



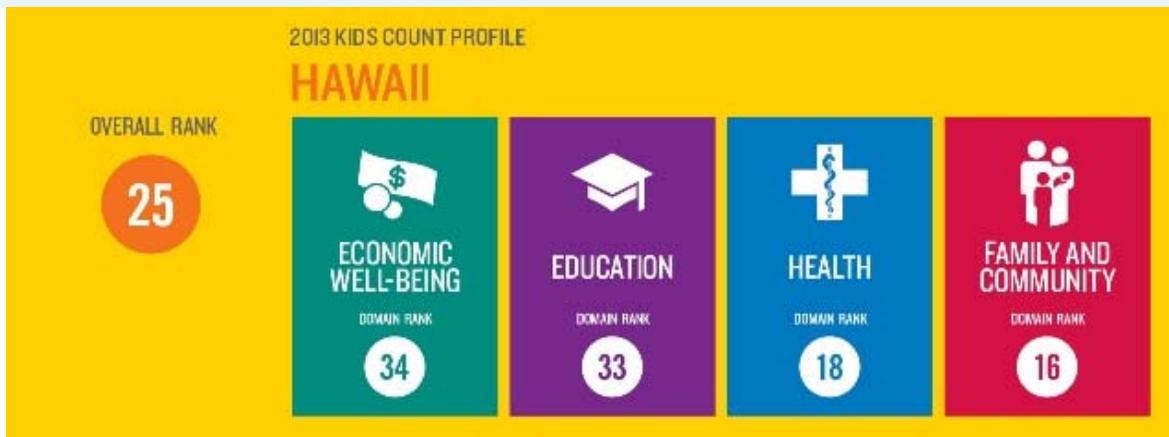
Hawai'i KIDS COUNT

E-Bulletin

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Center on the Family | University of Hawai'i at Mānoa-CTAHR

THE 2013 KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK ISSUE

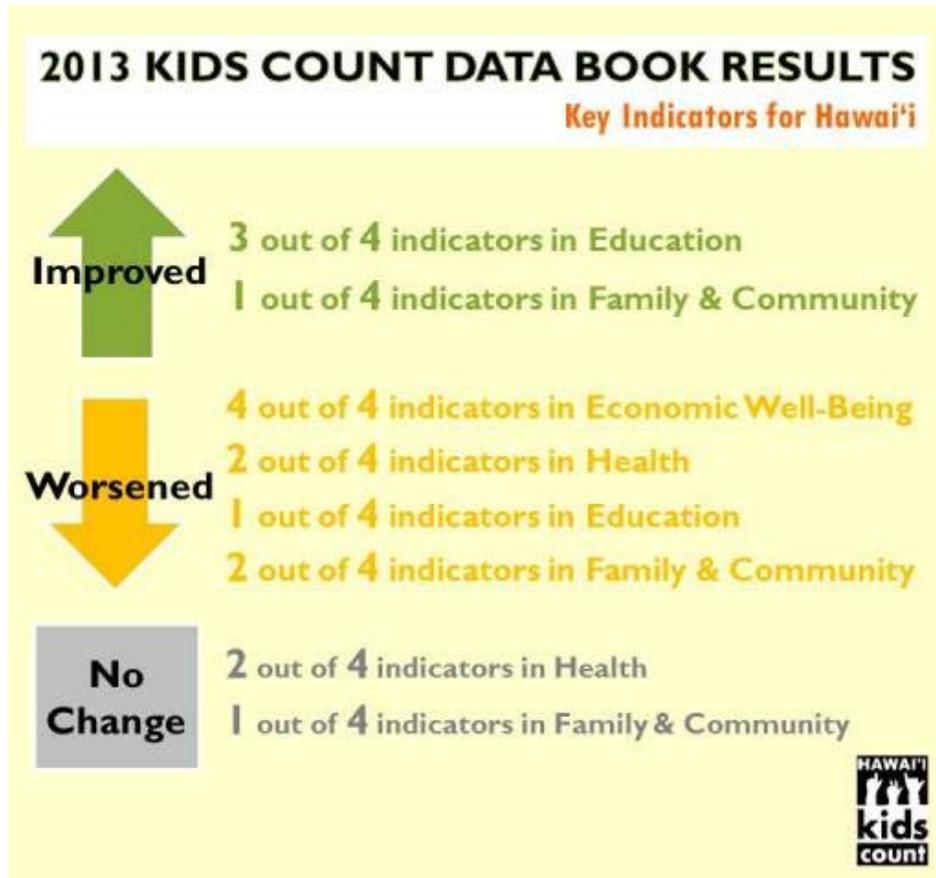


According to data presented in the 2013 *KIDS COUNT Data Book*, released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Hawai'i ranks 25th out of 50 states in overall child well-being.

