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## **News from the 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book Louisiana's Kids – Opportunities and Well-Being Status**

Our ability to progress as a state depends on the degree to which we can create opportunities for all children to succeed. Louisiana ranks 49th nationally in the *2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book*, a state-by-state study on the well-being of America's children. The *Data Book* reveals that Louisiana improved on four of the 10 measures affecting child well-being since 2000. Yet on four other measures, conditions worsened for Louisiana's kids. Two measures were not comparable to previous years.

The 21st annual *Data Book* is complemented by the expanded KIDS COUNT Data Center, which contains hundreds of measures of child well-being and allows users to create maps and graphs of the data at the national, state, county, and city level. To access information for Louisiana go to <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/la>.

### **Louisiana ranks in the bottom 10 nationally on all 10 indicators.**

Louisiana ranked 49th in both the percentage of low-birthweight babies and the share of children in single-parent families. The state also ranked 48th in the infant mortality and child poverty rates; 47th in the child death rate, the teen death rate, and the percentage of teens who were neither enrolled in school nor were high school graduates; and 45th in the percentage of teens not in school and not working, and the percentage of children without secure parental employment. Louisiana's highest ranking was on the teen birth rate, where it was 44th.

### **Child poverty remains high, but is lower than in 2000.**

In 2008, 25 percent of Louisiana's children lived in poverty, well above the national rate of 18 percent. However, child poverty in Louisiana actually is lower in 2008 than in 2000. (A family of two adults and two children were considered poor if their income in 2008 fell below \$21,834.)

### **Low birthweight and infant mortality show signs of recent improvement.**

Although Louisiana's share of low-birthweight babies—11.0 percent in 2007—remains higher than it was in 2000, it did show improvement from its 2006 level of 11.4 percent. Similarly, the state's 2007 infant mortality rate of 9.2 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, while higher than it was in 2000, fell 7 percent during the previous year.