

# CHILDREN FIRST

for Oregon



## Report Card 2002

### The Status of Children in Oregon



Portland General Electric

*This report is sponsored by Portland General Electric.*

### Status 2002

**C**hildren First for Oregon's 2002 Report Card on the Status of Children once again portrays a picture of mediocrity and missed opportunities. While our state has done well in a number of areas, we only have to look to childhood poverty – one out of every seven kids is living in poverty – to see where Oregon is failing to keep its true promise. For many of these children, common childhood experiences like getting back to school clothes, taking music lessons or playing a sport are unreachable dreams. Their lives and the lives of their families are burdened with uncertainty and worrying about where their next meal is coming from, how they will cover next month's rent and endlessly searching for affordable and responsible childcare. These stresses are consuming and exact a harsh toll on families. They shut out many of the positive experiences children need to reach their full potential.

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Oregon has a responsibility to be a better partner in building family stability. It starts with ensuring the basics – affordable and accessible child care, year-round availability of nutrition, access to affordable quality health care, quality educational opportunities for all students and training for parents for better paying jobs.

Oregon can permanently improve its consistently mediocre grade. It requires focus and discipline. In the last 10 years, smart public and private investments in effective programs have helped more families find affordable health insurance for their children. Fewer teens are pregnant and more mothers receive prenatal care. Thoughtfully planned programs have dramatically decreased the number of teenagers who smoke. In each of these areas Oregon has kept its promise.

While we all depend on a healthy economy to improve family life, the promise of a rising economy alone cannot carry the load. Today's challenging economic environment requires more from all of us to keep our promises. Together, our voices and our actions can create a better future for all of our children. We encourage you to get involved to help raise our grade and make a difference in the lives of thousands of deserving Oregon families and kids. Learn more about child and family issues. Vote for children. Demand stronger leadership and better policy choices. Give your time and resources so our promises to children are kept.

### Summary of Grades

Overall 2002 Grade	B-
Family Financial Stability	D
Health	B+
Early Care and Education	C
Youth Development and Education	B+
Safety	B+

**B-**

*The letter grades are based upon the objective analysis of:*

- 1. Progress toward the 2005 Oregon Benchmark over the last two years.*
- 2. Progress over the last ten years.*

*Note: All data are from 2001 except child poverty, food insecurity, uninsured children, affordable child-care and readiness to learn which are from 2000.*



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### Children First for Oregon

Since 1991, Children First for Oregon has served as the leading voice for Oregon's more than 800,000 children. As a non-profit, non-partisan group, Children First has led the charge to improve child well-being. Through research, media outreach and public education initiatives Children First speaks to the legislature, media and local communities on behalf of Oregon's children and our future. Visit our website at [www.childrenfirstforeregon.org](http://www.childrenfirstforeregon.org).

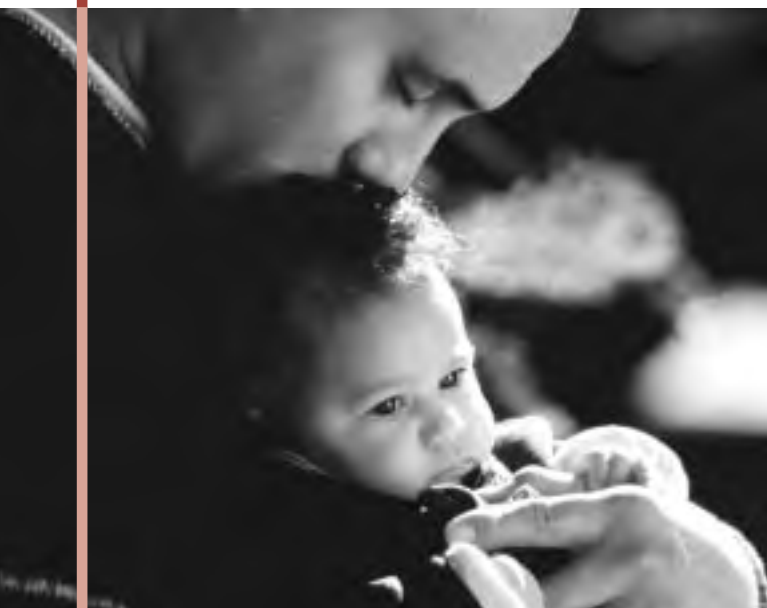
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*Children First is grateful to PGE for sponsoring the Report Card for the third consecutive year.*



