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Child Well-Being In Alabama at a Glance
2007 KIDS COUNT Alabama Fact Sheet

Alabama ranks 48th in the nation in a new state-by-state study on the well-being of America's children. The 2007 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* reveals that Alabama improved in four of the 10 measures reflecting child well-being and experienced setbacks in six areas since 2000. The 2007 Essay discusses the need for all children in foster care to develop strong, lasting family connections. The Essay also sets an ambitious national goal to preserve, strengthen, rebuild, or find permanent families for every American child who is at risk of not having one.

Over 8,300 Alabama children are in need of a permanent family connection

In 2004, 8,369 children under age 18 in Alabama lived in foster care at some point during the year, a rate of 8 per 1,000 children. That year, 58 children in the state aged out of the system without having a permanent family. Nationwide, 10 children per 1,000 under age 18 lived in foster care with 22,718 leaving the system at age 18 without a stable family environment.

Alabama ranks in bottom ten on seven out of ten indicators.

While the state saw improvement in four categories, Alabama ranked 48th in the percentage of low-birthweight babies, 47th in the teen death rate, 46th in the percentage of children in single parent families, 45th in the infant mortality rate, 44th in the percentage of children in poverty, and 40th in both the teen birth rate and percentage of teens not attending school and not working.

Three of these categories did show improvement however. Between 2000 and 2004, the infant mortality rate improved by seven percent, while the teen birth rate improved by 15 percent. The percentage of teens not attending school and not working showed a 17 percent decrease between 2000 and 2005.

Teens dropping out of high school decreases.

The percentage of teens aged 16-19 who were high school dropouts improved by 31 percent between 2000 and 2005, dropping to nine percent of teens in Alabama. Nationally, the percentage is slightly lower at seven percent.

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Percentage of children living in poverty worsens

The percentage of children living in poverty in Alabama increased by 19 percent from 21 percent in 2000 to 25 percent in 2005. The national percentage also increased over the same period from 17 percent to 19 percent.