Youth Advocates, Inc.	Tara Grieshop-Goodwin <i>KIDS COUNT Coordinator</i>	502-895-8167 Ext 118	tgrieshop@kyyouth.org
<i>Louisiana</i>	Agenda for Children	Teresa Falgoust <i>KIDS COUNT Coordinator</i>	504-586-8509 Ext 117	TFalgoust@agendaforchildren.org
<i>Mississippi</i>	Family and Children Research Unit	Linda Southward <i>MS KIDS COUNT Director</i>	662-325-0851	Linda.Southward@ssrc.msstate.edu
<i>North Carolina</i>	Action for Children North Carolina	Alexandra Sirota <i>KIDS COUNT Project Director</i>	919-834-6623 Ext 225	Alexandra@ncchild.org
<i>Oklahoma</i>	Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy	Anne Roberts <i>Ex Director</i>	405-236-5437 Ext 101	aroberts@oica.org
<i>South Carolina</i>	South Carolina Budget & Control Board	Baron Holmes <i>KIDS COUNT Project Director</i>	803-734-2291	Baron.holmes@ors.sc.gov
<i>Tennessee</i>	Tennessee Commission on Children & Youth	Pam Brown <i>KIDS COUNT Project Director</i>	615-532-1571	Pam.k.brown@state.tn.us
<i>Texas</i>	Center for Public Policy Priorities	Frances Deviney <i>KIDS COUNT Director</i>	512-320-0222 Ext 106	deviney@cphp.org
<i>Virginia</i>	Voices for Virginia's Children	John Morgan <i>Ex Director</i>	804-649-0184 Ext 26	john@vakids.org
<i>West Virginia</i>	West Virginia KIDS COUNT Fund	Margie Hale <i>Ex Director</i>	304-345-2101	margiehale@wvkidscountfund.org

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Some Ideas on How to Use KIDS COUNT Data

- A. **Develop a timeline over a multi-year period about how your state is doing on the 10 well-child indicators that are tracked by KIDS COUNT.** Have you done better or worse? If you're in a Southern state, you'll find that we're either standing still or doing worse over the last few years. This gives you an argument for:
- Enhanced financial resources to expand the scope of a program
 - Additional staffing to be able to serve more children and families
 - An increased focus on a certain problem, such as uninsured children. This type of argument helped to expand the scope of the SCHIP program at the federal level and means that more children will be eligible for health benefits in your state program.
- B. **Use the data to develop your organization's legislative agenda.** Can you determine from the trends indicated in the KIDS COUNT data that there is an area on which efforts should be focused? For example, is the number of children in immigrant families in your state increasing? (That's the case across most of the South.)
- Is your state prepared to work with these children?
 - Does your state have the people & money resources in place to support these families?
 - Do your state program outreach systems take into account language barriers and have the resources to meet them?
 - Are your employment services geared to assisting immigrant families to assimilate into local communities?
 - Will this increasing number place a strain on Social Service systems?
 - How can the early childhood community assist in this effort? What should your role be? What type of legislative agenda should the early childhood community put forth in relation to immigrant children and families?
- C. **Develop a one-page fact sheet about how your state is doing.** This fact sheet can be used with local, state and federal legislators as you advocate for better programs for children. You might send it to the local paper from your affiliate or organization and include information about what you are doing to resolve some of these problems in your community....a very effective advocacy technique.
- D. **Contact your state KIDS COUNT coordinator to determine if they can provide local/community data on these issues.** Having local data is particularly effective if you are advocating for programs at the local level.
- E. **Use the KIDS COUNT data to compare your state's efforts with those of surrounding states.** Legislators are particularly interested in how his/her state is doing in comparison with the neighbors. If you're doing better than a neighbor, let your legislators know that and commend them for the progress that's been made. That will give you a great starting point to talk about how your state can do even better!

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