

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE
July 27, 2010, 12:01 a.m., EDT

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News from the 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book Vermont'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. Vermont ranks third 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 Vermont improved on five of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. Yet on two other measures, conditions worsened for Vermont's 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 Vermont go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/vt>.

Vermont ranks in the top 10 on 8 of 10 indicators.

Vermont ranked first nationally in the teen death rate. It also ranked second in the teen birth rate; third in the percentage of low-birthweight babies, the infant mortality rate, and the child death rate; fourth in the percentage of teens who were high school dropouts; eighth in the percentage of teens not in school and not working; and 10th in the child poverty rate.

Children in single-parent families increase.

In 2008, 32 percent of Vermont's children lived in single-parent families, up from 25 percent in 2000. This share matched the nationwide percentage for 2008.

Teen birth rate reverses decline of earlier years.

Vermont's teen birth rate in 2007 was 22 births per 1,000 females ages 15-19—4 percent lower than it was in 2000. However, the state's 2007 rate was actually 5 percent higher than it had been in the previous year, suggesting a possible reversal from earlier trends.

Vermont's economic-based child indicators present a mixed picture.

In 2008, 28 percent of children in Vermont lived in families where no parent had full-time, year-round employment, which was slightly above the U.S. rate of 27 percent. By comparison, the state's child poverty rate of 13 percent in 2008 was well below the national average, although that rate did not change from 2000. (A family of two adults and two children were considered poor if their income in 2008 fell below \$21,834.)