

**UNDER EMBARGO until Tuesday, July 21, 2015, 12:01 a.m. EDT**

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## **1.7 Million More Children Live in Low-Income Working Families Today Than in Midst of Great Recession**

Rising Tide of Economic Recovery Did Not Lift All Boats — It Left Millions Shipwrecked,  
According to New *KIDS COUNT Data Book*

About 1.7 million more children live in low-income families today than during the Great Recession, according to the newly released 2015 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* from the [Annie. E. Casey Foundation](#). The total number of children in low-income families across America is now 18.7 million, or around one out of every four children. Nearly a third of children are living in families where no parent has full-time employment. And even when parents are working full time, wages and benefits are often not sufficient to adequately support a family.

In Oregon, which the report ranks as 29<sup>th</sup> in the nation for overall child well-being, the data shows that families continue to struggle to get by and face narrowing opportunities for success in the future. Despite a slight improvement in child poverty since 2012, child poverty remains more than 20% higher than before the onset of the Great Recession. Moreover, Oregon families face some of the highest housing costs as a percentage of income and more than one-third of children lived in a family in which no parent had full-time, year-round employment. In addition to families' economic hardship, Oregon students were less likely to attend preschool, read proficiently by the fourth grade, or graduate high school on-time than their peers in the majority of other states.

“Without a change in the trajectory of the economic lives of our families and the educational success of our students, Oregon’s prosperity is at risk,” said Tonia Hunt, executive director of Children First for Oregon. “This legislative session we’ve made significant strides in these areas by ensuring a fair shot for all workers and making significant investments in quality preschool for our lowest income students. However, the size of the gap between where we are and where we as a state want to be requires even more concerted efforts and further investments in the coming years.”

Oregon’s lagging rankings in the areas of economic security and education stand in contrast to the progress the state has made in the area of health insurance coverage. Since the expansion of Oregon’s Healthy Kids insurance program in 2009, the state has cut its rate of uninsured children nearly in half – the largest reduction in the country over that time period.

“When Oregon lawmakers act on behalf of kids, we can make significant progress,” said Hunt. “And when voters speak, lawmakers will act. We need to speak loud and clear so that every child has the opportunity to succeed.”

*The 2015 Data Book will be available July 21 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). Additional information is available at <http://databook.kidscount.org>, which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of indicators of child well-being. The Data Center allows users to create rankings, maps and graphs for use in publications and on websites, and to view real-time information on mobile devices.*

*The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation's children 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](http://www.aecf.org). KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.*

*Children First for Oregon, founded in 1991, is a nonpartisan child advocacy organization, committed to improving the lives of Oregon's vulnerable children and families. Its mission is to make long-term, systemic change by advocating for policies and programs that keep children healthy and safe, and strengthen families.*

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