

Highlights from the 2009 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book



The 2009 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book marks the 15th 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 2009 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book provides state, regional, and county profiles based on six categories of data representing multiple indicators of child well-being. In addition to accessing these publications online at <http://www.ndkidscount.org>, interactive access to North Dakota's Fact Book indicators is available through the Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT Data Center, <http://datacenter/kidscount.org/>. The KIDS COUNT Data Center 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 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 teens who are not attending school and not working. North Dakota has 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. Several indicators suggest that although certain rates are not getting worse, neither are they improving.

North Dakota's child poverty rate has not changed in nearly a decade. In 2007, 14 percent of the state's children were impoverished.

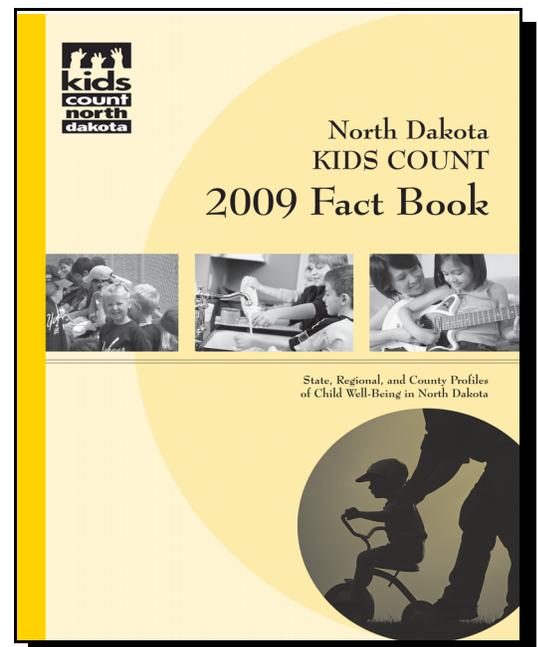
Composite scores for North Dakota public high school graduates taking the ACT have remained relatively unchanged over the past several years. Composite scores for 2008 North Dakota public high school graduates taking the ACT averaged 21.5 out of 36.

The proportion of high school students (in grades 9 through 12) who were enrolled in school and then dropped out that same year has remained around 2 percent for nearly a decade.

The proportion of juveniles who are referred to court in North Dakota has remained around 9 percent over the past several years.

The number of North Dakota births considered to be low-weight represented 6 percent of all live births in 2007, a proportion which has remained relatively unchanged over the past several years.

The 2009 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book is available in electronic format only, and can be accessed for viewing or printing at <http://www.ndkidscount.org>. For more information regarding North Dakota KIDS COUNT, please contact Polly Fassinger, Program Director, at (701) 231-5931 and fassinge@ndsu.edu - or Helen Danielson, Network Coordinator, at (701) 231-5931 and ndkidscount@yahoo.com - or visit the North Dakota KIDS COUNT website at <http://www.ndkidscount.org>.



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Table 1. Selected Indicators from the 2009 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book

Note: <6 indicates that the number of events is less than 6 and has been suppressed by ND Dept. of Health Vital Records. -- Not applicable. *This indicator reflects dropout events during a given school year; it does not reflect the success rate for high school students, or the proportion of students who actually graduate four years after they begin high school. For all definitions, visit <http://www.ndkidscount.org/factbook.htm>. Source: 2009 North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book.

