Kids Count in Michigan is part of a broad national effort to measure the well-being of children at the state and local levels and use that information to shape efforts to improve the lives of children. The project is housed at the Michigan League for Public Policy, a research and advocacy organization that promotes policies to improve the economic security of all Michigan residents.

Printed copies of this booklet are available from the League as long as supplies last. Please request by phone (517/487-5436) or e-mail: jbenson@mlpp.org

MORE DATA ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WEB

• Profiles of counties, Detroit and several regions are available in PDF format at: www.mlpp.org under Kids Count/MI Data Book 2013
• Data for the state, counties, cities and Congressional districts are available for over 100 indicators across multiple decades on the interactive KIDS COUNT Data Center: www.datacenter.kidscount.org

This report is dedicated to the memory of Deborah Strong who served as chair of the Kids Count in Michigan Advisory Committee from 1997 through 2005.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Paul Diefenbach who collected and compiled the data and Tillie Kucharek who developed the draft profiles, charts, and tables. We are also very grateful to other external reviewers and the state employees who provided information on selected topics and commented on specific sections. Thanks also to members of the Kids Count in Michigan Advisory Committee who have given their time and expertise to shape the book and other project activities, especially Beverley McDonald who reviewed the draft. We also thank the Population Reference Bureau and Child Trends who provided Michigan-specific calculations from national surveys.

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Special Education Services – John Robertson
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INTRODUCTION

MICHIGAN PROFILE OF TRENDS IN CHILD WELL-BEING

MICHIGAN COUNTIES WITH LOWEST AND HIGHEST RATES

County profiles are available on the web: www.mlpp.org
under Kids Count-MI data book 2013

ECONOMIC SECURITY

• Child Poverty
• Young Children Participating in SNAP
• K-12 Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Priced Lunch

HEALTH

• Less Than Adequate Prenatal Care
• Low-Birthweight Babies
• Infant Mortality
• Child/Teen Deaths

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

• Teen Births
• Children in Families Investigated for Abuse/Neglect
• Children Confirmed as Victims
• Children in Out-of-Home Care for Abuse/Neglect

EDUCATION

• Fourth-graders Not Proficient in Reading
• Eighth-graders Not Proficient in Math
• High School Students Not Proficient in Reading
• Students Not Graduating On Time

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE WEL-}

BING OF CHILDREN IN MICHIGAN

MICHIGAN COUNTY RATES ON KEY INDICATORS OF CHILD WELL-BEING

DATA NOTES AND SOURCES

ADVISORY COMMITTEE
INTRODUCTION

The status of children in our state matters—not only to their parents, families, and communities, but to all of us. As adults these children will shape the future of our state and the nation. Unfortunately we have reason for concern: Michigan ranked well into the bottom half of the states on child well-being—31st (No. 1 is the best) among the 50, according to the latest national KIDS COUNT data book.

This summary report focuses on the latest data for Michigan and its counties and reveals striking differences in the lives of children based on their location. Of the 15 measures used in this report to track child well-being only the following four can be replicated from the national index: the percentages of low-birthweight babies and high school students graduating on time, and the rates of teen births and child/youth deaths.

The report departs from its previous print format, which included profiles for all the counties, as well as the city of Detroit. These profiles, as well as those for selected regions such as the Upper Peninsula and Southeast Michigan, are now available only on the League website [www.mlpp.org]. This booklet format is intended to enhance portability and provide a quick reference on key measures to assess the status of the state’s children.

The most dramatic trend for the state’s children this year reflects persistent economic insecurity as indicated by a worsening experience on every measure in almost every county and by the relatively large numbers of children affected. Not surprising, child maltreatment reports and confirmations also rose substantially over the trend period. Policymakers may debate whether this is a positive or negative finding, but certainly cutbacks in prevention and family support programs and worsening economic conditions have exerted enormous stress on families.

The data also reflect how the large variations in well-being among the state’s children continue to be rooted in the place where they live. On over half of the 15 trend indicators, Lake County had the worst outcomes for children while Livingston County had the best rates on five. The life experience of a child growing up in Keweenaw County with just over 400 children differs significantly from that of a child in Wayne County with almost half a million children.

The well-being of our children is affected by the living conditions of their families and communities, which are deeply affected by decisions of local, state and federal policymakers. In its ongoing effort to inform public policy discussions and community action and improve the lives of children in the state and its communities, Kids Count in Michigan presents the following overview of the current status of children.

