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CONTACT:

Kim Varner
202-842-3600, Ext. 254
kidscount@hagerssharp.com

Barbara Bradley
Office: (919) 834-6623 ext 224
Fax: (919) 829-7299
Barb@ncchild.org

**News from the 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book
North Carolina's 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. North Carolina ranks 37th 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 North Carolina improved on five of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. Yet on three other measures, conditions worsened for North Carolina's kids. Two 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 North Carolina go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/nc>.

Percentage of low-birthweight babies increases.

In North Carolina, 9.2 percent of babies were of low birthweight in 2007, which is above the state's levels in both 2000 (8.8 percent) and 2006 (9.1 percent). Nationally, North Carolina ranked 42nd—among the bottom 10 states—on this indicator.

Infant mortality rate rises after earlier improvement.

The infant mortality rate in North Carolina was 8.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2007, which was 1 percent lower than the 2000 rate. Between 2006 and 2007, however, the rate actually rose 5 percent, suggesting a possible reversal of the longer-term trend. North Carolina ranked 45th nationally on this measure.

Share of teens not in school and not high school graduates is cut in half.

In 2008, 8 percent of North Carolina teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not high school graduates. The state's percentage is half of what it was in 2000.

Teen birth rate holds constant after decline.

North Carolina's teen birth rate in 2007 was 50 births per 1,000 females ages 15-19, which was 15 percent below what it was in 2000. However, the state's value on this measure did not change between 2006 and 2007.