The *Data Book* presents data on 16 indicators in four areas essential to child well-being: economic well-being, education, health, and the family and community context. The 2013 *Data Book*, which presents the latest trends starting with pre-recession data and ending with the most recent year of available data, highlights that certain conditions for Hawai'i's children have improved since 2005, while others have worsened.

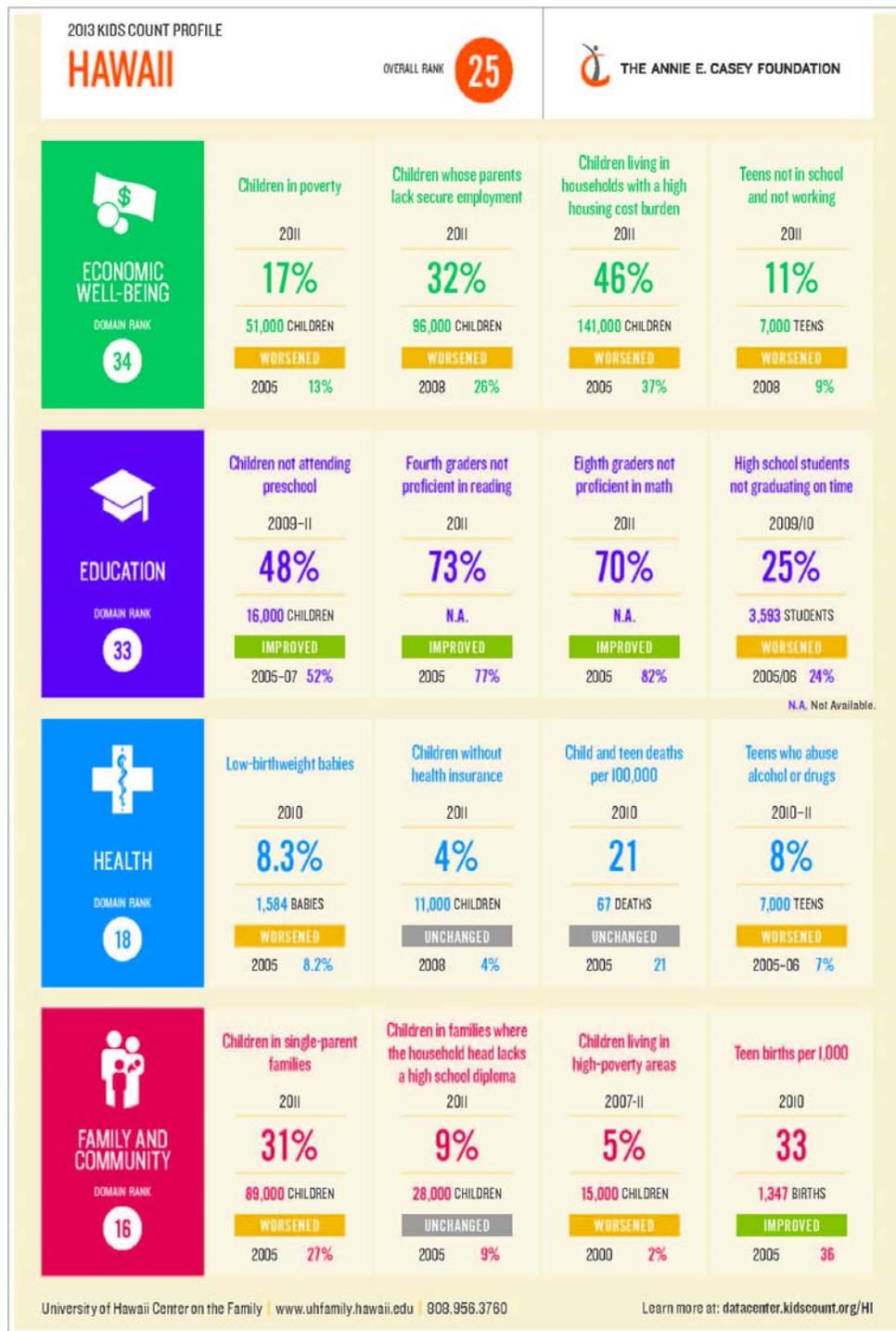
- All economic conditions measured – children living in poverty, children whose parents lack secure employment, children living in households with a high cost burden, and teens not in school and not working – have worsened over the past several years. Hawai'i ranks in the bottom third (34th out of 50 states) in this domain.
- Some gains were made in the education domain during the period examined. The percent of fourth graders not proficient in reading and the percent of eighth graders not proficient in math both decreased between 2005 and 2011. There were also more 3- to 4-year olds attending preschool during the 2009-2011 three-year period than there were in the preceding years. The percent of high school students not graduating on time remained relatively stable. Hawai'i ranks 33rd in the education domain.
- Hawai'i is doing well in the health domain, ranking 18th in the nation. The health conditions measured have remained somewhat stable, with three conditions showing little (percent of low-birthweight babies) to no (child and teen death rate and percent of children without health insurance) change over the period examined. The percent of teens who abuse alcohol or drugs increased toward the beginning of the current decade, though the change is not statistically significant.

