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**News from the 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book
West Virginia'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. West Virginia ranks 43rd 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 West Virginia improved on four of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. Yet on two other measures, conditions worsened for West Virginia's kids. Conditions remained unchanged on two measures, 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 West Virginia go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/wv>.

West Virginia ranks among bottom 10 states on four of 10 indicators.

Nationally, West Virginia ranked 46th in the percentage of low-birthweight babies; 45th in the percentage of children living without secure parental employment; 43rd in the percentage of children in poverty; and 42nd in the child death rate.

Recent increase pushes teen birth rate to 2000 level.

Between 2005 and 2007, the teen birth rate has increased 9 percent to 47 births per 1,000 females ages 15-19—the same rate it was in 2000. This suggests a possible reversal of the trend of declining teen births that had occurred in the first half of the 2000s.

Child poverty is below 2000 level.

West Virginia's child poverty rate was 23 percent in 2008—the same as it was a year earlier and lower than the 26 percent rate in 2000. (A family of two adults and two children were considered poor if their income in 2008 fell below \$21,834.)

One in three West Virginia children lack secure parental employment.

In 2008, 32 percent of children in West Virginia lived in families where no parent had full-time, year-round employment. This is well above the U.S. rate of 27 percent.