



An organization that speaks out on behalf of Utah's children

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CONTACT: Terry Haven
801-364-1182
terryh@utahchildren.org

**2011 KIDS COUNT *DATA BOOK* REVEALS
IMPACT OF THE RECESSION ON UTAH'S CHILDREN**
Gains of the 1990s Lost in Recession

Salt Lake City, UT - According to data released by the Annie E Casey Foundation in its 2011 KIDS COUNT *Data Book*, Utah ranks 7th in key indicators of child health and well-being, a drop from our 4th ranking in the 2010 *Data Book*. In fact Utah is among the five states with the biggest drops in their rankings along with Hawaii, Maine, Montana, and North Dakota. The ranking is based on ten indicators on health, education, and economic stability.

Utah statistics from this year's National *Data Book* include:

- 6.8% of our babies are born at low birth weight (2,500 grams or 5.5 pounds), compared to 8.2% nationally
- Infant death rate in Utah stands at 5.1 per 1,000 births compared to 6.8 nationally.
- Child Death Rate (deaths per 100,000 children ages 1–14) in Utah was 20 compared to 19 nationally.
- Teen Death Rate (deaths per 100,000 teens ages 15–19) in Utah was 59 compared to 62 nationally.
- Teen Birth Rate (births per 1000 teens ages 15–19) in Utah was 35 compared to 41 nationally.
- Twenty-two percent of our children under the age of 18 lived in households where the parents were without secure employment, compared to 31% of children nationally.

Each year, the Data Book is accompanied by an essay on timely topics affecting children and families. The 2011 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* message examines how children and families are faring in the wake of the recession and ties together research findings on family economic success and the critical role of investing in early childhood programs that can allow the next generation to succeed. In an ongoing effort to track the impact of the recession, there are two new indicators in this year's data set -- the number of children impacted by foreclosure and households with at least one unemployed parent.

The Utah *KIDS COUNT* data shows that:

- 65,000 children lived with at least one unemployed parent in 2010
- Between 2000 and 2009, there was a 20 percent increase in the Utah child poverty rate. As a result, over 32,000 more children are living below the federal poverty line (\$21,756 for a family of two adults and two children).

- Foreclosures – never before reported –affected an estimated 3% (or 56,000) of Utah’s children who lived in mortgaged households that were disrupted by foreclosure since 2007.

The essay provides 16 policy recommendations which focus on two basic premises: 1) Children succeed when parents succeed, and 2) Increasing opportunity for children means starting early. These recommendations underscore the importance of Casey’s commitment to a two-generation strategy to change the future for large numbers of at-risk kids. Casey’s goal is to recommend ways to help parents succeed and provide for their children now and ensure that services are in place, from health care to education – to ensure that the children have an opportunity to succeed in the future.

“Helping families accumulate assets can increase their long-term financial stability, which in turn helps the children growing up in these families”, says Terry Haven, KIDS COUNT Director for Voices for Utah Children. “Casey’s recommendations provide research based policy strategies that are do-able and can make a huge difference in the lives of our children”

“The negative consequences of poverty are not inevitable. But the gap between what we know and what we do is growing and increasingly unconscionable,” says Karen Crompton, Executive Director for Voices for Utah Children. “The time for leadership on behalf of vulnerable children and their families is now.”

In addition to the 10 key measures tracked in the *Data Book*, the KIDS COUNT Data Center (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org>) provides easy, online access to the latest child well-being data on hundreds of indicators by state, county, city, and school district. It serves as a comprehensive source of information for policymakers, advocates, members of the media, and others concerned with addressing the needs of children, families, and communities. By visiting the Data Center, users can download the complete *Data Book*, and create interactive maps and graphs. Visit the new mobile site being launched in conjunction with this year’s *Data Book* from your smartphone, such as the Droid, BlackBerry, or iPhone.
sara@utahchildren.org

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* with state-by-state rankings and supplemental data launches at 12:01 a.m. EDT, August 17, 2011 at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org>. For interactive Utah KIDS COUNT data, visit <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/StateLanding.aspx?state=UT>.

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Voices for Utah Children works to improve the lives of children and families by advocating for effective public policies and programs. We work on behalf of all children, but are particularly concerned about those who are most vulnerable and in need of the greatest support. Follow Voices for Utah Children on Twitter @utchildren and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Voices-for-Utah-Children/237644275109>