

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

CONTACT: Kim Varner
202-842-3600, Ext. 254
kidscount@hagerssharp.com

News from the 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book
Missouri'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. Missouri ranks 31st 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 Missouri improved on four of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. Yet on three other measures, conditions worsened for Missouri's kids. Conditions remained unchanged on one measure, and two others 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 Missouri go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/mo>.

Child poverty rate rises.

Missouri's child poverty rate was 19 percent in 2008—higher than both the 16 percent rate in 2000 and the 18 percent rate in 2007. (A family of two adults and two children were considered poor if their income in 2008 fell below \$21,834.)

Declining share of teens not in school and not high school graduates.

In 2008, 7 percent of Missouri teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not high school graduates. This is a significant decrease from the state's 2000 level of 11 percent.

Percentage of children in single-parent families remains constant.

The share of Missouri children living in single-parent families was 32 percent in 2008—the same percentage as in 2000 and 2007. The U.S. rate on this measure also was 32 percent.

Percentage of low-birthweight babies reverses earlier increase.

In 2007, 7.8 percent of babies in Missouri were of low birthweight, up from 7.6 percent in 2000. However, the 2007 share actually is lower than it was in 2006, which suggests a possible reversal of the longer-term trend.

Infant mortality worsens.

Missouri's infant mortality rate was 7.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2007, an increase of 4 percent since 2000.