

4th Grade Students Who Scored At or Above Proficient Math Level: 2007 is the percentage of 4th grade public school students who reached either the Proficient or the Advanced level in mathematics, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

4th Grade Students Who Scored At or Above Proficient Reading Level: 2007 is the percentage of 4th grade public school students who reached either the Proficient or the Advanced level in reading, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

8th Grade Students Who Scored At or Above Proficient Math Level: 2007 is the percentage of 8th grade public school students who reached either the Proficient or the Advanced level in mathematics, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

8th Grade Students Who Scored At or Above Proficient Reading Level: 2007 is the percentage of 8th grade public school students who reached either the Proficient or the Advanced level in reading, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Child Death Rate (deaths per 100,000 children ages 1–14): 2005 is the number of deaths to children between ages 1 and 14, from all causes, per 100,000 children in this age range. The data are reported by place of residence, not place of death. SOURCES: **Death Statistics:** U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. **Population Statistics:** U.S. Census Bureau.

Children in Extreme Poverty (income below 50% of poverty level): 2006 is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in families with incomes below 50 percent of the U.S. poverty threshold, as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. The federal poverty definition consists of a series of thresholds based on family size and composition. In calendar year 2006, a family of two adults and two children were below 50 percent of the poverty level if their annual income fell below \$10,222. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Children in Low-Income Families (income below 200% of poverty level): 2006 is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in families with incomes below 200 percent of the U.S. poverty threshold, as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. In calendar year 2006, a family of two adults and two children were considered low income if their annual income fell below \$40,888. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

More complete definitions and more detailed listings of data sources are available on the KIDS COUNT website at www.kidscount.org.

Children in Low-Income Families That Spend More Than 30% of Their Income on Housing:

2006 is the percentage of children under age 18 in low-income families where the family spent more than 30 percent of their gross monthly income on rent, mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, and/or related housing expenses. Low-income families are those with incomes below 200 percent of the U.S. poverty threshold, as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. The federal poverty definition consists of a series of thresholds based on family size and composition. In calendar year 2006, a family of two adults and two children fell in this category if their annual income fell below \$40,888. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Estimated Daily Count of Detained and Committed Youth in Custody:

2006 is the number of youth charged with, or court-adjudicated for, an offense and residing in a public or private facility on February 22, 2006, resulting from contact with the justice system. Their ages can range from age 10 to the upper age of court jurisdiction for that state. Counts reflect state of offense. SOURCE: National Center for Juvenile Justice, special analysis of data from the 2006 Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement.

Infant Mortality Rate (deaths per 1,000 live births):

2005 is the number of deaths occurring to infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births. The data are reported by place of residence, not place of death. SOURCE: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics.

Juvenile Violent Crime Arrest Rate (arrests per 100,000 youth ages 10–17):

2005 is the number of arrests per 100,000 youth ages 10 to 17 for violent offenses, including homicide, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. In some jurisdictions, data were adjusted to account for underreporting. Thus, our figures will not match FBI or state or local law enforcement agency data. Rates reflect state of offense. Illinois and District of Columbia data were suppressed because the reporting coverage estimate was less than 50 percent. SOURCE: National Center for Juvenile Justice, special analysis of data from the FBI *Uniform Crime Reporting Program*.

Median Income of Families With Children:

2006 is the median annual income for families with related children under age 18 living in the household. “Related children” include the householder’s (head of the household) children by birth, marriage, or adoption; as well as other persons under age 18 (such as nieces or nephews) who are related to the householder and living in the household. The median income is the dollar amount that divides the income distribution into two equal groups—half with income above the median, half with income below it. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Number of Children: **2006** are estimates of the total resident population under age 18 and ages 10 to 17 as of July 1, 2006, including Armed Forces personnel stationed in the area and their dependents.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *State Characteristics Population Estimates File*.

Number of Children Without Health Insurance:

2005 is the number of children under age 18 who were not covered by health insurance at any point during the year. The figures shown here are 3-year averages of data from 2004 through 2006. We label these as 2005 estimates because 2005 is the midpoint of the 3-year period. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey.

Overall Rank for each state was obtained in the following manner. First, we converted the 2006 (or 2005, depending on the indicator) state numerical values for each of the 10 key indicators into standard scores. We then summed those standard scores to create a total standard score for each of the 50 states. Finally, we ranked the states on the basis of 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.