- In the area of family and community well-being, the percent of children in single-parent families and the percent of children living in high-poverty areas have increased in recent years. The most recent teen birth data available showed a statistically significant improvement in the teen birth rate since the mid-2000s, while the percent of children in families where the household head lacks a diploma remained unchanged during the period examined. Hawai'i ranks 16th in this domain.



The Center on the Family at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa serves as Hawai'i's KIDS COUNT affiliate. "It's a similar story to what we found last year," said Ivette Rodriguez Stern, Junior Specialist at the Center on the Family and Director of the Hawai'i KIDS COUNT Project. "We're doing well in the area of health and in the family and community context. And we've made some important gains in the education domain, which must be maintained and improved since we're still hovering near the bottom third when compared to other states. The economic conditions for Hawai'i's children, however, remain a concern."

Nationally and locally, when it comes to their economic well-being, children fall short of where they stood before the recession. There have been slight improvements since 2010 at the national level, however, the data tell a different story for Hawai'i. In 2011, 17% of Hawai'i's children lived in poverty, up from 13% in 2005; 32% had parents who lacked secure employment, up from 26% in 2008; and 46% lived in households with a housing burden (i.e., where more than 30% of monthly household income is spend on rent, mortgage, taxes, insurance, or related expenses), an increase from 37% in 2005. All these changes were statistically significant. "While the recession ended in 2009, we see the lingering effects, and what's concerning is that the child poverty rate and the share of children with parents who lacked full-time, year-round employment continued to climb between 2010 and 2011," said Stern.



The negative effects of poverty on children are troubling in their own right, but they also increase the chances for poor outcomes for youth and young adults, such as teen pregnancy, not graduating from high school, poor health, and lack of secure employment. “The 2013 *Data Book* points out that as the number of low-income children increases, the gap between their well-being and that of their middle-income and more affluent peers widens,” said Dr. Grace Fong, Interim Director of the Center on the Family. “This year, KIDS COUNT is alerting us to the importance of focusing on the early years in order to promote healthy child development and to give children a strong foundation for successful educational experiences in school. This message is captured in the Japanese phrase “*Okage sama de*” — ‘I am who I am because of you’— which recognizes that every person

accomplishes what he/she does in life only with the support of many others. High quality early experiences provide children with 'roots' (a sense of self-identity and belonging) and 'wings' (the confidence and freedom to explore and engage in increasingly complex learning), which are essential elements in their healthy development. High quality early care and educational experiences are critical for children to be ready to succeed in school and in life, and, according to the research, these experiences are especially important for children who are at the highest risk of poor outcomes. The investments we make now in providing our young children with high quality care and education can improve their chances for experiencing better outcomes in the future." To download the full 2013 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* and the Hawai'i profile, go to the KIDS COUNT Data Center website: <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/databook/Default.aspx>.

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