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2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book Facts **How Maine's Children Are Faring**

Creating opportunities for all children to succeed is closely linked to how they do as infants and toddlers, and later on in school. This *2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book*, an annual snapshot of the nation's children, shows that Maine ranks 14th best among the states in the study on the well-being of America's children. The *Data Book* shows that Maine improved on three of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. On five other measures, conditions worsened for Maine's kids. Two of the 10 measures 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 Maine go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/me>.

Maine performs better than the national average on seven of 10 indicators.

Maine did better than the national average in the percentage of low-birthweight babies, the infant mortality rate, the child death rate, the teen death rate, the teen birth rate, the percentage of children in poverty, and the percentage of children in single-parent families.

Child poverty and children in single-parent families both increase since 2000.

The proportion of children in Maine living in poverty increased from 12 percent in 2000 to 16 percent in 2008. (A family of two adults and two children were considered poor if their income in 2008 fell below \$21,834.) Maine is now 23rd nationally among the 50 states on this measure. During the same period, the share of Maine children living in single-parent families also rose, from 24 percent in 2000 to 31 percent in 2008.

More Maine young people are not high school graduates.

The percentage of youth between the ages of 16 and 19 who are not in school and are not high school graduates has risen from 5 percent in 2000 to 6 percent in 2008. During this time the national rate was declining steadily. Maine is now 15th among the 50 states on this measure.

Percentage of low-birthweight babies reverses post-2000 rise.

In 2007, 6.3 percent of Maine births were of low-birthweight, an increase from its 6.0 percent level in 2000. However, the rate actually declined from the previous year, suggesting a possible reversal. Maine tied for fourth best among the 50 states on this measure.

Child death rate declines

The death rate for Maine's children has declined significantly, from 21 per 100,000 children in 2000 to 16 per 100,000 in 2007. The decline was steeper than the national average, and Maine now ranks 11th among the 50 states on this measure.