While this summary report focuses on the trends over a specific period, the recently updated KIDS COUNT Data Center [www.datacenter.kidscount.org] provides 10-20 years of data for multiple indicators by county, city (and township) and Congressional district. The interactive data base allows users to compare trends in similar geographies, produce maps, line graphs and review rankings on specific indicators.
**TRENDS in CHILD WELL-BEING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE YEAR NUMBER</th>
<th>CURRENT YEAR NUMBER</th>
<th>WORSE</th>
<th>BETTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**ECONOMIC SECURITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>BASE YEAR</th>
<th>CURRENT YEAR</th>
<th>WORSE</th>
<th>BETTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children in poverty, ages 0–17</td>
<td>454,296</td>
<td>556,687</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children, ages 0–5, eligible for SNAP</td>
<td>187,912</td>
<td>259,168</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students eligible for free/reduced price school lunches</td>
<td>612,022</td>
<td>740,296</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HEALTH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>BASE YEAR</th>
<th>CURRENT YEAR</th>
<th>WORSE</th>
<th>BETTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than adequate prenatal care</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>33,949</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-birthweight babies</td>
<td>10,770</td>
<td>9,702</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant mortality (per 1,000)</td>
<td>1,036</td>
<td>815</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child/Teen deaths, ages 1–19 (per 100,000)</td>
<td>837</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (per 1,000)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>BASE YEAR</th>
<th>CURRENT YEAR</th>
<th>WORSE</th>
<th>BETTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Births to teens, ages 15–19</td>
<td>12,077</td>
<td>10,732</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in investigated families</td>
<td>162,026</td>
<td>206,896</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed victims of abuse/neglect</td>
<td>28,193</td>
<td>33,565</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in out-of-home care</td>
<td>16,982</td>
<td>10,316</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EDUCATION (not proficient)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>BASE YEAR</th>
<th>CURRENT YEAR</th>
<th>WORSE</th>
<th>BETTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-graders (MEAP reading)</td>
<td>45,022</td>
<td>33,787</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Class of 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth-graders (MEAP math)</td>
<td>81,623</td>
<td>75,399</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Class of 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school students (MME reading)</td>
<td>54,480</td>
<td>46,903</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Class of 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students not graduating on time</td>
<td>34,453</td>
<td>30,808</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Class of 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Supplimental Nutrition Assistance Program.
2 Family income is below 130 percent poverty level.
* Sometimes a rate could not be calculated because of low incidence of events or unavailable data.
MME - Michigan Merit Exam
N/A not available.

Michigan county profiles are available at [www.mlpp.org](http://www.mlpp.org) under Kids Count>Data Book 2013
### MICHIGAN COUNTIES WITH LOWEST AND HIGHEST RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Best County</th>
<th>BEST Rate</th>
<th>WORST Rate</th>
<th># of counties ranked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMIC SECURITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child poverty, ages 0-17</td>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young children, ages 0-5 eligible for SNAP</td>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 students eligible for free or reduced price lunch</td>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEALTH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than adequate prenatal care</td>
<td>Crawford</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-birthweight babies</td>
<td>Gogebic</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant mortality (per 1,000)</td>
<td>Shiawassee</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child/teen death, ages 1-19 (per 100,000)</td>
<td>Grand Traverse</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAMILY AND COMMUNITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Births to teens, ages 15-19 (per 1,000)</td>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in families investigated for abuse/ neglect (per 1,000)</td>
<td>Keweenaw</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed victims of abuse/ neglect (per 1,000)</td>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in out-of-home care due to abuse/ neglect (per 1,000)</td>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-graders NOT proficient in reading</td>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth-graders NOT proficient in math</td>
<td>Washtenaw</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school students NOT meeting reading expectations</td>
<td>Midland</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school students NOT graduating on time</td>
<td>Luce</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ECONOMIC SECURITY

Best County

Rate

Worst County

Rate

# of counties ranked

Child poverty, ages 0-17

Young children, ages 0-5

eligible for SNAP

K-12 students eligible for free or reduced price lunch

Livingston

9%

Livingston

14%

Livingston

21%

Livingston

48%

Livingston

60%

Livingston

94%

Lake

83

Roscommon

83

Lake

82

Livingston

48%

Lake

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Livingston

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Lake

94%
In Michigan over one-third of children (35%) lived in a family where no parent had a full-time year-round job.

Children in Poverty
Young Children in the Food Assistance Program
Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Price School Lunches

Michigan families with children have struggled in the economic downturn; joblessness and deteriorating wages have constrained the ability of many to provide for basic needs, as indicated by the large share of children living in families with income below the federal poverty level ($23,300 for a family of four and $18,500 for a single parent with two children).

More parents have taken part-time or part-year jobs to make ends meet. In Michigan over one-third of children (35%) lived in a family where no parent had a full-time year-round job. Differences were dramatic by race/ethnicity: African American children were three times more likely than Asian American children to live in a family where no parent had such employment in 2011. Such jobs usually provide more stable and higher income, and also often include health benefits, as well as the sick and vacation time critical for working parents. Structural issues such as discrimination in employment practices, disparity in educational quality and inadequate public transportation affect broader access to “good jobs.”

This section presents the trends in child poverty and nutrition support program eligibility—Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP for young children ages 0-5 and free or reduced priced school lunches for K-12 students—to assess economic insecurity. Both of these programs have responded to the economic recession by providing for the nutritional needs of children. Participation trends in these particular programs give some perspective on the levels of need among different age groups in Michigan and its counties.
MORE MICHIGAN CHILDREN LIVED IN FAMILIES WITH INCOME BELOW POVERTY LEVEL.

Economic security continued to deteriorate for children in Michigan in 2011. Between 2005 and 2011 the child poverty rate (SAIPE) rose by one-third—from 18% to 25% of children living in families with income below the federal poverty level. The 2011 poverty rate meant that over half a million children in the state lived in families with income inadequate to meet basic needs. All aspects of a child’s well-being are affected by economic insecurity, particularly as the state investment in schools, child care and public health have constricted dramatically in recent decades.

