

Minnesota Kids: A Closer Look 2003 Data Book



a child's voice



Minnesota Kids: A Closer Look 2003 Data Book

produced by
Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota



Minnesota KIDS COUNT is a joint project of the
Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota
and
Congregations Concerned for Children-Child Advocacy Network
at the **Joint Religious Legislative Coalition**.

Minnesota KIDS COUNT releases periodic reports and an annual data book to provide a statistical profile of Minnesota's children and suggestions for action on their behalf. This data book was made possible through funds provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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County pages are available on the web at
<http://www.cdf-mn.org/kidscount.html>

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and departmental web sites give in the Data Notes on pages 34-36.

Access the data in this book in an interactive format, and find out about national KIDS COUNT data and KIDS COUNT projects throughout the United States at <http://www.kidscount.org>



Additional Publications

From Minnesota KIDS COUNT

These publications are free of charge and are available online at <http://www.cdf-mn.org/kidscount.html>.

All Kids Count! Assessing the Well-being of African-American, American Indian, Asian, and Latino Children. 2002. 47 pages.

Minnesota Children in the 2000 Census:

Population by County. Spring, 2001. 8 pages.

Household Composition. Summer, 2001. 8 pages.

Low-Income Children and Families. Fall, 2002. 6 pages.

Children with Disabilities. Winter, 2002. 4 pages.

Language Spoken at Home. Winter, 2002. 4 pages.

Housing and Families. Winter, 2002. 4 pages.

Educational Attainment. Winter, 2002. 4 pages.

From National KIDS COUNT

This publication is free of charge and can be downloaded at <http://www.kidscount.org>, or ordered by calling (410) 223-2890.

2002 National KIDS COUNT Data Book. State Profiles of Child Well-Being. 2002. 200 pages.

To subscribe to the free Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota newsletter, please call (651) 227-6121, or email west@cdf-mn.org.

To join the Children's Defense Fund-MN listserv, please send an email to webmaster@cdf-mn.org.

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INTRODUCTION

A state's quality of life reflects what it values. Minnesota enjoys a high quality of life as it consistently leads the nation in the well-being of its children. This is source of great pride and hope.

Minnesotans are proud when:

- Children are healthy.
- Children are safe.
- Children have access to a good education.
- Children have equal opportunities.

The data in this publication helps Minnesotans see where they are succeeding and where they need to do more. With this information, Minnesota citizens and policy makers can recommit themselves to ensuring that no child is left behind.

Minnesota Children in 2001

All Minnesota children deserve a fair start in life. Yet many Minnesota children live in families that have inadequate financial resources to make ends meet.

- One in ten Minnesota children lived below the poverty line (\$18,000 for a family of four.)

- One in ten children received food support (formerly known as food stamps) (\$23,000 for a family of four.)
- One in four Minnesota children receive free/reduced-price school lunches (\$33,000 for a family of four.)

These indicators all improved or held steady during the economic prosperity of the 1990s, but in the last year of available data, food support receipt and free/reduced-price lunch participation have started to increase.

All Minnesota children deserve a head start in life. Yet many Minnesota children do not have a good start at birth, or a successful educational experience.

- One out of every sixteen Minnesota babies was born at low birth weight.
- Almost 1,600 teenagers gave birth.

Minnesota has made excellent progress in reducing teen births; teen birth rates have decreased by 26% over the past ten years. However, the percent of children born at low birth weight has climbed 28% during the same period.

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INTRODUCTION, continued

- Fifteen percent of the enrollment in Minnesota schools changed schools at least once during the school year. This has increased 17% since 1992-93.
- More than one in five Minnesota students does not graduate on time. This rate has not improved over time.

All Minnesota children deserve a safe start in life. Yet the lives of too many Minnesota children are affected by crime and violence.

- 13,569 Minnesota children were arrested for serious crime. However, this number has been cut in half over the last ten years.
- Around 10,000 Minnesota children every year have a substantiated report of child abuse and neglect, or enter the child welfare system through a new “alternative response” program, and about 17,500 children are placed in foster care or group homes away from their families.

- 173 Minnesota children died preventable deaths in 2001 from homicide, suicide or injury.

CDF Minnesota staff will visit 19 communities across the state, including urban, suburban, small town and rural areas. These informal community meetings, called Kids Count Coffees, offer the opportunity for people to learn about the well-being of children in their local area and to identify ways to become more involved in advocating on their behalf.

Minnesotans – parents, schools, faith-based organizations, non-profits, businesses and government – must continue to strive to provide a community where all of our children are healthy, safe and educated. Minnesota should settle for nothing less.

If you would like to join us in these efforts, please call (651) 227-6121 or visit our web site at <http://www.cdf-mn.org>.

