New Hampshire ranks #1 again in the nation for overall child well-being

_Child Poverty Still on the Rise, but Outlook for Children Better in Education and Health, KIDS COUNT report finds_

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CONCORD, NH—As the nation’s economy recovers, America’s children are showing some signs of improvement despite an ever-growing poverty rate, according to new data in the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s _KIDS COUNT® Data Book_.

Children continue to progress in education and health but have gained only incremental steps in their economic well-being since 2010, falling short of where they stood before the recession. From roughly 2008 to 2011, the number of children in New Hampshire without health insurance decreased from 15,000 to 10,000, a drop of 20 percent. Teen birth rate in New Hampshire dropped by 11 percent to a historic low; the rate of high school students not graduating in four years saw an almost 26 percent decline in New Hampshire, and the child and teen death rate decreased by 9 percent.

Although the economic well-being of the nation’s children improved slightly from 2010 to 2011, the negative impact of the recession remains evident. In 2011, the child poverty rate stood at 12 percent in New Hampshire, or 33,000 children—an increase of 2,000 children since 2009. The number of children living in households in New Hampshire where both parents lack full time employment—65,000 in 2011— is a minor improvement from the previous year, but was still about 4,000 more than in 2008. Nationally, the number of children whose parents lacked full-time, year-round employment was nearly 20 percent higher than in 2008.

The 2013 Data Book also examines how America’s youngest children are faring, adding to the ongoing national conversation on early childhood education. In particular, younger children are disproportionately affected by the lingering effects of the recession: Nationally the poverty rate among children younger than 3 is 26 percent; among 3- to 5-year-olds, it is 25 percent — higher than the national average for all kids.

“Children are our nation’s most precious resource, as well as our future leaders, employees, citizens and parents,” said Patrick McCarthy, the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s president and CEO. “The early years of their lives are a critical juncture in their development. As our economic recovery continues, we cannot lose sight of doing whatever it takes to help kids, particularly kids in low-income families, reach their full potential — and that includes laying a solid foundation from the moment they are born.”
The Children’s Alliance of New Hampshire is proud of our state designation as number one nationally from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and all that our state accomplishes for its children. Although our state accomplishes so much for its children, we still have 34,000 children living in poverty. We know that we still have work to do to improve the lives of children in our state,” said Ellen Fineberg, Executive Director of the Children’s Alliance of New Hampshire.

Not only did New Hampshire rank number one in child well-being nationally, but also relative to other New England States. Vermont and Massachusetts were the only other New England states to rank in the top five (ranked number two and three respectively) while Rhode Island ranked 26th nationally.

For New Hampshire specific data, please visit www.childrennh.org for city and county based data on the well-being of children. The KIDS COUNT Data Book features the latest data on child well-being for every state, the District of Columbia and the nation. This information is available in the newly redesigned KIDS COUNT Data Center, which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of measures of child well-being.

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The Children’s Alliance of New Hampshire is the Annie Casey New Hampshire KIDS Count partner. The Children’s Alliance is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization with a 25 year history that convenes with advocates, businesses, community, and policy makers to promote the well-being of children in our state. Visit www.childrennh.org for more information.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation’s children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit www.aecf.org. KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.