



Children's Action Alliance

A Voice for Arizona's Children since 1988

NEWS RELEASE

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Few Bright Spots in Conditions for Arizona Kids; Progress in Health Could Backslide With State and Congressional Votes

PHOENIX, Ariz., June 13, 2017—The Annie E. Casey Foundation's *2017 KIDS COUNT® Data Book* finds Arizona's conditions for kids in the bottom five in the nation, ranking 46th. The analysis takes into account 16 different indicators across four domains: education, health, economic well-being and family and community aspects.

More Arizona kids gained access to health coverage through Medicaid expansion and the marketplace when the Affordable Care Act went into effect. That increase in insured children helped boost Arizona's health ranking from 45 in last year's *Data Book* to 40 this year. Now, only 8 percent of the state's children are uninsured, a 38 percent drop from 2010. Updated data will reflect more progress, since KidsCare coverage was restored in September 2016 and 20,000 children are now enrolled.

"So many Arizonans joined together last year to fight for KidsCare and it's exciting to see this trend going in the right direction," said Dana Wolfe Naimark, President and CEO of Children's Action Alliance. "But this good news could be wiped out in the blink of an eye."

The U.S. House version of the American Health Care Act and President Trump's budget proposal would push tens of thousands of Arizona children out of affordable health coverage with reckless cuts to Medicaid, Naimark explained. And the state budget just signed by Governor Doug Ducey mandates that KidsCare enrollment be frozen again if there is any reduction to federal funding to Arizona.

"We're counting on our state lawmakers to work side by side with our Congressional delegation to stand up for the health care Arizona children need," Naimark added.

Thanks to parents, mentors, educators, community support and health care, Arizona's teen birth rate improved more quickly than the national trend. At 26 births per 1,000 females in 2015, the teen birth rate is down 38 percent since 2010, and below the national average. But this progress is also at risk—in a surprise, last-minute addition to the state budget in April, legislators changed the allocation of Title X federal family planning funds. Now, teens may lose access to effective pregnancy prevention services in the coming year.

"Our elected leaders should be working with us to build on the improvements in health coverage and teen parenthood," said Delphis Richardson, an East Valley pediatrician who chairs the Cover

Children's Action Alliance is an independent voice for Arizona children at the state capitol and in the community. CAA works to improve children's health, education, and security through information and action. Visit us online at www.azchildren.org.



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Kids Coalition. "I know firsthand these are two of the most important changes we can make to help children grow up healthy and make families stronger."

Other measures that showed slow improvement include:

- The percentage of 3-4 year old children **not** enrolled in preschool is now at 63 percent, compared to 66 percent in 2010; Arizona still ranks in the bottom five states.
- The percentage of children living in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment has improved a bit more in Arizona than the national trend.
- The rate of child and teen deaths dropped 14 percent from 2010 to 2015, now just below the national average.

The report shows that many families in Arizona continue to struggle with poverty during the slow and uneven economic recovery. One in four children in the state is growing up poor, higher than the national average of 21 percent.

The *2017 Data Book* will be available June 12th at 9:01pm Arizona time at www.aecf.org, with additional information and online data tools at the KIDS COUNT Data Center. Users can customize their own data sets, maps and graphics to illustrate the most recent statistics available.

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





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How Are Children Doing in Arizona? 2017 KIDS COUNT Data Book, The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Marker	U.S. Rate	AZ Rate	AZ Rank
Overall Rank			46
Children in households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing (2015)	33%	34%	39
Children living in poverty (<i>income below \$24,250 for a family of two adults and two children in 2015</i>)	21%	25%	43
Children living in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment (2015)	29%	30%	30
Teens ages 16 to 19 not attending school and not working (2015)	7%	9%	40
4th graders who scored below proficient reading level ³ (2015)	65%	70%	40
8th graders who scored below proficient math level ³ (2015)	68%	65%	18
Children ages 3 to 4 not attending school (2013-15)	53%	63%	46
High school students not graduating on time ² (2014-15)	17%	23%	43
Child and teen death rate (<i>deaths per 100,000 children ages 1 to 19</i>) (2015)	25	24	16
Low-birthweight babies (2015)	8.1%	7.2%	17
Children without health insurance (2015)	5%	8%	44
Teens ages 12 to 17 who abused alcohol or drugs in the past year (2013-14)	5%	6%	35
Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma (2015)	14%	18%	46
Children in single-parent families (2015)	35%	38%	39
Children living in high-poverty areas (<i>census tracts with poverty rates ≥ 30%</i>) (2011-15)	14%	24%	48
Teen birth rate (<i>births per 1,000 females ages 15 to 19</i>) (2015)	22	26	33

#1 is the best state for kids and #50 is the worst.

For some indicators, a higher rate is better, while for others, a lower rate is better.

¹ Due to changes in the methodology calculating the High School Students Not Graduating on Time indicator, the overall ranking from the previous year should not be compared to this year.

² This year and going forward the data is derived from Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR), not the Averaged Freshman Graduate Rate (AFGR), which was the source in previous years.

³ The National Assessment of Educational Progress is administered every two years; 2016 and 2017 Data Books both use same 2015 NAEP data.