

CONTACT: Nicole Mace
Voices for Vermont's Children
(802) 229-6377
nicolem@voicesforvtkids.org

New Report Ranks Vermont Third in the Nation in Overall Child Health and Well-Being

Vermont ranks third nationally in overall child health and well-being in the *2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book*, a state-by-state study on the well-being of America's children. Vermont ranks in the top ten on eight of the ten individual indicators affecting child well-being that are reported in the *Data Book*. Vermont improved on five of the ten measures since 2000.

Vermont's success in these national rankings is not luck or magic – it is the result of forward-thinking policies and years of investment in programs and services that have helped kids and families thrive. “Our strong showing relative to other states in the nation demonstrates how our public policies and effective support systems are making a difference in improving the lives of Vermont's children and families,” said Carlen Finn, Executive Director of Voices for Vermont's Children.

The *Data Book* also demonstrates the importance of using timely and reliable data to guide us in our decisions about how to use public resources effectively to meet the needs of Vermont's children and families. Data on child well-being help us measure the impact of public services and systems, and help us hold each other collectively accountable for the healthy development of children.

In conjunction with today's release of the *2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book*, Voices for Vermont's Children is releasing its statewide and county-level data pages, an electronic resource for tracking indicators of child health and well-being in the state of Vermont.

To access this data, visit [Vermont's KIDS COUNT](#) on the Voices for Vermont's Children website. Visitors will encounter a map of Vermont; each county on the map links to a two-page report on select economic and health statistics. These statistics include child poverty rates, free and reduced lunch participation, prenatal care for pregnant women, and results from the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The reports track changes to rates over time and compare the particular county's rates to the overall state rates.

“These county data give us a richer picture of how children and families are faring in different parts of Vermont. They show that while a majority of our kids are doing

well, an increasing number are growing up in conditions that make it difficult for them to prosper and thrive. Now more than ever, Vermonters and their children need support from state and local systems and services designed to mitigate the worst effects of this recession and get people back on their feet," said Nicole Mace, Research Coordinator at Voices for Vermont's Children.