Percent Change Over Time Analysis

was computed by comparing the 2006 (or 2005, depending on the indicator) data for each of the 10 key indicators with the data for 2000. To calculate percent change, we subtracted the value for 2000 from the value for 2005/2006 and then divided that quantity by the value for 2000. The results are multiplied by 100 for readability. The percent change was calculated on rounded data, and the “percent change” figure has been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Percent Low-Birthweight Babies: 2005 is the percentage of live births weighing less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds). The data are reported by place of mother's residence, not place of birth. SOURCE: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics.

Percent of Children in Immigrant Families: 2006 is the number of children who are foreign born or who live with at least one foreign-born parent. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Percent of Children in Poverty (income below \$20,444 for a family of two adults and two children in 2006): 2006 is the percentage of children under age 18 who live in families with incomes below 100 percent of the U.S. poverty threshold, as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. The federal poverty definition consists of a series of thresholds based on family size and composition and is updated every year to account for inflation. In calendar year 2006, a family of two adults and two children fell in the "poverty" category if their annual income fell below \$20,444. 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 foster children). The data are based on income received in the 12 months prior to the survey. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Percent of Children in Single-Parent Families: 2006 is the percentage of children under age 18 who live with their own single parent, either in a family or subfamily. In this definition, single-parent families may include cohabiting couples and do not include children living with married stepparents. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Percent of Children Living in Families Where No Parent Has Full-Time, Year-Round Employment: 2006 is the share of all children under age 18 living in families where no parent has regular, full-time employment. For children living in single-parent families, this means that the resident parent did not work at least 35 hours per week, at least 50 weeks in the 12 months prior to the survey. For children living in married-couple families, this means that neither parent worked at least 35 hours per week, at least 50 weeks in the 12 months prior to the survey. Children living with neither parent also were listed as not having secure parental employment because those children are likely to be economically vulnerable. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Percent of Children With Special Health Care Needs: 2005–2006 is defined by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) as the percentage of children under age 18 who are at increased risk of a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Percent of Children Without Health Insurance: 2005 is the percentage of children under age 18 who were not covered by health insurance at any point during the year. The figures shown here are 3-year averages of data from 2004 through 2006. We label these as 2005 estimates because 2005 is the midpoint of the 3-year period. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey.

Percent of Teens Not Attending School and Not Working (ages 16–19): 2006 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). This measure is sometimes referred to as "Idle Teens" or "Disconnected Youth." Inclusion of the group quarters population in the 2006 ACS could have a noticeable impact on the universe population for this age group. Therefore, the 2006 and 2005 ACS estimates might not be fully comparable. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Percent of Teens Who Are High School Dropouts (ages 16–19): 2006 is the percentage of teenagers between ages 16 and 19 who are not enrolled in school and are not high school graduates. Those who have a GED or equivalent are included as high school graduates in this measure. The measure used here is defined as a "status dropout" rate. Inclusion of the group quarters population in the 2006 ACS could have a noticeable impact on the universe population for this age group. Therefore, the 2006 and 2005 ACS estimates might not be fully comparable. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Percent of Youth in Custody for Non-Violent Offenses: 2006 is the percentage of detained or committed youth arrested for non-violent offenses, which are all offenses other than criminal homicide, violent sexual assault, robbery, or aggravated assault. Detained or committed youth are those charged with, or court-adjudicated for, an offense and residing in a public or private facility on February 22, 2006. Their ages can range from age 10 to the upper age of court jurisdiction for that state. Rates reflect state of offense. SOURCE: National Center for Juvenile Justice, special analysis of data from the 2006 Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement.

Race and Hispanic Origin of Youth (ages 10–17): 2006 are estimates of the total resident population ages 10 to 17 as of July 1, 2006, including Armed Forces personnel stationed in the area. The categories provided are mutually exclusive for the largest racial and ethnic groups, as currently measured by the U.S. Census Bureau. In order to provide mutually exclusive groupings, racial categories used here (“White,” “Black/African American,” “American Indian/Alaskan Native,” “Asian and Pacific Islander,” and “More than one race”) do not include anyone who indicated that they were Hispanic or Latino. Those persons who did consider themselves Hispanic or Latino were included in the “Hispanic/Latino” category. For purposes of this report, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Other Pacific Islanders were grouped into one category because of small numbers in some states. SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *State Characteristics Population Estimates File*.

