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**CONTACT:** Kim Varner  
202-842-3600, Ext. 254  
[kidscount@hagerssharp.com](mailto:kidscount@hagerssharp.com)

Tara Manthey  
501-371-9678, Ext. 111  
[tmanthey@aradvocates.org](mailto:tmanthey@aradvocates.org)

**News from the 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book  
Arkansas' Kids – Opportunities and Well-Being Status**

Our ability to progress as a state depends on the degree to which we can create opportunities for all children to succeed. Arkansas ranks 48th nationally in the *2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book*, a state-by-state study on the well-being of America's children. The *Data Book* reveals that Arkansas improved on five of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. Yet on two other measures, conditions worsened for Arkansas' kids. Conditions remained unchanged on one measure, and two others were not comparable to previous years.

The 21st annual *Data Book* is complemented by the expanded KIDS COUNT Data Center, which contains hundreds of measures of child well-being and allows users to create maps and graphs of the data at the national, state, county, and city level. To access information for Arkansas go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/ar>.

**Arkansas ranks in the bottom 10 nationally on eight of 10 indicators.**

Among the 50 states, Arkansas ranked 50th in the percentage of teens not in school and not working; 48th in the percentage of children in poverty; 47th in the teen birth rate; 46th in the child death rate; 45th in both the teen death rate and the percent of children without secure parental employment; 44th in the percentage of high school dropouts; and 43rd in the percentage of children in single parent families.

**Percentage of idle teens is highest in the nation.**

The percentage of teens ages 16-19 in Arkansas who were not in school and not working (also referred to as idle teens) stood at 12 percent in 2008—the highest in the country. Nationally, this share stood at 8 percent. About 20,000 Arkansas teens were not in school and not working.

**Early childhood indicators show signs of improvement.**

Infant and child mortality in Arkansas have both fallen since 2000. The state's infant mortality rate in 2007 was 7.7 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, 8 percent lower than it was in 2000. Over the same period, the child death rate fell 15 percent to 28 deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-14 in 2007. Even the percentage of low-birthweight babies—while higher than it was in 2000—has shown signs of improvement recently, falling from 9.2 percent to 9.1 percent between 2006 and 2007.