Children in Lake County were five times more likely to live in families with income below the poverty line than those in Livingston County—48% vs. 9%. Even though Livingston maintained the lowest child poverty rate, between 2005 and 2011 it experienced an increase of more than half in its child poverty rate, which jumped from 6% to 9% of children living below the poverty level. Overall child poverty rates escalated most sharply among Michigan’s affluent counties, such as Lapeer, Oakland, Ottawa and Clinton counties.

While the poverty level has been used for over five decades, the standard dramatically understates economic insecurity since it falls well below half the median income. The income to meet the average cost of basic needs in most areas of the state would require roughly double the official “poverty level.” By that measure (income under 200% FPL) nearly half the state’s children live in an economically insecure family.

FEDERAL POVERTY LEVELS AND MINIMUM WAGE EARNINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Single Parent/Two Children*</th>
<th>Two Parents/Two Children*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual Income</td>
<td>Monthly Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Poverty (50%FPL)</td>
<td>$9,249</td>
<td>$771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Poverty Level (100%)</td>
<td>$18,498</td>
<td>$1,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130% FPL</td>
<td>$24,047</td>
<td>$2,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150% FPL</td>
<td>$27,747</td>
<td>$2,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>185% FPL</td>
<td>$34,221</td>
<td>$2,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200% FPL</td>
<td>$36,996</td>
<td>$3,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250% FPL</td>
<td>$46,245</td>
<td>$3,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time minimum wage income</td>
<td>$15,392</td>
<td>$1,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount minimum wage earnings are below poverty level</td>
<td>$3,106</td>
<td>$259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Program eligibility levels are rough estimates for most participants.
Note: These amounts are gross income.
* Poverty rates are adjusted each year for inflation and based on family size and age.

FPL - Federal Poverty Level for 2012
Poverty was even more prevalent among children in Michigan’s African American and Hispanic communities, which have been disproportionately affected by the economic downturn. Half of the state’s African American children lived in poverty in 2012, as did more than one of every three Hispanic children. Children identified as non-Hispanic white or Asian had the lowest poverty rate (17%) although among Asian children poverty more than doubled over the trend period.

Geographically Michigan’s highest child poverty rates concentrated in its northern counties, particularly to the northeast. The more affluent counties often edged a county with an urban core.
SNAP PARTICIPATION RATES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN REFLECT WORSENING ECONOMIC INSECURITY.

Child poverty is particularly devastating to the development of young children; its impact during this stage is more likely to have lifelong consequences. Roughly 29% of Michigan’s youngest children ages 0-5 lived in families with incomes below poverty level, according to the latest data from the 2012 American Community Survey.

While poverty rates for young children are not available for all counties, participation for this age group in the federally funded SNAP, provides a reliable proxy for economic distress in this age group across counties. The program provides roughly $136 per month per person to Michigan families with income below 130% of the federal poverty level. SNAP benefits, which can be used only to purchase food items (no paper or cleaning products), are provided through an Electronic Benefits Transfer card, similar to a debit card. Michigan has one of the best participation rates among the states, with 95% of those eligible participating.¹

Over one quarter of a million of the state’s young children ages 0-5 relied on the program to meet their nutritional needs in 2012. Between 2005 and 2012 the participation rate for this age group leapt from 24% to 37%. Every Michigan county except one experienced increased participation, with rates in three of the state’s most affluent counties, Livingston, Oakland and Macomb, reflecting the largest increases, more than doubling over the trend period.

Even with its recent substantial increase, Livingston County continued to have the lowest rate of use SNAP (14%) among young children. The northern counties of Roscommon and Lake with roughly three of every five young children in the program reflected the highest rate of participation.

ROUGHLY HALF OF ALL K-12 STUDENTS WERE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL LUNCHES IN 2012.

Eligibility for free or reduced price lunches extends to 185% of the federal poverty level. (Students in families with income below 130% of the federal poverty level qualify for a free lunch while those in families with income between 130% and 185% of the federal poverty level are eligible for lunch at a reduced price.) Allowing K-12 students to obtain a free (fully subsidized) meal through the School Lunch Program or at reduced price is another national strategy to ensure low-income children have their nutritional needs met during the critical growing up years.

In the 2012-13 school year almost one of every two students in Michigan’s K-12 schools was eligible for a free or reduced priced lunch—roughly 740,000 students. In line with the trends in other economic security indicators, Livingston County had the smallest percentage of eligible students (21%) while Lake County had the largest (94%).

Between 2006 and 2012 the state average jumped by one-third—from 36% to 48% of K-12 students eligible for free or reduced priced school lunch. Every county sustained an increase in eligible students with Isabella County showing the largest jump—more than doubling over the trend period. Lake County with a rate already close to 90% in 2006 reflected the smallest increase over the trend period.

**ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL LUNCHES ESCALATED AMONG K-12 STUDENTS IN ALL COUNTIES.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: MI Department of Education*
HEALTH
CHILD POVERTY JEOPARDIZES CHILD HEALTH:
Low-income parents often do not have enough resources to provide adequate nutrition and healthy housing in safe neighborhoods with parks and recreation opportunities. While children in Michigan are less likely to be uninsured (5%) than those in 42 other states, that doesn’t guarantee a healthy birth or childhood. Michigan’s low-birthweight rate (babies born weighing less than 5 pounds 8 ounces) is higher than that in 30 other states and the child/teen death rate (27 deaths among every 100,000) is significantly above that of the best states—Massachusetts and Connecticut (17 deaths among every 100,000 children/youth).

Access to medical care can alleviate the symptoms of disease or prevent disease or death, but the conditions that promote health are rooted in the well-being of families, neighborhoods and communities. Children in Michigan are more likely to survive childhood, yet they increasingly suffer from a number of chronic conditions such as asthma, obesity, mental health issues, developmental conditions or special health care needs.  

Children in the state’s low-income households are at much higher risk for all these conditions. Escalating poverty, persistent unemployment, and disinvestment in local communities all function to compromise child health.

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2 Special health care needs include any physical, developmental, mental, sensory, behavioral, cognitive, or emotional impairment or limiting condition that requires medical management, health care intervention, and/or use of specialized services or programs. Definition from American Association of People with Disabilities.
In 2011 more than one of every four births in Michigan was to a woman who received less than adequate prenatal care.

In 2011 roughly 34,000 babies were born to Michigan women who had received less than adequate prenatal care as measured by the number of visits during the pregnancy and when care began. While the Michigan average was 29% for all live births, the rate ranged from a low of 19% in Crawford County to a high of 46% in Gratiot County.

Access to adequate prenatal care matters; it is a key strategy in improving birth outcomes for both mother and baby. The large percentage (29%) of Michigan’s pregnant women who do not receive adequate care should be a concern as the state has relatively high rates of unhealthy births. It compared poorly with the 50 states on key birth indicators, such as infant mortality (37th), low-birthweight (31st) and preterm births (31st).

Over one-third of mothers of newborns who resided in several counties in central northern Michigan and in southwest Michigan received less than adequate prenatal care. These high rates also prevailed in several counties in the UP. The causes for these wide variations must concern local communities and state policymakers in their efforts to improve the lives of young children.

3 It is not possible to assess the trend in prenatal care before 2008 because of changes in the Michigan birth certificate in 2007.

4 KIDS COUNT Data Center www.datacenter.kidscount.org

Roughly 9,700 Michigan infants weighed less than five and one-half pounds at birth, putting them at risk of development delay, chronic disease and even death. Low-birthweight is the second most common cause of infant mortality and has been linked to several causes including maternal diseases, infections, smoking, multiple births, nutritional deficiency and stress.

Between 2005 and 2011 the percentage of Michigan babies born at low-birthweight remained essentially the same—registering at 8.3% of all births in 2005 to 8.4% in 2011. Trends over the last decade in the state’s two largest counties reflected stagnation (Wayne County) or increase (Oakland County).

INFANT MORTALITY DECLINED IN MICHIGAN BETWEEN 2005 AND 2011.

The infant mortality rate for Michigan declined by 12% between 2005 and 2011—dropping from 8 deaths among every 1,000 births to 7.1. Just over 800 babies in Michigan died before their first birthday each year in the three-year period 2009-11.

Among the 47 Michigan counties that had statistically reliable infant mortality rates, Shiawassee had the lowest (3.3 deaths per 1,000 births) and Iosco the highest (12.5 deaths per 1,000 births). Of the 41 counties where a trend could be calculated, the majority experienced improvement between 2005 and 2011.

Shiawassee saw the most dramatic drop in its infant mortality rate over the trend period while Lapeer and Lenawee counties experienced a doubling in their rates. The infant mortality rates in Lapeer and Shiawassee deviated dramatically over the first decade of the 21st century.
The death rate for Michigan’s children and youth continued to decline between 2005 and 2011.

The death of a child or youth devastates a family, and the impact reverberates through the extended family and community. Due to immunizations against disease, other public health initiatives and multiple efforts to prevent accidental deaths and improve auto safety, the child/youth death rate dropped steadily over the 20th century.

Fortunately the death rate from all causes among Michigan’s children/youth ages 1-19 has continued to decline in recent years, but much less dramatically than over the 1990s. Between 2005 and 2011 the Michigan death rate for this age group declined by 11%—from 31 deaths among every 100,000 to 28 deaths. On average, 695 children/youth in the state lost their lives each year over the three-year period 2009-11.
In recent years the most dramatic changes in child/youth death rates occurred in Calhoun and Mason counties.

The likelihood of death in this age group varied widely; only 52 of the 83 counties even had a statistically reliable rate (with a total of six or more deaths) over the three-year period. Among those counties Grand Traverse had the lowest rate (12 deaths per 100,000) and the UP county of Iron had by far the highest death rate in this latest period—107 deaths per 100,000 children/youth. (This rate was an anomaly as the previous seven years Iron County did not have a reliable rate.) Mason and Osceola followed with a rate of 56 deaths per 100,000, with Mason showing a rate consistently above the state average since the late 1990s. Calhoun County reflected the most dramatic improvement over the trend period; its rate dropped by two-thirds, while Mecosta and Mason experienced the most acute increases.
FAMILY and COMMUNITY
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PROVIDE THE
PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL
ENVIRONMENT in which children live and grow. For
a variety of reasons some families have significant
difficulty providing for their children or protecting them
from harm. For example, children born to teenagers
are at higher risk of multiple bad outcomes including
poverty, abuse or neglect, grade retention, dropping
out of high school and teen parenthood. Their life
chances are greatly reduced from those of children
born to parents over the age of 19.

