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## Nebraska ranked ninth in national child well-being report

Nebraska ranks 9th nationally in the 2012 Kids Count report on child well-being.

The 23rd annual *Kids Count Data Book: State trends in child well-being*, released in July by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, compares and ranks the 50 states on 16 child and family well-being indicators. The 16 indicators are grouped into four dimensions: economic well-being; health; education; and family and community.

Nationally, Nebraska ranks 2nd in economic well-being, 12th in health and 15th in both education and family and community when compared to the other 49 states.

Despite being ranked 2nd in the nation for the economic well-being domain, Nebraska experienced deterioration in three of the four indicators that comprise this domain.

- The percent of children in poverty increased 20% (from 15% in 2005 to 18% in 2010).
- The percent of children whose parents lack secure employment increased 26% (from 19% in 2008 to 24% in 2010).
- The percent of children living in households with a high housing cost burden increased 17% (from 24% in 2005 to 28% in 2010).

Nebraska experienced significant gains in the indicators of the health domain.

- The percent of children without health insurance decreased 14% (from 7% in 2008 to 6% in 2010).
- The number of child and teen deaths per 100,000 decreased 26% (from 34 per 100,000 in 2005 to 25 per 100,000 in 2008).
- The percent of teens who abuse alcohol or drugs decreased 11% (from 9% in 2005-06 to 8% in 2008-09).

In the education domain, Nebraska saw a 10% decrease in the percent of children not attending preschool (from 59% in 2005-2007 to 53% in 2008-10). While at the same time, Nebraska saw a sharp 31% increase in the percent of high school students not graduating on time (from 13% in 2005-06 to 17% in 2008-09).

The most dramatic change in any indicators was in the family and community domain. There was a 100% increase in the percent of children living in high-poverty areas (from 3% in 2000 to 6% in 2006-10).

Compared to the region, Nebraska did not rank the highest nor the lowest in any of the domains (see table 1). Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa all ranked higher in overall child well-being, with rankings of 5th, 6th and 8th, respectively. Of the 9 regional states 7 ranked in the top 10 of all states for the economic well-being domain, with North Dakota ranked as 1st. At the same time 6 of the 9 states in the region ranked in the lower half of the nation in the health domain: North Dakota, 27th; Kansas, 32nd; Missouri, 33rd; South Dakota, 43rd; Colorado, 45th; and Wyoming 47th. Most of the states ranked in the top half for the education domain, save Wyoming who ranked 29th. Similarly, most of the states ranked in the top half for the family and community domain, save Missouri who ranked 27th.

**Table 1. State Rankings of Key Indicators of Child Well-being, for Nebraska and Region, 2012**

State	Overall Ranking of Child Well-being	Economic Well-being Domain Rank	Education Domain Rank	Health Domain Rank	Family and Community Domain Rank
Minnesota	5	7	7	7	5
North Dakota	6	1	16	27	4
Iowa	8	3	14	9	8
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>
Kansas	16	8	12	32	24
South Dakota	17	4	21	43	21
Wyoming	19	5	29	47	6
Colorado	22	16	9	45	25
Missouri	26	21	24	33	27

Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2012). *Kids Count Data Book, 2012: State trends in child well-being*. Retrieved from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/DataBook/2012/OnlineBooks/KIDSCOUNT2012DataBookFullReport.pdf>

### **Kids Count in Nebraska 2011 Report**

Voices for Children in Nebraska publishes a companion piece to the annual Kids Count report. The 19th annual *Kids Count in Nebraska Report* continues to provide pertinent information on the well-being of all children in areas of health, education, safety and economic stability and features a commentary on the importance of investing in early childhood.

To view their latest report visit their website at <http://voicesforchildren.com/kids-count/>.

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