

## Press Release

For Immediate Release

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# With One of Every 11 Kids Calling Texas Home, New Report Ranks State Low for Child Well-Being

**(AUSTIN, Texas)** — Texas ranks 44th among the states in overall child health and well-being, according to data released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation in its 2012 KIDS COUNT *Data Book*.

The data book, which has been updated and revamped from previous versions, now also examines how children are doing in four key domains—Economic Well-Being, Education, Health, and Family and Community.

“Texas accounts for one of every 11 kids in this country. The choices we make now to improve our kids’ lives will drive not only the future of Texas, but the future of our country,” said Frances Deviney, Texas KIDS COUNT director at the Center for Public Policy Priorities. “Texas needs to prioritize its policy choices by investing in children first since we are producing the next generation of leaders.”

Texas had a child poverty rate above the U. S. rate of 22 percent, with 26 percent or one in four Texas kids living in poverty in 2010. The data show the number of poor children increased by 4 percent from 2005 to 2010, and the rate of children living in homes where no parent has a full-time job increased by 19 percent.

Texas also ranked 49th in children without health insurance, with an uninsured rate of 14 percent in 2010. The number of uninsured Texas children decreased by 22 percent since 2008, mainly because of increased coverage through the public health insurance programs Medicaid and CHIP. Still, Texas has the second highest children’s uninsured rate in the country.

“With rankings like these, this is not the Texas I want for my child, or yours. These numbers cry out for a change in direction for Texas’ kids,” Deviney said. “That means reinvesting in education, building a health insurance exchange so families can find affordable health coverage for their children, and building our workforce so that Texas’ kids can become tomorrow’s leaders.”

Texas has the third highest teen birth rate in the country and saw a 2 percent increase in the number of babies born at a low-birthweight.

The 2012 *Data Book* has been updated with a new index that provides an even more robust and comprehensive portrait of how U.S., and Texas, children are faring. It assesses states based on how they do on 16 indicators for child well-being—a change from the previous annual rankings based on 10.

(more)

“Texas ranks as the 44th state to be a kid in overall. Now is the time to harness our Texas pride and make the choices that will move our kids to the top, where they belong,” Deviney said.

### **About the *KIDS COUNT Data Book***

The data described in the book aims to show the importance of tracking indicators of child well-being. The 23rd annual *Data Book* is produced by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and is also complemented by an online Data Center containing hundreds of measures of child well-being at the national, state, county and city level. The full *Data Book* with state-by-state rankings and supplemental data will be available at 12:01 a.m. EDT, July 25, 2012 at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org>.

Follow the Annie E. Casey Foundation and this issue on Twitter @aecfkidscount and on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/KIDSCOUNT>.

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### **For More Information**

For more information or to request an interview, please contact Brian Stephens at [stephens@cphp.org](mailto:stephens@cphp.org) or 512.320.0222, ext. 112.

### **About the Center**

The Center for Public Policy Priorities is a nonpartisan, nonprofit policy institute committed to improving public policies to make a better Texas. You can learn more about the Center at [CPPP.org](http://CPPP.org).

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