Mental illness, domestic violence and substance abuse
also interfere with the capacity to parent. Unfortunately
the current lack of community services to address these
issues can place children at heightened risk of abuse
or neglect, whether detected by the state or not. Poverty and unemployment elevate the risk of child
maltreatment, which may partially explain the rising
rates during recent times of economic hardship.

Conversely, the maltreatment rates in Michigan also
rose during the state’s economic boom of the late
1990s. Finally, the rates are influenced by factors within
the system itself—leadership, resources and federal
and state policies, including a precipitous drop in
prevention services and family support programming.
These indicators reflect the widest ranges of rates
across the counties: for some measures the highest rate
is eight or nine times the lowest rate.
Michigan’s teen birth rate continued its downward trend, dropping 10% between 2005 and 2011. The rate declined from 34 to 30 births among every 1,000 teenagers ages 15-19.\(^5\) Teen parenthood is both a risk and a result of living in poverty. While teenagers living in families with income below the poverty level are at higher risk of becoming parents as teens, once teen parenthood occurs, the affected teen experiences a heightened probability of a life in poverty. Almost 11,000 teenagers in Michigan gave birth each year over the three-year period 2009-11.

The risk of teen parenthood varied substantially by geography in Michigan. Despite a substantial drop (34%) in the teen birth rate in Lake County over the trend period, a teenager there was still four times more likely to have a child as one in Livingston County. (Lake County children also were almost six times more likely than those in Livingston County to live in a family with income below the poverty line.) The majority of counties (64) saw their teen birth rates decline over the trend period, with the most dramatic decrease occurring in Montmorency County.

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\(^5\) 2005 and 2011 reflect a three-year average for 2003-05 and 2009-11 respectively.
MORE CHILDREN LIVED IN FAMILIES INVESTIGATED FOR ABUSE OR NEGLECT.

Reports to the state of suspected child abuse or neglect come from a variety of sources, mostly “mandated” reporters, such as teachers, nurses, social workers and law enforcement, but also concerned relatives or neighbors. In FY 2012 the largest numbers of reports came from school personnel—teachers, counselors, and administrators (15,000)—and law enforcement (11,500). The other two major sources were the roughly 7,700 anonymous reporters and 7,100 relatives. Only those incidents that fit the state’s legal definitions are referred for further investigation by a Child Protective Services worker from the Department of Human Services.

As of March 2012 reports of abuse or neglect of children in Michigan are directed to a central intake center in an effort to standardize decisions about reports that require further investigation. When a report of alleged abuse or neglect is investigated, all family members are affected.

A total of almost 207,000 children—the highest number in the last 22 years—were involved in such an investigation in FY 2012—roughly 45,000 more children than in FY 2005. It is not clear whether the increase resulted from the implementation of the centralized intake almost halfway through FY 2012 or worsening conditions for families as relatively high unemployment rates persisted and incomes fell. Funding and staffing levels as well as policy changes also affect these trends.

The rate of children in a family investigated for abuse or neglect rose by 41% between Fiscal Years 2005 and 2012—jumping from 64 children of every 1,000 to 90 children among every 1,000. Substantial variation occurred across counties. A child in Lake County was six times more likely to live in a family investigated for abuse or neglect than one in Clinton County. Lake’s high rate (254

A CHILD IN LAKE COUNTY WAS ROUGHLY SIX TIMES MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN A FAMILY INVESTIGATED FOR ABUSE/NEGLECT AS ONE IN CLINTON COUNTY IN 2012.

Source: Michigan Department of Human Services

6 DHS report to Chairs of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees. January 2013. CPS Data 407905.7

7 The Michigan definitions of the various forms of child maltreatment are available on the state website at http://www.michigan.gov/gtfcan/0,4588,7-195-26941-77801--,00.html
per 1,000 children) meant that one of every four children in the county lived in a family investigated for abuse or neglect. Five of the eight counties with the highest rates were in northern Michigan.

Only four counties experienced a decline between Fiscal Years 2005 and 2012 in their rates of children involved in an investigation of abuse or neglect. In roughly a dozen counties the rate at least doubled over the trend period; Alger County sustained a fourfold increase in its rate.

MORE CHILDREN WERE CONFIRMED AS VICTIMS OF MALTREATMENT.

As the rate of children involved in investigations of abuse or neglect rose in Michigan, so did the rate of confirmed child victims. Historically allegations of abuse or neglect are confirmed in 20-25% of investigated cases. Between Fiscal Years 2005 and 2012, the rate of children confirmed as victims of maltreatment, mostly involving neglect, rose by almost one-third—jumping from 11 of every 1,000 children ages 0-17 to 15 of every 1,000. Neglect is defined as a child not receiving basic needs such as food, clothing or shelter; or not being protected from harm; or in relatively rare occurrences, being abandoned.

