

KIDS COUNT Data Center

HARNESSING THE POWER OF DATA

By Kandice K. Bridges

The Annie E. Casey Foundation was established by Jim Casey, the founder of UPS, and his siblings in honor of their mother. Today, the Casey Foundation is the largest philanthropy in the United States focused solely on improving the lives of children. The Foundation's connection with UPS places data at the center of its work. Since its inception, the KIDS COUNT Data Center has grown from its ten original *KIDS COUNT Data Book* indicators to include thousands of child well-being indicators, turning it into the most comprehensive database of its kind.



The KIDS COUNT Data Center is maintained by the Casey Foundation and the KIDS COUNT network, which covers all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Organizations in the network are child well-being experts. "The local experts within the network can identify why and how our children are impacted by a variety of influences, because they understand the data and have clear connections with populations they serve," says Florencia Gutierrez, senior research associate for KIDS COUNT.

While some recent well-being results are encouraging, such as improvements in education and health, according to Gutierrez, "Over 10 million children live in neighborhoods with limited access to jobs, resources and opportunities. We must be more intentional about advancing racial equity and inclusion. If we want to ensure that all children have access to economic security, stable families and supportive communities, there has to be a focus on race and ethnicity.

"The overall totals mask the realities hidden within the data for children of color," she adds. To uncover those realities, KIDS

COUNT began drilling deep into the general data, with a focus on disaggregating the results by race in order to present a clearer, more nuanced picture of child well-being in the United States.

Not only can data be sorted by race on the Data Center—allowing resources to be targeted where most needed—it can also be sorted by state, county, city, Congressional district, and even by school district in many instances. "Understanding the capabilities of and resources provided by KIDS COUNT is the first step in harnessing its power," says Sue Lin Chong, senior communications manager. From reducing child mortality rates in Delaware and lead poisoning incidences in Rhode Island to improving child well-being rankings in Tennessee, policy makers and advocates across the country have relied on accurate data to tailor strategic, effective responses.

For those who need to benchmark the well-being of children or aspire to ensure that children don't fall through societal cracks, KIDS COUNT is the go-to resource for evidence-based data. The Casey Foundation's mission to improve opportunities for children has sustained the development

Advancing Racial Equity and Inclusion for Kids in the United States:

Additional Resources and Information

RACE FOR RESULTS:

- A 2014 policy report that explores issues pertinent to children of color and access to opportunity, with an update scheduled for 2017
- A series of case studies to address different issues pertaining to race and opportunity

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS DISAGGREGATED BY RACE:

- The child population, including those living in poverty or extreme poverty
- Socioeconomic factors such as median household income, the safety levels of the communities, access to healthcare and health status
- Education-related factors including secondary and post-secondary education attendance, enrollment and completion, and school discipline
- Home-life quality and stability and quantifying population of children residing in foster care, juvenile detention, correctional and/or other residential facilities

of the KIDS COUNT Data Center so that decision-makers, advocates and the general public can have access to timely and up-to-date information.

For more information about KIDS COUNT and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, visit: www.aecf.org