



March Newsletter 2002

Here's what's new on the KIDS COUNT NETWORK website. Despite the fact that the legislative season is in full swing, Network members have been busy. Visit the KIDS COUNT Network website, browse the library, add new resources and as always, let us know what you think.

Published by KIDS COUNT

Maine Kids Count - 2002 Data Book - by *Maine Children's Alliance*

The Maine KIDS COUNT Data Book, now in its eight edition, has tracked the well being of Maine Children since 1994. If one conclusion can be drawn from these nine years of data, it is this: investing in children works, in good times and in bad.

A Universal Good: Expanding Voluntary, Early Learning Opportunities for Illinois' Young Children - by *Sean Noble, Voices for Illinois Children*

This Special Report examines the current state of early childhood care and education in Illinois. Illinois is a leader in funding for a range of preschool programs, but not all children have "universal" access to high-quality, voluntary preschool. This report sets the stage for recommendations from the Governor's Task Force on Universal Access to Preschool.

Illinois Kids Count 2002: Supporting the Changing Family - by *Voices for Illinois Children*

This 10th annual "Illinois Kids Count" report shows continued improvements in the quality of life for Illinois children. Fewer children are being born to teen mothers, more teens are graduating from high school and child abuse and neglect rates are down. This report features extensive data for all 102 counties plus the City of Chicago and State of Illinois.

Privatization of Child Welfare Services: A Child Advocacy Perspective - by *Kansas Action for Children*

Released in 1998, this child advocacy perspective on privatization of child welfare services examines concerns about system design and proposes recommendations for mid-course corrections.

Struggle for Self-Sufficiency: Impact of Welfare Reform on Families With Children in Kansas - by *Kansas Action for Children*

This report, the second of a two-year collaboration with the United Way Association of Kansas and United Community Service, assesses the state's efforts to assist needy Kansas families since welfare reform was initiated in 1996. The report, released in August 2000, features recommendations designed to make more low-income families self-sufficient. Contact Kansas Action for Children to order copies of the report and/or copies of a brochure that highlights the report's findings and major recommendations.

Collaborating for Kansas Kids: A Closer Look at Heartland Programs - by *Kansas Action for Children*

Many community leaders have recognized that we need to focus attention and resources on early education and prevention. This report looks at one program that has resulted from a community collaboration, Heartland Programs of Salina.

Slipping through the Cracks: Children at Risk in Kansas - by *Kansas Action for Children*

The report identifies and discusses the six risk factors that can adversely affect the health and well-being of children. Copies of the report are available at KAC.

Resources and Reports

Children and Welfare Reform: Issues and Ideas - by *David and Lucille Packard Foundation*

Issues and Ideas guides are for policymakers and the press and are designed to complement specific journals. This guide includes descriptions of innovative programs and lists of relevant Web sites, experts, and reports.

How Are Immigrants Faring After Welfare Reform? - by *Randolph Capps , Chris Furguele , Scott McNiven , Dan Perez-Lopez , Michael E. Fix , Leighton Ku , Jeffrey S. Passel , Rajeev Ramchand - UI*

This report provides findings from a 1999-2000 survey of 3400 immigrant families in Los Angeles County and New York City, two cities that account for roughly a quarter of the nation's immigrant population. The survey was conducted in five languages and probed the respondents' legal status (naturalized citizen, legal permanent resident, refugee, undocumented immigrant, etc.). The report measures housing affordability, food insecurity and hunger among immigrant populations. Health insurance coverage, health care access and self-reported health status are also highlighted. The study uses these measures to assess the need for food stamps, Medicaid and other benefits and services and differing immigrant subpopulations.

RELIEVING THE RECESSION: Nineteen Ways States Can Assist Low-Income Families During the Downturn - by *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*

States can mitigate the recession's harsh effects on low-income families by re-examining the policies they have adopted for various low-income programs. These programs play two critical roles during an economic downturn: they provide relief to families whose income falls as a result of job loss or reduced work hours and help stabilize the state's economy by bolstering spending among low-income families. Yet low-income programs can be effective in these roles only to the degree that they reach the families in need. This report considers an array of measures that states can adopt to meet the needs of families adversely affected by the economic downturn. It consists of 19 short policy briefs.

Health and Taxes

Insuring Uninsured Children - What More Can Be Done? - by *The Urban Institute*

While the majority of children eligible for Medicaid and SCHIP participate in these programs, new Urban Institute data show that nearly 7 million more uninsured children are eligible and could be enrolled.

Children's Participation in Medicaid and SCHIP - by *Lisa Dubay , Genevieve M. Kenney*

Following the creation of Title XXI-the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)-in 1997, all states expanded public health insurance coverage for low-income children. SCHIP gave states the option of using either Medicaid or separate state programs to expand children's eligibility. In this brief, the 1999 National Survey of America's Families (NSAF) is used to examine participation in both Medicaid and SCHIP—nationally and for the 13 Assessing the New Federalism (ANF) project study states—among children who are citizens and who do not have private insurance coverage.

A HAND UP - How State Earned Income Tax Credits Help Working Families Escape Poverty in 2001 - by *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*

This report, the latest in a series of the same name, examines the widening effect of the Earned Income Tax Credit on child poverty, welfare to work efforts and supports for working poor families.

STATE INCOME TAX BURDENS ON LOW-INCOME FAMILIES IN 2001 - by *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*

Despite years of tax-cutting at the state level, poor families in many states still face a substantial burden as they file personal income taxes for the 2001 tax year. In nearly half of the states that levy income

taxes — 19 out of 42 states — two-parent families of four with incomes below the federal poverty line continue to owe income tax. In 17 of those states, poor single-parent families of three also pay income taxes. In addition, about half of the 23 states that don't tax the poor still tax families with incomes just above the poverty line, even though such families typically have difficulty making ends meet.

Upcoming Events

2002 KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK - 05/23/2002

Location: Washington, D.C.

Planned release date for 2002 Data Book

Avenue for Action: Advancing Advocacy - 03/20/2002

Location: Dover, DE

Second annual one day conference featuring nationally know speakers, practical workshops and the KIDS COUNT Awards luncheon.

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