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Twenty-fifth Edition of *KIDS COUNT Data Book* Highlights Improvements in Health, Safety, Education and Decline in Teen Birth Rate Since 1990

National, State Policy Changes Have Resulted in Positive Changes for Children, but More are Living in Poverty and in Single-Parent Families

Wilmington, DE (July 22, 2014) – A new KIDS COUNT® report ranks Delaware 23rd in the nation for overall child well-being. This state-by-state report on children’s well-being, issued by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is the 25th edition of the annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book*.

This year’s *Data Book* examines how demographic, social and economic changes combined with major policy developments have affected the lives of lower-income children in both positive and negative ways since 1990. The good news is that there has been steady improvement in the numbers of children attending preschool and a decline in the number of school children not proficient in reading and math. Additionally, the teen birth rate is at a historic low and the death rates for children and teens have fallen as a result of medical advances and increased usage of seat belts, car seats and bike helmets.

Worrisome trends include a rise in the official child poverty rate as defined by the federal government. The percentage of children living in single-parent families has risen significantly and the rate of children growing up in poor communities has also increased.

“This year’s *KIDS COUNT Data Book* provides some hopeful signs” said Janice Barlow, Director of KIDS COUNT in Delaware. “At the same time, children and families are still coping with the effects of the recession and continued high unemployment.”

To examine the more recent trends between 2005 and 2012, the new *Data Book* uses 16 indicators across four areas: Economic Well-Being, Education, Health and Family and Community.

- **Delaware children continue to progress in the areas of education and health.** All four education indicators covering milestones such as preschool attendance and high school graduation showed steady improvements. Additionally, child health improved across all four indicators. More children have access to health insurance coverage than before the

recession, there were drops in child and teen mortality and teen substance abuse and the percent of low-birth weight babies declined slightly.

- **Economic progress still lags, even after the end of the recession.** Three of the four economic well-being indicators were worse than the mid-decade years, which is not surprising given the severity of the economic crisis over the past six years. However, since the *2013 Data Book*, the majority of the indicators in this area improved slightly, indicating modest but hopeful signs of recovery.
- **Mixed picture on Family and Community indicators.** The teen birth rate is at a historic low. There was a small drop in the percent of children living in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma. However, there was an increase in the percent of children living in single-parent families and the percentage of children living in high-poverty areas was unchanged.

The [KIDS COUNT Data Book](#) features the latest data on child well-being for every state, the District of Columbia and the nation. This information is available in the [KIDS COUNT Data Center](#), which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of measures of child well-being. Data Center users can create rankings, maps and graphs for use in publications and on websites, and view real-time information on mobile devices.

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About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation's children by developing strategies to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit www.aecf.org. KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

About KIDS COUNT in Delaware

As one of fifty-three similar projects throughout the United States and the U.S. territories funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT in Delaware is housed in the Center for Community Research and Service at the University of Delaware and is led by a board of child and family advocates from the public and private sectors. Since 1995, KIDS COUNT in Delaware has reported on the status of children in Delaware and, in partnership with the State of Delaware since 1998, has been monitoring the health and well-being of children and their families. Please visit our website www.dekidscount.org to learn more about our important work. Follow KIDS COUNT in Delaware and this issue on Twitter @dekidscount and on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/dekidscount>.