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The Annie E. Casey Foundation Releases KIDS COUNT 2010 *Data Book* *Utah data available on child well-being*

Salt Lake City, UT – On July 27, 2010, The Annie E. Casey Foundation will release its 21st annual KIDS COUNT *Data Book*, a national and state-by-state report that includes key measures and statistical trends on the condition of America's children and families.

Utah ranked 4th overall in this year's publication, a drop from our ranking of 3rd in last year's data book. The state saw improvements in four of the ten indicators studied. These four indicators were:

- Infant mortality declined from 5.2 to 5.1 per 1,000 live births (between 2000 and 2007).
- The teen death rate fell from 60 to 50 deaths per 100,000 youths (between 2000 and 2007).
- The teen birth rate fell from 38 to 36 per 1,000 female teens (between 2000 and 2007). **However, the state's rate is also 9 percent higher than it was in 2005 and indicates a reversal of the longer-term trend.**
- The percent of children in single-parent families fell from 21% to 18% (between 2000 and 2008).

Utah also worsened on three indicators:

- The percent of babies born at low birth weight saw a negligible increase between 2000 and 2007 from 6.6% to 6.7%.
- The percent teens not in school and not high school graduates rose from 6% to 7% between 2000 and 2000.
- The percent of children in poverty rose from 10% to 11% between 2000 and 2008.

Utah also stayed the same on one indicator (the child death rate) and two of the indicators used in this year's report were not comparable to other years (Percent of teens not attending school and not working, percent of children living in families where no parent has full-time year-round employment).

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“Utah saw some improvement on a variety of indicators, which is good news for most of our children,” says Terry Haven, KIDS COUNT Director for Voices for Utah Children. “But those improvements were small, incremental steps. It is imperative that we as a state continue to work on improving the quality of life for all of Utah’s children.”

Haven says the data should also remind us that in Utah there are still over 88,000 children living in poverty, over 3,700 teens giving birth, and over 150,000 children living with parents who don’t have secure employment. She urges policymakers and advocates to recognize the importance of using good data to affect positive change for Utah’s children and families, and remember that data-driven decision-making is a powerful, but sorely underutilized tool to improve results for children.

For example, the data indicates that to improve our teen pregnancy rate by 10% we need to reduce the number of babies born to teen mothers by 377. This information should drive health care professionals to target new programs in areas where the teen pregnancy rate is high.

The top three states in this year’s overall ranking were New Hampshire, Minnesota and Vermont (followed by Utah) and the states with the lowest ranking were Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* with state-by-state rankings and supplemental data launches at 12:01 a.m., July 27, 2010 at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org>. Through the KIDS COUNT Data Center, users can download the complete *Data Book*, access hundreds of other measures of child well-being, and view real-time information on portable devices

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