

Report: Children of Color in UT, Nation Face Barriers to Well-Being



PHOTO: A report out today (Tuesday) shows children of color face major economic and educational barriers in overall well-being. Photo courtesy FDA.

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SALT LAKE CITY - Children of color in Utah and across the nation face major economic and educational barriers in nearly every category of well-being, a new report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation reveals. [Race for Results: Building a Path to Opportunity for All Children](#) says children of color are trailing in many key areas of success, and in nearly every region of the nation.

Terry Haven, deputy director, Voices for Utah Children, said ensuring that all kids get the best possible education is critical for America's future in a competitive global economy.

"The well-being of children is critical to the prosperity of American society. We need to be able to provide opportunities for our kids to succeed in a smart way that ensures what's going on in Utah is good for them," Haven said.

The report based its rankings on 12 indicators that measure a child's success in each stage of life, from birth to adulthood. Indicators include fourth-grade reading proficiency, students who graduate from high school on time, and young adults who complete an associate's degree or higher.

By 2018, children of color will represent the majority of children in the U.S., the report says. Haven pointed to many economic and educational factors that contribute to a child's overall well-being, and said early childhood education is a critical starting point.

"If we don't get some of these at-risk kids ready to learn when they get to kindergarten, so that by grade three they're on grade-level reading, they're going to fall behind," she warned, "and these statistics will never change."

Haven added that research shows that children in states with universal "Pre-K" programs are ahead of kids in states without those programs.

The Casey Foundation report is available at www.aecf.org.

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