## Family Financial Stability D

### Childhood Poverty

**14% of children under age 18 live in poverty.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....14%  
*Though Oregon has met its Benchmark goal, nearly 120,000 children live in poverty in Oregon.*

### Child Support

**56% of child support payments are paid (court ordered).**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....75%  
*Child support collection is far from meeting its 2005 goal.*

### Affordable Housing

**76% of low-income rental households do not have affordable housing.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....70%  
*The number of low-income renters who spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing has risen in recent years.*

### Food Insecurity

**14.3% of Oregonians are at risk of hunger.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....8%  
*Oregon has the highest rates of food insecurity in the nation. Households are food insecure when they need to use emergency measures such as food banks to avoid hunger.*

### Unemployment

**6.3% of Oregon workers are unemployed.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....115% of federal unemployment rate  
*Oregon's unemployment rate is consistently one of the worst in the country.*

## Health B+

### Prenatal Care

**82% of babies are born to mothers who receive early prenatal care.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....85%  
*Prenatal care rates continue to make slow progress toward the Benchmark.*

### Infant Mortality

**5.4 babies per 1,000 die before their first birthday.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....5.1  
*Oregon's infant mortality rate has decreased by half since 1980 and is one of the lowest in the nation.*

### Uninsured Children

**9% of children under age 18 lack health insurance.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....8%  
*About 70,000 children go without health insurance on a given day in Oregon.*

### Immunizations

**75% of two-year-olds are up to date on their immunizations.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....82%  
*Oregon's rate of immunizations has dropped in the last year.*

### Teen Pregnancy

**31.7 per 1,000 girls become pregnant in Oregon.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark (ages 15-17) .....36  
*Oregon has exceeded its 2005 goals for teen pregnancy.*



## Early Care and Education C

### Affordable Childcare

**35% of low income families find affordable childcare.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....45%  
*Affordable infant and toddler care is becoming more difficult for families to find.*

### Child Care Supply

**18 child care slots are available per 100 children under age 13.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....25  
*The number of available child care slots is decreasing.*

### Ready to Learn

**67% of children enter school ready to learn.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....87%  
*Kindergarten teachers report that student readiness has improved except in the area of motor development.*

### 3rd Grade Reading and Math Proficiency

**84% of 3rd grade students meet or exceed state reading standards.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....90%  
**75% of 3rd grade students meet or exceed state math standards.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....81%  
*While more third graders are reading at state standards, math scores have not improved.*



## Youth Development and Education B+

### 8th Grade Reading and Math Proficiency

**62% of 8th grade students meet or exceeded state reading standards.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....71%  
**55% of 8th grade students meet or exceed state math standards.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....69%  
*The percentage of eighth grade students meeting math and reading standards has decreased in the last year.*

### High School Dropout

**5.3% of high school students drop out of school.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....5.4%  
*The high school dropout rate has improved in the last year; yet, 8,700 high school students failed to complete the 2000-2001 school year.*

### Juvenile Arrests

**42.8 juveniles are arrested per 1,000 children under the age of 18.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....46.5  
*Arrests among Oregon's youth remain at a decade low.*

### Substance Abuse

**In a month...**  
**25% of 8th grade students drink alcohol.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....21%  
**4% of 8th grade students use illicit drugs.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....15%  
**12% of 8th grade students smoke cigarettes.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark.....16%  
*Reported use of alcohol, drugs and cigarettes continues to decline.*

### Suicide Attempts

**216.9 youths per 100,000 (ages 10-17) attempt suicide.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....A Benchmark is not set  
*There were 856 reported suicide attempts in 2001 that resulted in hospitalization or death among youth ages 10-17.*

## Safety B+

### Child Abuse and Neglect

**5.7 children per 1,000 are abused or neglected.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....6.2  
*Confirmed cases of abuse and neglect have decreased in the last year, but reports of abuse and neglect are increasing.*

### Threat of Harm

**3.9 children per 1,000 are at significant risk of abuse or harm.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....5.9  
*3,375 children live in a situation that has been identified as threatening or risky, while 4,857 were actually abused or neglected.*

### Crimes Against Persons

**12 crimes are committed against people per 1,000 Oregonians.**  
 ▶ 2005 Benchmark .....13.1  
*Reported violent crime continues to decline in Oregon and is now at its lowest point since before 1990.*



*This report, part of the KIDS COUNT project, is made possible by a generous grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.*