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**News from the 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book
Alabama's Kids – Opportunities and Well-Being Status**

Our ability to progress as a state depends on the degree to which we can create opportunities for all children to succeed. Alabama ranks 47th nationally in the *2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book*, a state-by-state study on the well-being of America's children. The *Data Book* reveals that Alabama improved on three of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. On five other measures, conditions worsened for Alabama's kids. Two measures documented in the *2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book* were not comparable to previous years.

The 21st annual *Data Book* is complemented by the expanded KIDS COUNT Data Center, which contains hundreds of measures of child well-being and allows users to create maps and graphs of the data at the national, state, county, and city level. To access information for Alabama go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/al>.

Child poverty falls from previous year's level, but remains high.

Between 2007 and 2008, the percentage of Alabama children living in poverty fell from 24 percent to 22 percent—although it remains higher than its 2000 rate. (A family of two adults and two children were considered poor if their income in 2008 fell below \$21,834.) The state's child poverty rate remains higher than the national rate of 18 percent.

Alabama improves on three of 10 indicators of child well-being.

Alabama continues an upward trend, showing improvement in the following indicator areas: teen birth rate, child death rate and the percent of teens not in school and not high school graduates.

Percent low-birthweight babies continues downward trend from earlier years.

Although the percentage of low-birthweight babies in Alabama remains higher than it was in 2000, it has declined in recent years: from 10.7 percent in 2005 to 10.4 percent in 2007.

Teen birth rate holds steady for Alabama.

After steadily declining from 61 births per 1,000 females ages 15-19 in 2000, the teen birth rate in Alabama did not change between 2006 and 2007. It stood at 54 births per 1,000 teens in both years.

Data show Alabama still in need of improvement.

Despite recent gains on indicators of child well-being, the data places Alabama in the bottom 10 on four of 10 indicators. Among the 50 states, Alabama ranked 49th in the infant mortality rate; 48th in the percentage of low-birthweight babies; 45th in the teen death rate; and 43rd in the percentage of children in single-parent families.