

Highlights from the 2008 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book



The 2008 *North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book* marks the 14th annual publication produced by the North Dakota KIDS COUNT program, part of a 50-state network founded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to collect information about the status of children in communities across the United States. Data included in the annual *North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book* cover issues affecting children from birth through adolescence and are widely used by a variety of audiences in planning, needs assessments, and grant writing activities on behalf of North Dakota children. *Fact Book* data offer a road map to better understand the challenges facing North Dakota children in the communities where they live, and quantify the numbers of children affected by respective areas of concern.

The 2008 *North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book* provides state, regional, and county profiles based on seven categories of data representing multiple indicators of child health and well-being. An abridged version of the *Fact Book* is also available, featuring select indicators from each of the seven categories presented in a tabular format. In addition to accessing these publications online at www.ndkidscount.org, interactive access to North Dakota's *Fact Book* indicators is available through the Annie E. Casey Foundation's CLIKS (Community-Level Information on Kids) website, www.kidscount.org/cliks. CLIKS offers historical trends, profiles, graphs, maps, and rankings for North Dakota, as well as data for other participating states.

According to the national KIDS COUNT program, North Dakota consistently ranks better than other state averages on many child health and well-being indicators. When compared to other states, North Dakota has the lowest percentage of teens who are high school dropouts and the lowest percentage of children living in families where no parent has full-time/year-round employment. North Dakota has the second lowest percentage of teens who are not attending school and not working, the third lowest percentage of children in single-parent families, and the fifth lowest percentage of low-birthweight babies.

Despite these high rankings, the *North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book* raises some important issues concerning the well-being of North Dakota's children.

While 14 percent of North Dakota children live in families with incomes below the official poverty level, many more children are in need of financial assistance: 20 percent receive food stamps, 23 percent receive health care assistance through Medicaid, and 32 percent of school children receive free or reduced price lunch. In addition, while the number of children in North Dakota has been declining (10 percent since 2000), the number of children receiving food stamps grew 13 percent from 2000 to 2007 and the number of school children receiving free or reduced price lunch remained relatively unchanged during this time.

These economic challenges faced by North Dakota children and their families are not equally shared throughout the state. In more than half of North Dakota counties (31 of 53), at least one out of every three students received free or reduced price lunches in 2007; in seven North Dakota counties, more than one out of two students received free or reduced prices lunches.

The 2008 *North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book* is available in electronic format only, and can be accessed for viewing or printing at www.ndkidscount.org. For more information regarding North Dakota KIDS COUNT, please contact Richard Rathge, Executive Director, at (701) 231-8621 or richard.rathge@ndsu.edu - or Helen Danielson, Coordinator, at (701) 231-5931 or ndkidscount@yahoo.com - or visit the North Dakota KIDS COUNT website at www.ndkidscount.org.

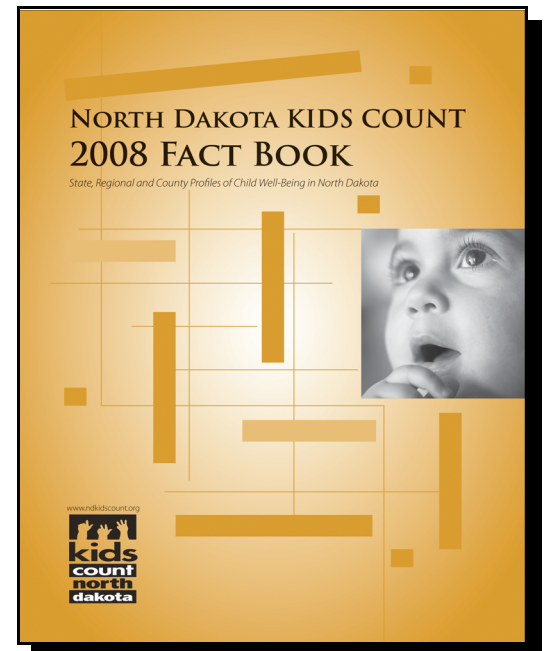


Table 1. Selected Indicators from the 2008 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book

Source: North Dakota KIDS COUNT, 2008 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book. For definitions and data sources, see www.ndkidscount.org/factbook.htm

