

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE**  
July 27, 2010, 12:01 a.m., EDT

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**News from the 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book**  
**Alaska'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. Alaska ranks 38th 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 Alaska improved on five of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. Yet on three other measures, conditions worsened for Alaska's kids. Two measures 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 Alaska go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/ak>.

**Alaska ranks in the top 10 on two indicators, but in the bottom 10 on five others.**

Among the 50 states, Alaska ranked first in the percentage of low-birthweight babies and fourth in the percentage of children in poverty. However, the state also ranked 50th in the teen death rate; 49th in the child death rate and the percentage of children living in families where no parent had secure parental employment; 47th in the percentage of teens who were high school dropouts; and 45th in the percentage of teens not in school and not working.

**Percentage of low-birthweight babies falls from previous year.**

Not only did Alaska have the nation's lowest share of low-birthweight babies in 2007 at 5.7 percent, but that rate also declined from its 2006 level of 6.0 percent. Alaska's percentage of low-birthweight babies is now only slightly higher than its level in 2000.

**Alaska's economic-based child indicators provide mixed results.**

The percentage of teens ages 16-19 in Alaska who were not in school and not working (also referred to as idle teens) was 11 percent in 2008, noticeably higher than the national level of 8 percent. Meanwhile, 34 percent of Alaska's children live in families where no parent had full-time, year-round employment, compared to 27 percent of children nationally. The child poverty rate in Alaska, however, did fall from 13 percent in 2000 to 11 percent in 2008—and was

noticeably lower than the national rate of 18 percent. (A family of two adults and two children were considered poor if their income in 2008 fell below \$21,834.)