



## COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN

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### **Continued Increase in Number of Children Living in Poverty Tempers Improvements in Child Health and Education**

*Colorado is 22<sup>nd</sup> among states for overall child well-being*

DENVER— Colorado has seen little improvement in overall child well-being compared to other states, despite progress in health and education, according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2014 *KIDS COUNT® Data Book*. The state ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> among states for overall child well-being, down one spot from last year.

The annual, nation-wide examination of the status of children found that the economic security of Colorado families continues to temper positive trends in areas like teen birth and graduation rates. Several years of increasing childhood poverty are limiting the potential of Colorado's children, families, and economy, according to the Colorado Children's Campaign.

Colorado saw improvements in several measures of education and health considered in the ranking system. However, the state's overall ranking dropped to 22 from 21 as Colorado saw increasing rates of children living in poverty and areas of concentrated poverty.

"Major changes in our education and health systems in recent years are having a direct, positive impact on the well-being of Colorado kids," said Chris Watney, President and CEO of the Colorado Children's Campaign. "However, our ranking among all states in child well-being is weighted down by consistent growth in childhood poverty. Imagine the progress our state could make in providing every chance for every child if we all focused on improving the economic security of Colorado families."

Although Colorado's lowest ranking came in the child health domain (39<sup>th</sup>), the state has seen significant improvements in the percent of children without health insurance, the percent of teens abusing alcohol or drugs and the number of deaths among children and teens. Only two years ago, Colorado ranked 45<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states for child health.

In education, Colorado dropped out of the top 10 states after falling to 11<sup>th</sup>. The state showed small improvements on most education indicators but was improving more slowly than other states. Colorado also saw a slight dip in the percent of eighth graders who are proficient in math.

"We'd love to see the small steps Colorado has made in ensuring more children have access to health and quality education turn into leaps and bounds," Watney said. "It's time to remove barriers that have been limiting the potential of Colorado children."

Colorado's 2014 rankings among all states:

- Overall: 22<sup>nd</sup> (down from 21<sup>st</sup> in 2013)
- Economic Well-Being: 18<sup>th</sup> (up from 19<sup>th</sup> in 2013)
- Education: 11<sup>th</sup> (down from 9<sup>th</sup> in 2013)
- Health: 39<sup>th</sup> (up from 42<sup>nd</sup> in 2012)
- Family and Community: 21<sup>st</sup> (stayed the same)

The [KIDS COUNT Data Book](#) features the latest data on child well-being for every state, the District of Columbia and the nation. This information is available in the redesigned [KIDS COUNT Data Center](#), which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of measures of child well-being. Data Center users can create rankings, maps and graphs for use in publications and on websites, and view real-time information on mobile devices.

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*The Colorado Children's Campaign is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and advocacy organization focused on improving the quality of and expanding access to child health, K-12 education and early childhood experiences. For more information, please visit [www.coloradokids.org](http://www.coloradokids.org).*