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Indiana ranks 29th in nation for child well-being

KIDS COUNT® Data Book provides comprehensive annual report on child well-being in the United States

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana — Indiana ranks 29th in the nation for child well-being, according to the [2019 KIDS COUNT® Data Book](#) released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. While the *Data Book* identifies many positive gains, more progress must be made to ensure all children thrive.

The report found fewer Hoosier children living in poverty, suggesting that families are benefiting from the economic recovery. The percentage of Indiana children living in poverty has decreased to 18 percent from 22 percent in 2010. Of Indiana's neighboring states, only Illinois has a lower percentage. However, a third of African-American children and a third of American Indian children lived in poverty — and they're three times as likely as white kids to live in poverty.

In school, more Hoosier students are facing challenges graduating on time, according to the national *Data Book*. Sixteen percent of Hoosier high school students did not graduate on time in 2016-17, 2 percent higher than in 2010-11.

A health-related bright spot includes a decline in teen substance abuse. Indiana, along with five other states, shares the lowest rate of teen substance abuse in the nation at 3 percent (18,000 children in Indiana). However, the health data also found a growing challenge: The percent of low birth-weight babies in Indiana increased to 8.3 percent (6,794 babies) from 8 percent in 2010.

Serious racial disparities can be found throughout the national data. Nearly half of African-American children and more than a third of Latino children experienced reduced resources because their parents faced high family housing costs. Additionally, in 2017, one in five African-American, Latino and American Indian children was proficient in reading by fourth grade. The rate was twice as high for white children.

"The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* provides valuable insight into where progress is being made and where we need to focus our efforts," said Tami Silverman, president and CEO of the Indiana

Youth Institute. “While there are positive signs across many indicators, it is clear that we need to do more to ensure Hoosier children, especially our children of color, have bright futures.”

The annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book* from the Annie E. Casey Foundation uses 16 indicators to rank each state across four domains — health, education, economic well-being and family and community — as an assessment of child well-being. Indiana ranks:

- **24th in economic well-being** (ranked 24th in 2018). In addition to a lower poverty rate for children compared to 2010, the report found a 9 percentage-point drop in the number of children living in households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing. More good news: The percentage of children whose parents lack secure employment dropped to 26 percent from 33 percent in 2010.
- **21st in education** (ranked 14th in 2018). Despite a drop in national education ranking, there’s been some good progress in reading proficiency. The percentage of fourth-graders who are proficient in reading increased to 41 percent from 34 percent in 2009. While Indiana’s four neighboring states had slightly different reading proficiency rates in 2010 (ranging from 36 percent to 32 percent), Indiana has seen the biggest improvement in the past decade and currently has the highest rates of fourth-grade reading proficiency of the five states.
- **32nd in family and community** (ranked 32nd in 2018). Indiana’s teen birth rate continues to decrease — now 23 per 1,000 births — but it is still above the national rate of 19 per 1,000 births.
- **26th in health** (ranked 31st in 2018). Six percent of Hoosier children don’t have health insurance, an improvement from 9 percent in 2010. However, that’s still higher than the national average of 5 percent.

The *2019 KIDS COUNT Data Book* is the 30th edition of an annual data study that is based on U.S. Census and other publicly available data, representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Release Information

The *2019 KIDS COUNT® Data Book* will be available June 17 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at www.aecf.org. Additional information is available at www.aecf.org/databook, which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of indicators of child well-being. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about the *Data Book* can use the KIDS COUNT® Data Center at datacenter.kidscount.org.

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About the Indiana Youth Institute

For three decades, the Indiana Youth Institute has supported the youth services field through innovative trainings, critical data, and capacity-building resources, aiming every effort at

increasing the well-being of all children. To learn more about the Indiana Youth Institute, visit www.iyi.org, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

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.