Only 12 counties had a decline in their rates of confirmed child victims over the trend period whereas 22 counties saw their rates at least double. The increase was substantial in several northern Michigan counties: Rates in Osceola, Oscoda, Montcalm, Mason and Luce bounced up fourfold. Dramatic variations also occurred in the rates across counties. A child in Lake County was almost nine times more likely to be a confirmed victim of abuse or neglect as one in Oakland County.

A CHILD IN LAKE COUNTY WAS ALMOST NINE TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE A CONFIRMED VICTIM OF ABUSE/NEGLECT AS ONE IN OAKLAND COUNTY IN 2012.
Victims often suffer more than one type of abuse or neglect, but neglect is by far more common although no less damaging than abuse. Between Fiscal Years 2008 and 2011, more than four of five confirmed victims in Michigan suffered from some form of neglect. Physical abuse was confirmed for roughly 20-23% of victims; sexual abuse and medical neglect occurred among a relatively small share of victims—3% and 4%, respectively.

FEWER CHILDREN REMAINED IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE FOR ABUSE OR NEGLECT.

There were almost 7,000 fewer children in out-of-home care (including foster and relative care) due to abuse or neglect in Michigan at the end of FY 2012 compared with FY 2005. The number of children in care at the end of the fiscal year totaled roughly 10,300 versus almost 17,000 in FY 2005. The rate of children in care declined by one-third—from 7 of every 1,000 children to 5 of every 1,000. Due to a lawsuit by the Children’s Rights organization, the state agreed to meet a number of goals to improve the lives of children in foster care and reduce the amount of time in such care.

Lake County had a rate of children in out-of-home care for abuse or neglect roughly eight times that of Oakland County: 16 of every 1,000 children compared with 2 of every 1,000 children in Oakland County. The rates of children living in out-of-home care were higher in 2012 than 2005 in just over half of the 74 counties where a rate could be calculated for trend years. The most substantial declines occurred in the urban counties of Saginaw, Oakland, Wayne and Genesee where rates were cut in half. At the other extreme, rates in Alpena and Osceola counties tripled.

Of the 8,485 children exiting care in FY 2011, roughly half returned home, comparable to the national average (52%). In contrast, the percentage of the state’s children exiting care through adoption was considerably higher than the national average—29% vs. 20%. The state’s percentage for adoption exits was among the 10 highest states in 2011 and has been consistently higher than the national average. Children in Michigan were less likely to leave care to live with other relatives than the national average—3% vs. 8% in the U.S.

8 KIDS COUNT Data Center [NCANDS data].
9 The number of children in foster care is a “point-in-time” one-day count at the end of the fiscal year and does not include youth over the age of 17.
EDUCATION

FOURTH-GRADERS
(NOT PROFICIENT IN READING)

EIGHTH-GRADERS
(NOT PROFICIENT IN MATH)

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
(NOT PROFICIENT IN READING)

STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME

EDUCATION IS KEY TO INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE ECONOMIC SUCCESS OF THE STATE. The current focus on education begins with prenatal care and extends from early childhood through postsecondary training or education. More Michigan residents must complete this trajectory successfully to be ready for careers in the 21st century.

From the moment of birth children begin to learn, and human brains develop most rapidly during the early years. By the fourth grade all children need proficiency in reading in order to learn other subjects. Graduation requirements demand that eighth-graders master basic math skills; and high school students must develop solid competence in literacy to move into postsecondary training and education. All Michigan youth need to graduate from high school within four years; currently only three of every four do so.

All the education outcomes in Michigan reflected improvement with the most dramatic progress occurring among the state’s fourth-graders demonstrating reading proficiency on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP).

Of concern is that despite improvements, relatively large percentages of Michigan students still did not demonstrate proficiency in eighth-grade math and high school English. Two of every three eighth-graders lacked math proficiency, and more than two of every five high school students did not show mastery in reading skills. Furthermore, only roughly one-third of counties reflected any improvement in the percentage of eighth-graders demonstrating proficiency in math or of high school students graduating within four years.

All Michigan youth need to graduate from high school within four years; currently only three of every four do so.
READING PROFICIENCY AMONG FOURTH-GRADERS IMPROVED ON THE MEAP.

The percentage of Michigan fourth-graders who did not demonstrate proficiency on the MEAP reading test declined between 2008 and 2012—dropping from 40% to 32% of test takers. While this is a heartening trend, this share represents roughly 33,800 of the state’s fourth-graders or almost one of every three who will face challenges with reading to learn other subjects as they move into upper level elementary grades.

While this is enough reason for concern, national test results suggest that the percentage of Michigan fourth-graders not proficient in reading is much larger. National results consistently show that over two-thirds of Michigan fourth-graders not demonstrating proficiency.

Livingston County had the smallest percentage (16%) of fourth-graders whose performance on the MEAP reading test did not reach proficiency level while Lake County had the largest share (46%). Most Michigan counties saw improvement in reading proficiency among fourth-graders; Lake County was one of only eight that experienced a worsening trend between 2008 and 2012.

The counties with the largest shares of fourth-graders who did not demonstrate proficiency in reading were concentrated in Michigan’s northern and south-central counties.
MATH PROFEICIENCY AMONG EIGHTH-GRADERS SHOWED LITTLE IMPROVEMENT.