Rate of Detained and Committed Youth in Custody (per 100,000 youth ages 10–15): 2006 is the number of detained and committed youth ages 10 to 15 per 100,000 youth in this age group. Detained or committed youth are those who have been charged with, or court-adjudicated for, an offense and were in residential placement on February 22, 2006. Residential placement includes public and private placement facilities. Rates reflect state of offense. SOURCE: National Center for Juvenile Justice, special analysis of data from the 2006 Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement.

Ratio of Rates of Youth of Color to White Youth in Custody: 2006 is the ratio of the following two rates: (1) the rate of detained and committed youth of color per 100,000 youth and (2) the rate of detained and committed non-Hispanic white youth per 100,000 youth. The **ratio** denotes the proportion of youth of color offenders relative to non-Hispanic white youth offenders. They can be as young as age 10 and as old as the upper age of court jurisdiction for that state. Detained or committed youth are those who have been charged with, or court-adjudicated for, an offense and were in residential placement on February 22, 2006. Residential placement includes public and private placement facilities. Youth of color include black, Hispanic, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other race. Rates reflect state of offense. SOURCE: Annie E. Casey Foundation, analysis of the National Center for Juvenile Justice’s special analysis of data from the 2006 Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement.

Teen Birth Rate (births per 1,000 females ages 15–19): 2005 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:** U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. **Population Statistics:** U.S. Census Bureau.

Teen Death Rate (deaths per 100,000 teens ages 15–19): 2005 is the number of deaths from all causes to teens between ages 15 and 19, per 100,000 teens in this age group. The data are reported by place of residence, not the place where the death occurred. SOURCES: **Death Statistics:** U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. **Population Statistics:** U.S. Census Bureau.

Over the past several years, we have developed a set of criteria to select the statistical indicators published in the national *KIDS COUNT Data Book* for the purposes of measuring change over time and ranking the states. The criteria are designed to meet our twin goals of using only the highest quality data and communicating clearly and concisely. The criteria are described below.

1. The statistical indicator must be from a reliable source. All of the indicator data used in this book come from U.S. government agencies. Most of the data have already been published or released to the public in some other form before we use them. We work with a small circle of data experts to examine and re-examine the quality of the data used in the *KIDS COUNT Data Book* each year.

2. The statistical indicator must be available and consistent over time. Changes in methodologies, practice, or policies may affect year-to-year comparability. Program and administrative data are particularly vulnerable to changes in policies and/or program administration, resulting in data that are not comparable across states or over time.

3. The statistical indicator must be available and consistent for all states. In practice, this means data collected by the federal government or some other national organization. Much of the data collected by states may be accurate and reliable and may be useful for assessing changes over time in a single state, but unless all of the states follow the same data collection and reporting procedures, the data are likely to be inconsistent across states. Without data for every state, we would not be able to construct an overall composite index of child well-being.

4. The statistical indicator should reflect a salient outcome or measure of well-being. We focus on outcome measures rather than programmatic or service data (such as dollars spent on education or welfare costs), which are not always related to the actual well-being of children. This focus reflects our ultimate aim of improving child well-being, regardless of the policies or programs used to achieve this goal.

5. The statistical indicator must be easily understandable to the public. We are trying to reach an educated lay public, not academic scholars or researchers. Measures that are too complex or esoteric cannot be communicated effectively.

6. The statistical indicators we use must have a relatively unambiguous interpretation. If the value of an indicator changes over time, we want to be sure there is widespread agreement that this is a good thing (or a bad thing) for kids.

7. There should be a high probability that the measure will continue to be produced in the near future. We want to establish a series of indicators that can be produced year after year to track trends in the well-being of children in each state. Therefore, we are reluctant to use data from a one-time survey, even though it may provide good information about kids.

Over the past few years, we have produced several *KIDS COUNT Working Papers* focused on the KIDS COUNT data and methodology. These are available on the KIDS COUNT website at www.kidscount.org. For additional information on characteristics of good indicators of child well-being, see *Key Indicators of Child and Youth Well-Being: Completing the Picture*, 2008, Brett V. Brown (Ed.), Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New York, NY.