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Contact: Brittany Brin, Communications Manager

[bbrin@cfvi.net](mailto:bbrin@cfvi.net) or 340-774-6031

## **2017 KIDS COUNT® Data Book Highlights Gains for U.S. Children**

*Annie E. Casey Foundation Urges Lawmakers to Continue to Invest in Kids*

**ST. THOMAS, U.S. Virgin Islands, June 13, 2017** — The Annie E. Casey Foundation is urging state and federal policymakers not to backtrack on gains made in improving health and well-being outcomes for children across the United States. These improvements are noted in the just-released *2017 KIDS COUNT Data Book*, which shows progress in several areas of child well-being, especially economic stability for children.

The data are also a call to action, and highlight the importance of maintaining targeted investments that help U.S. children live healthier lives, complete high school and better position them to contribute to the nation's economy as adults. Nationally, only 5 percent of children in the continental United States remain uninsured, a historic low, due to the combination of key provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and expansions to Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Limited data are reported for the Virgin Islands in the *Data Book* because the territory is not included in most nationwide surveys and datasets. The annual report reviews teen birth rate and low birthweight babies. According to the annual *Data Book*, the Virgin Island's teen birth rate dropped 24 percent between 2010 and 2015; the percentage of low birthweight babies was 9.2 percent in 2015, a 2 percent increase over the same period.

A *Data Book* for the Virgin Islands is released annually, produced by the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands and based on local data from local agencies. This year's *Data Book* for the Virgin Islands is expected to be released during the summer.

### **Release Information**

The *2017 KIDS COUNT Data Book* will be available June 13 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). Additional information is available at [www.aecf.org/databook](http://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](http://datacenter.kidscount.org).

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### **About the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands**

For more than 25 years, the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands has been bringing positive changes in the Territory through programs committed to youth, learning, family support and the environment. With a professional staff and a volunteer Board of Directors composed of local community leaders, CFVI is a leading advocate and supporter of programs that give children the best

starts possible while ensuring opportunity and sustainability for our community in the future. CFVI operates or funds close to 50 community programs including KIDS COUNT, scholarships, teacher grants, and emergency grants to families and elderly residents of the USVI. CFVI is a registered non-profit entirely supported by individual donors, grants, trusts, corporate donations and estate planning.

### **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](http://www.aecf.org). KIDS COUNT is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.