The percentage of Michigan eighth-graders who did not demonstrate proficiency on the math MEAP test (68%) remained essentially the same between 2008 and 2012, even though most individual counties reflected worsening trends. More than two of every three eighth-graders did not perform to proficient level in either year. These outcomes mirror state results on the national testing report.

Washtenaw County had the smallest percentage (50%) of eighth-graders showing proficiency in math on the MEAP test while almost 90% of Montmorency eighth-graders performed below that level. Only 26 counties showed any improvement over the trend period in the percentage of eighth-graders with proficiency in math, and for most the change was minimal. Oscoda and Menominee counties reflected the most progress while Ontonagon and Leelanau counties sustained the steepest worsening trends.

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SHOW IMPROVEMENT IN READING SKILLS BETWEEN 2008 AND 2012.

The percentage of Michigan high school students not meeting expectations on the reading test improved by 8% between 2008 and 2012—dropping from 48% to 44% of test takers. A total of roughly 47,000 high school students did
not have the expected mastery of literacy skills. These results are of concern in an economy that demands postsecondary training or education to secure a job with adequate wages.

Among Michigan counties Midland had the smallest share (31%) of high school students not demonstrating reading skills to the expected level, and Iosco the largest percentage (55%).

ROUGHLY ONE OF EVERY FOUR MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DID NOT GRADUATE ON TIME.

Most Michigan high school students graduate from high school in four years, which is considered “on-time.” The state experienced only slight improvement on this measure: The percentage not graduating on time dropped from 25% to 24%. However, large disparities exist between counties. High school students in Lake County were six times more likely not to graduate on time than those in Luce County.

On-time graduate rates also vary considerably by disability status, race/ethnicity and economic status. Almost half (46%) of high school students with a disability or identified as homeless do not graduate within four years. In contrast, less than 20% of females, whites or Asians did not do so. Although almost all subgroups in the Class of 2012 improved compared with the Class of 2007, students with disabilities or limited English proficiency sustained increased rates.
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF CHILDREN

State policies shape the opportunities for families and their children. The findings from this report show the most compelling trends for children in Michigan to be the dramatic increases in economic insecurity and child maltreatment. Child poverty compromises all aspects of child well-being, including emotional and physical health, as well as safety and development. More than 80% of child abuse and neglect victims suffer from neglect, which is closely tied with poverty. Policy solutions must support the ability of parents to work in family-sustaining jobs.

• Reinstate the Earned Income Tax Credit at 20%: The state EITC is a refundable tax credit for working families. Based on the federal credit, it is designed to offset other taxes that disproportionately fall on low- and middle-income families. The credit has been shown to increase work efforts and assist families to meet basic needs. It also helps people stay on the job and working (by covering work-related costs such as transportation). The Michigan Legislature reduced the credit from 20% to 6% of the federal EITC beginning in tax year 2012.\textsuperscript{11}

• **Increase the child care subsidy amount and eligibility level:** Affordable quality child care supports children's healthy development and expands employment opportunities for parents. Michigan’s low subsidy rates, which have not been adjusted for inflation in over two decades, do not provide access to the licensed market for low-income working families.\(^{12}\) The average cost of full-time care for one child would consume roughly 40% of the gross earnings from a full-time minimum wage job. The state also has one of the lowest income eligibility ceilings in the country. Families lose access to the subsidy at income levels well below the amount necessary to absorb the average cost of care.

• **Support the successful implementation of the Affordable Care Act:** Healthier parents mean healthier children. The expansion of eligibility under Medicaid (now called the Healthy Michigan Plan) to all state residents with incomes below 138% of the poverty level should result in healthier parents, babies and children. Low-income women will have better access to health services before and after pregnancy to address chronic conditions that jeopardize their health and that of their babies. Low-income parents will get coverage through Medicaid or private coverage (with federal subsidies) at the Health Insurance Marketplace. Children whose parents purchase coverage through the marketplace will be guaranteed dental and vision benefits.

• **Expand Healthy Kids Dental fully:** Despite the expansion of the program into three more counties in FY 2014, roughly half of all the state’s Medicaid-eligible children will still not be included in this program that provides access to dental care. Dental decay and cavities are among the most common chronic childhood diseases and closely affect overall physical health.

• **Invest in early childhood:** Learning begins at birth, and the architecture of the brain develops rapidly during early childhood. Toxic stress during this critical period can affect healthy brain development and have lifelong consequences. Timely interventions and supports, including home visiting, parenting education and help with basic needs during this stage of life can improve the likelihood of more kindergarteners showing up at the door ready to succeed in school and life.

• **Raise the minimum wage:** Over the past four decades, the value of the minimum wage has dropped by over one-third, leaving many low-income parents struggling to provide for their children. Full-time earnings ($15,400) at minimum wage ($7.40) job in Michigan leaves a two-parent family of four with an income almost $8,000 below the federal poverty level ($23,300).

