



Idaho Ranks 20th for Overall Child Well-Being in New Report
Idaho's data show decline in education, but gains in health care

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BOISE, Idaho, June 13, 2017 — While Idaho's children are seeing gains in access to health care, education continues to lag, signaling a need for more prudent investments in programs and early learning, according to data in the *2017 KIDS COUNT® Data Book* released today the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The *Data Book* focuses on key trends in child well-being in the post-recession years and measures child well-being in four domains: economic well-being, education, health, and family and community.

Idaho ranks a disappointing 43rd in education. One particular area of concern is the low rate of participation in early education. Nearly 70 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds in the state are not attending a formal early education program.

"While many other states are making prudent investments in early learning, in Idaho we're missing an opportunity to ensure our kids have a strong foundation for future success," said Lauren Necochea, Idaho Voices for Children director. "Investments in early learning save taxpayer dollars down the road through reductions in crime and increased productivity."

Idaho has seen gains overall in economic well-being. The state saw a 19 percent decrease in the percentage of children living in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment. However, child poverty persists, with only slight gains from several years. Close to one in five Idaho children is living below the poverty line, putting their families at greater risk for not having health coverage and weakening their overall financial stability.

There are several bright spots, particularly in community aspects and health. Just 25 percent of Idaho kids live in single-parent families, well below the national average of 35 percent. In addition, the percentage of teenagers abusing drugs or alcohol remains steady at 6 percent.

In health, Idaho showed a 45 percent drop in the percentage of children without health insurance between 2010 and 2015. Today, only 6 percent of Idaho's children lack health insurance. But there are looming threats to this progress, Necochea noted. "The proposed cuts

to Medicaid and family tax credits in the American Health Care Act threaten critical progress we've made in protecting children's health," Necochea said.

Release information

The 2017 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* will be available June 13 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at www.aecf.org. Additional information is available at www.aecf.org/databook, which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of indicators of child well-being. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about the *Data Book* can use the KIDS COUNT Data Center at datacenter.kidscount.org.

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About Idaho Voices for Children

Idaho Voices for Children, a nonprofit program of Jannus, Inc., works to develop and promote a state-level policy agenda that targets child health, education, safety, and family economic stability. Idaho Voices for Children works to ensure all Idaho children arriving at adulthood are ready to succeed as individuals – in families and in the workforce.

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

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. For more information, visit www.aecf.org. KIDS COUNT is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.