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CONTACT:

Kimberly Varner, (202) 842-3600, Ext.254

kidscount@hagerssharp.com

Sue Lin Chong, (410) 223-2836

media@aecf.org

Social Media Release: <http://pitch.pe/18150>

A Project of

The Annie E. Casey

Foundation

701 St. Paul Street

Baltimore, MD 21202

410 547.6624 Fax

410 547.6600

www.kidscount.org

2009 KIDS COUNT National Fact Sheet

Baltimore, Md., July 28, 2009 – The Annie E. Casey Foundation’s 2009 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* shows that since 2000, six of the 10 key indicators improved and four indicators got worse, marking a slight improvement over the indicators from the previous year’s *Data Book*. Nonetheless, these latest available indicators still lag behind the steady improvements made in the late 1990s.

- Six areas of improvement: infant mortality rate, child death rate, teen death rate, teen birth rate, high school dropout rate, and rate of teens not in school and not working;
- Four areas have worsened: low-birthweight babies, children living in families where no parent has full-time year-round employment, children in poverty, and children in single parent families.

It should be noted that the effects of the current economic downturn were not felt at the national level until well into 2008. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics the unemployment rate more than doubled from 4.5 percent in May 2007 to 9.4 percent in May 2009.

New in 2009 – The KIDS COUNT Data Center

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org>

The 20th *KIDS COUNT Data Book* is complemented by the new online Data Center that contains hundreds of measures of child well-being covering national, state, county, and city information. Users can now access:

- **Popular topics** such as KIDS COUNT overall rankings, the number of children in poverty; teens who are high school dropouts; and children living in single-parent families.
- **Geographic Profiles** that include information on education, economic well being, health and more.
- **Customizable maps, trend lines, and charts** for use in publications and presentations.
- **Rankings** of states, cities, and other geographic areas.
- **Data** covering large racial and ethnic groups and children in immigrant families.

Users who download maps and information from the Data Center to place on their own sites have the benefit of having that information automatically updated through syndication.

(more)

The 2009 *Data Book* also contains the Casey Foundation's essay that analyzes the country's progress in keeping track of children's well-being. The discussion covers several best practices of marshalling available information to address pressing needs and create meaningful opportunities for the next generation. The essay recommends a series of action steps to increase the quantity and quality of available data, better utilize data to improve policy and practice, hold public agencies accountable for results, and mobilize states and communities to take data-driven action on behalf of vulnerable kids and families.

10 Measures of Child Well-Being

Percent of low-birthweight babies continues to increase.

Between 2000 and 2006, the percentage of low-birthweight babies (less than 5.5 lbs) increased from 7.6 percent to 8.3 percent, an increase of nine percent. The 2006 rate is the highest level in four decades.

Best rate in 2006: Alaska (6 percent)

Worst rate in 2006: Mississippi (12.4 percent)

Infant mortality rate has started to improve.

In contrast to previous stalled progress in this area, the infant mortality rate (6.7 deaths per 1,000 live births) in 2006 has slightly improved.

Best rate in 2006: Washington (4.7 deaths per 1,000 live births)

Worst rate in 2006: Mississippi (10.6 deaths per 1,000 live births)

Child death rate continues to improve.

The child death rate dropped from 22 out of every 100,000 children between the ages of 1 and 14 in 2000 to 19 deaths per 100,000 in 2006.

Best rate in 2006: Connecticut (9 deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-14)

Worst rate in 2006: Alaska (33 deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-14)

Teen death rate continues to move downward.

The death rate for youth ages 15 to 19 dropped from 67 deaths per 100,000 teens in 2000 to 64 deaths per 100,000 in 2006.

Best rate in 2006: Rhode Island (34 deaths per 100,000 teens ages 15-19)

Worst rate in 2006: Arizona and Arkansas (98 death per 100,000 teens ages 15 – 19)

Teen birth rate is on the rise in recent years.

Nationally, the teen birth rate is below the rate in 2000; however the rate increased from 40 to 42 births per 1,000 females ages 15-19 between 2005 and 2006. The latest increase has affected 41 states. Only six states and the District of Columbia saw a decrease and three states saw no change.

Best rate in 2006: New Hampshire (19 births per 1,000 females)

Worst rate in 2006: Mississippi (68 births per 1,000 females)

High school dropout rate continues to improve.

The high school dropout rate dropped from 11 percent of teens ages 16 to 19 not in school and with no high school diploma in 2000 to 7 percent in 2007.

Best rate in 2007: North Dakota (2 percent)

Worst rate in 2007: Nevada (11 percent)

Percentage of idle teens decreases slightly.

The percentage of teens (ages 16-19) not attending school and not working has dropped slightly from 9 percent in 2000 to 8 percent in 2007.

Best rate in 2007: Minnesota and North Dakota (4 percent)

Worst rate in 2007: Nevada (13 percent)

The rate of children living in families where no parent has a full-time, year-round job continues to increase.

The percentage of children living in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment increased from 32 percent in 2000 to 33 percent (or 24,281,000 children) in 2007.

Best rate in 2007: Utah (24 percent)

Worst rate in 2007: Mississippi (43 percent)

Children living in poverty increases.

The percentage of children living in poverty (income below \$21,027 for a family of two adults and two children) increased from 17 in 2000 to 18 percent in 2007. Although the rate has stayed between 17 and 19 percent thus far this decade, a rate of 18 percent in 2007 means 900,000 more children in poverty nationally than in 2000.

Best rate in 2007: New Hampshire (9 percent)

Worst rate in 2007: Mississippi (29 percent)

Percentage of children living in single-parent households rose slightly.

There was a small increase in the percentage of children living in single-parent families, from 31 percent in 2000 to 32 percent in 2007.

Best rate in 2007: Utah (18 percent)

Worst rate in 2007: Mississippi (44 percent)

Note on data sources: The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* uses the most up-to-date state level estimates from Federal statistical agencies. The data on the high school dropout rate, the number of idle teens, the number of children who live with a parent who lacks a full-time year-round job, the child poverty rate, and the number of children living in single-parent households come from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and reflect conditions in 2007. Data on births and deaths come from the National Center for Health Statistics and reflect events in 2006.

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