Area	Total Children Ages 0 to 17: 2006		Children Ages 0 to 18 Receiving Food Stamps: FY 2007		Persons Ages 0 to 20 Receiving Medicaid: FY 2007		Children Receiving Free and Reduced Price Lunch: October 2007	
	Number	% of Total Population	Number	Percent of Children Ages 0 to 18	Number	Percent of Persons Ages 0 to 20	Number	Percent of School Enrollment
North Dakota	144,876	22.78%	31,380	20.27%	41,376	23.06%	32,340	32.00%
Adams	416	17.84%	46	10.34%	74	14.51%	71	25.36%
Barnes	2,252	20.56%	423	17.46%	566	19.86%	569	34.97%
Benson	2,309	33.00%	1,344	54.90%	1,706	62.49%	996	70.29%
Billings	149	17.97%	2	1.26%	15	8.06%	15	32.61%
Bottineau	1,255	18.87%	237	17.40%	362	22.63%	283	34.01%
Bowman	567	18.96%	57	9.38%	97	13.86%	150	25.60%
Burke	342	17.57%	47	12.95%	66	16.06%	64	26.56%
Burleigh	16,380	21.73%	3,130	17.92%	4,206	20.84%	2,739	22.43%
Cass	30,083	22.70%	5,109	15.97%	7,331	19.57%	4,482	22.06%
Cavalier	794	19.37%	118	13.74%	169	17.23%	197	32.78%
Dickey	1,267	23.47%	203	15.04%	284	18.19%	211	24.94%
Divide	329	15.73%	55	15.49%	73	17.68%	74	31.62%
Dunn	745	21.64%	108	13.57%	190	20.77%	142	31.84%
Eddy	486	19.42%	98	18.88%	142	24.03%	128	33.42%
Emmons	748	20.52%	76	9.58%	128	14.45%	233	37.95%
Foster	747	20.85%	92	11.53%	144	15.84%	171	26.76%
Golden Valley	410	24.25%	84	19.05%	105	20.96%	172	49.00%
Grand Forks	15,928	24.34%	3,158	18.19%	3,957	18.67%	3,036	33.70%
Grant	461	17.81%	96	19.32%	111	19.14%	204	59.48%
Griggs	427	17.39%	72	15.75%	117	22.24%	209	51.99%
Hettinger	441	17.20%	66	13.87%	80	14.41%	136	34.69%
Kidder	449	18.30%	49	10.21%	87	15.79%	150	38.36%
LaMoure	835	19.59%	113	12.70%	161	15.86%	285	43.51%
Logan	397	19.86%	49	11.61%	74	15.71%	107	32.52%
McHenry	1,080	19.89%	255	22.12%	319	24.17%	413	45.94%
McIntosh	507	17.15%	65	12.08%	103	16.83%	155	38.46%
McKenzie	1,364	23.93%	439	30.09%	577	34.43%	305	36.88%
McLean	1,606	18.80%	281	16.30%	422	21.25%	559	37.32%
Mercer	1,683	20.44%	227	12.49%	353	16.67%	224	16.80%
Morton	5,787	22.47%	1,339	21.81%	1,747	25.07%	1,299	30.69%
Mountrail	1,645	25.54%	516	29.67%	770	39.25%	736	50.45%
Nelson	556	16.90%	98	16.47%	132	19.24%	224	44.62%
Oliver	365	20.19%	32	8.12%	49	10.86%	50	20.83%
Pembina	1,539	19.47%	236	14.33%	392	20.66%	472	36.39%
Pierce	872	20.66%	175	18.78%	232	22.01%	225	32.33%
Ramsey	2,620	23.25%	813	29.09%	1,057	33.39%	779	38.09%
Ransom	1,207	21.19%	234	18.32%	271	18.96%	303	30.18%
Renville	465	19.18%	60	12.12%	70	12.39%	174	30.05%
Richland	4,015	23.77%	701	16.15%	914	17.91%	850	30.89%
Rolette	4,619	33.22%	2,960	60.58%	3,298	60.46%	2,357	73.89%
Sargent	929	22.13%	86	8.72%	129	11.65%	208	27.40%
Sheridan	218	15.48%	48	20.51%	49	18.15%	76	56.30%
Sioux	1,558	36.38%	1,169	70.98%	1,320	71.58%	755	70.17%
Slope	122	17.11%	6	4.58%	10	6.41%	0	0.00%
Stark	5,001	22.56%	968	18.05%	1,345	21.55%	1,078	29.30%
Steele	416	21.41%	33	7.37%	73	14.17%	78	27.37%
Stutsman	4,182	20.14%	857	19.10%	1,118	21.39%	1,003	34.98%
Towner	457	18.91%	69	14.02%	104	18.44%	109	36.58%
Traill	1,803	22.05%	322	16.58%	431	18.98%	403	27.14%
Walsh	2,365	20.81%	715	28.42%	878	30.74%	766	42.48%
Ward	14,587	26.39%	2,900	18.83%	3,553	20.36%	2,718	30.93%
Wells	810	18.28%	134	15.46%	178	18.00%	223	37.23%
Williams	4,281	22.00%	810	17.69%	1,237	23.58%	974	31.16%

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North Dakota continues to rank well nationally in child well-being, yet areas of concern exist

According to the national KIDS COUNT program, North Dakota ranks seventh best in the nation on child well-being indicators. This high ranking is largely due to low rates of high school dropouts, children living in families where no parent has full-time/year-round employment, teens who are not in school and not working, children living with single parents, and low-birthweight babies. Every year since the KIDS COUNT program research began, North Dakota has ranked in the top 10 states. Despite the high national ranking, challenges do exist for children and families throughout the state.

This month's edition of the "Population Bulletin," released from the North Dakota State Data Center at North Dakota State University, presents selected indicators from the 2008 "North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book" (available at <http://www.ndkidscount.org>). The 2008 edition marks the 14th year the publication has been produced by the North Dakota KIDS COUNT program. The program is part of a nationwide network founded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to collect information about the status of children. Data included in the annual publication cover issues affecting children from birth through adolescence and offer a road map to better understand the challenges facing North Dakota's children.

Some of the concerns raised in this year's Fact Book focus on the economy. While 14 percent of North Dakota children live in families with incomes below the official poverty level, many more children are in need of financial assistance: 20 percent receive food stamps, 23 percent receive health care assistance through Medicaid, and 32 percent of school children receive free or reduced price lunch. In addition, while the number of children in North Dakota has been declining (10 percent since 2000), the number of children receiving food stamps grew 13 percent from 2000 to 2007 and the number of school children receiving free or reduced price lunch remained relatively unchanged during this time.

These economic challenges faced by North Dakota children and their families are not equally shared throughout the state. It is important to note that these statewide percentages do not necessarily reflect what's going on in individual counties. In more than half of North Dakota counties (31 of 53), at least one out of every three students received free or reduced price lunches in 2007; in seven North Dakota counties, more than one out of two students received free or reduced prices lunches.

"We face some important challenges because the future of North Dakota rests in our ability to provide safe and economically secure environments for our children," said Richard Rathge, Executive Director of the North Dakota KIDS COUNT program. "We need to recognize that solid children form the building blocks of solid economies and communities," said Rathge.