Area	Total Children Ages 0 to 17: 2007		High School Dropouts*: 2006-07		Low-Weight Births: 2007		Juveniles Ages 10 to 17 Referred to Court: 2008	
	Number	% of Total Population	Number	Percent of Grade 9-12 Enrollment	Number	Percent of Total Births	Number	Percent of Children Ages 10 to 17
North Dakota	142,809	22.3%	791	2.4%	557	6.3%	5,555	8.4%
Adams	400	17.6%	0	0.0%	<6	--	13	5.9%
Barnes	2,079	19.3%	0	0.0%	<6	--	91	9.1%
Benson	2,346	33.7%	19	4.5%	10	6.7%	12	1.1%
Billings	144	18.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	10.5%
Bottineau	1,171	18.3%	0	0.0%	<6	--	46	7.5%
Bowman	550	18.7%	0	0.0%	<6	--	15	5.3%
Burke	344	18.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	3.1%
Burleigh	16,885	21.8%	184	4.6%	70	6.6%	856	11.4%
Cass	31,348	22.8%	131	2.0%	133	6.5%	1,286	9.8%
Cavalier	738	18.9%	4	1.7%	0	0.0%	25	5.8%
Dickey	1,203	22.5%	1	0.4%	<6	--	19	3.5%
Divide	313	15.6%	1	0.9%	<6	--	5	2.9%
Dunn	722	21.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	10	2.5%
Eddy	471	19.4%	1	0.7%	0	0.0%	11	4.3%
Emmons	690	19.9%	0	0.0%	<6	--	35	8.3%
Foster	745	21.3%	2	1.0%	0	0.0%	32	8.2%
Golden Valley	395	23.7%	1	0.8%	<6	--	18	6.9%
Grand Forks	14,229	21.2%	35	1.2%	52	5.4%	521	8.3%
Grant	441	17.9%	0	0.0%	<6	--	15	5.4%
Griggs	408	17.0%	1	0.7%	<6	--	8	3.5%
Hettinger	391	16.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	1.3%
Kidder	416	17.7%	1	0.8%	<6	--	11	5.2%
LaMoure	795	19.3%	0	0.0%	<6	--	11	2.6%
Logan	372	19.0%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	12	5.4%
McHenry	1,034	19.8%	1	0.3%	<6	--	39	7.5%
McIntosh	422	15.3%	1	0.8%	<6	--	15	6.5%
McKenzie	1,318	23.5%	9	3.4%	<6	--	27	3.8%
McLean	1,565	18.7%	4	0.8%	<6	--	61	7.3%
Mercer	1,651	20.7%	2	0.4%	<6	--	57	6.0%
Morton	6,084	23.5%	36	2.5%	34	9.3%	335	11.5%
Mountrail	1,646	25.4%	11	2.5%	7	6.5%	16	2.1%
Nelson	513	15.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12	4.5%
Oliver	314	18.2%	3	3.3%	0	0.0%	3	1.6%
Pembina	1,461	19.4%	5	1.2%	11	13.1%	47	6.2%
Pierce	816	19.9%	3	1.2%	<6	--	14	3.2%
Ramsey	2,524	22.6%	7	1.0%	10	7.2%	212	17.1%
Ransom	1,213	21.3%	3	0.9%	<6	--	49	8.3%
Renville	422	18.2%	1	0.5%	<6	--	4	1.9%
Richland	3,645	22.1%	11	1.3%	15	7.3%	87	4.9%
Rolette	4,526	33.1%	78	7.8%	18	6.2%	41	2.0%
Sargent	893	21.7%	0	0.0%	<6	--	33	6.8%
Sheridan	193	14.6%	1	1.9%	0	0.0%	7	5.5%
Sioux	1,485	35.2%	30	9.7%	10	9.7%	0	0.0%
Slope	116	17.6%	0	0.0%	<6	--	0	0.0%
Stark	4,891	21.8%	22	1.7%	22	7.6%	202	8.6%
Steele	371	20.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	2.1%
Stutsman	3,979	19.4%	16	1.7%	15	6.4%	239	12.3%
Towner	391	17.1%	2	1.8%	<6	--	26	11.0%
Traill	1,711	21.2%	2	0.4%	<6	--	26	3.1%
Walsh	2,393	21.7%	14	2.4%	11	7.9%	103	9.1%
Ward	14,673	26.2%	83	2.9%	57	5.7%	505	8.1%
Wells	741	17.4%	2	0.8%	<6	--	45	10.7%
Williams	4,222	21.6%	62	5.9%	19	6.2%	276	13.6%

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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, 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 2009 "North Dakota KIDS COUNT Fact Book" (available at <http://www.ndkidscount.org>). The 2009 edition marks the 15th 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.

Many of the indicators in this year's Fact Book suggest that although certain rates are not getting worse, neither are they improving. "This is something that we need to constantly monitor and evaluate," said Richard Rathge, Policy Analyst for North Dakota KIDS COUNT.

For example, North Dakota's child poverty rate (14 percent) has not changed in nearly a decade. Composite scores for North Dakota public high school graduates taking the ACT have remained relatively unchanged over the past several years, averaging 21.5 out of 36 in 2008. The proportion of high school students (in grades 9 through 12) who were enrolled in school and then dropped out that same year has remained around 2 percent for nearly a decade. The proportion of juveniles who are referred to court in North Dakota has remained around 9 percent over the past several years. The number of North Dakota births considered to be low-weight represented 6 percent of all live births in 2007, a proportion which has remained relatively unchanged over the past several years.

While many of these rates are relatively low, which is good news for North Dakota, they have not improved over the past several years. The North Dakota KIDS COUNT program has released another report that asks the question, "Is Child Well-Being Improving in North Dakota?" The report indicates that, with respect to 10 measures of child well-being investigated, North Dakota ranks near the bottom of the nation with respect to improvements in child well-being during each of three five-year intervals: 1990-1995, 1995-2000, and 2000-2005. For information on the 10 indicators investigated, visit http://www.ndkidscount.org/publications/misc/ND_well-beingimprovement_2009.pdf.

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