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<th>County</th>
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<th>% K-12 Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch</th>
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### Child Health

#### Child Deaths 1:19 per 100,000 Children

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<th>% Children 0-17 in Poverty</th>
<th>% Children 0-5 in the Food Assistance program</th>
<th>% K-12 Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch</th>
<th>% Children 0-17 in Poverty</th>
<th>% Children 0-5 in the Food Assistance program</th>
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### Economic Security

#### Michigan County Rates on Key Indicators of Child Well-Being

- **Overview 2013**
- **Child Health**
- **Economic Security**
### Indicators of Child Well-Being

#### Family and Community

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<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Children 0-17 in Families Investigated for Abuse, Neglect per 1,000</th>
<th>Confirmed Victims of Abuse, Neglect per 1,000</th>
<th>Children 0-17 in Out of Home Care per 1,000</th>
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#### Education

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<th>% Not Proficient in MME HS Reading</th>
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ECONOMIC SECURITY

CHILDREN IN POVERTY: The number reflects children living in families whose income is below the poverty level in 2005 and 2011. The percentage is based on the total number of children ages 0–17 in those years. These are the only annual child poverty estimates available for all Michigan counties. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates [http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe.html]

YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: The number includes children in families eligible for the Food Assistance Program (FAP), also known as the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), in December 2005 and December 2012. Families qualify with incomes below 130 percent of the poverty level. The percent is based on the estimated population of children ages 0–5 in 2005 and 2011. Source: Michigan Department of Human Services, Assistance Payments Statistics, Table 68, December 2005 and December 2012 (for counties); special run for Detroit data

STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE/REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL LUNCHES: K–12 students from families with incomes below 130 percent of the federal poverty are eligible for a fully subsidized or “free” school lunch while those from families with incomes between 130 and 185 percent are eligible for one at reduced price. The percentages are based on total enrollments of K–12 public school students for school years 2006–07 and 2012–13, including “charter” schools (public school academies). Beginning with the 2009–10 school year, the counts reflect those enrolled by October 31, not September 30 as in prior years. Source: Center for Educational Performance Information [http://www.mich.gov/cepi]

CHILD HEALTH

LESS THAN ADEQUATE PRENATAL CARE: The number represents the mothers who received less than adequate prenatal care as defined by the Kessner Index, which measures the adequacy of prenatal care by the month it began, the number of prenatal visits, and the length of the pregnancy. Due to a change in the birth certificate in 2008, data from previous years are not comparable. The number is an annual average for the three-year period of 2009–11. The percent is based on total resident live births, based on the mother’s county of residence. Source: Michigan Department of Community Health, Vital Records and Health Data Development Section

LOW–BIRTHWEIGHT BABIES: The number, which includes those babies who weighed less than 2,500 grams (approximately 5 lb. 8 oz.) at birth, is an annual average for the three-year periods of 2003–05 and 2009–11. The percentage is based on total resident live births in the mother’s county of residence. Source: Michigan Department of Community Health, Vital Records and Health Data Development Section

INFANT MORTALITY: The number, which includes infants who died before their first birthday, is an annual average for the three-year periods of 2003–05 and 2009–11. The rate is the number of infant deaths per 1,000 births during the reference periods in the mother’s county of residence. Source: Michigan Department of Community Health, Vital Records and Health Data Development Section

CHILD/TEEN DEATHS: The number includes deaths from all causes for ages 1–19. It is an annual average for the three-year periods of 2003–05 and 2009–11. The rate is the number of child deaths per 100,000 children ages 1–19 during those periods in the child’s county of residence. Source: Michigan Department of Community Health, Vital Records and Health Data Development Section

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

BIRTHS TO TEENS: The total number of births to teens ages 15–19 is an annual average for the three-year periods of 2003–05 and 2009–11. The rate of teen births is based on the number of live births per 1,000 females, ages 15–19 for those periods by county of residence. Source: Michigan Department of Community Health, Vital Records and Health Data Development Section

CHILDREN IN INVESTIGATED FAMILIES: These children reside in families where an investigation of abuse or neglect was conducted in fiscal years 2005 and 2012. Families may be investigated more than once in a given year, and their children would be counted each time. The number reflects the total for the year. Rates are calculated per 1,000 children ages 0–17 in their county of residence. Data are merged for two sets of counties: Missaukee/Wexford and Grand Traverse/Leelanau. Source: Michigan Department of Human Services, Health and Welfare Data Center, Children’s Protective Service Management Special Report (Fiscal Years 2005 and 2012)
CONFIRMED VICTIMS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT: These numbers reflect an unduplicated count of children confirmed to be victims of abuse or neglect following an investigation in fiscal years 2005 and 2012. Rates are calculated per 1,000 children ages 0–17 in their county of residence. Data are merged for two sets of counties: Missaukee/Wexford and Grand Traverse/Leelanau Source: Michigan Department of Human Services, Health and Welfare Data Center, Children's Protective Service Special Report (Fiscal Years 2005 and 2012)

CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE: The number represents child victims of abuse or neglect who are in out-of-home placement supervised by the Department of Human Services, its agents or the courts, including children placed with a relative or guardian during fiscal years 2005 and 2012. The county represents the location of the court rather than the child’s residence. The rate is calculated per 1,000 children ages 0–17. The data are from a single month (September) in the reference years. Source: Michigan Department of Human Services, Children's Services Management Information System, Special Report (September 2005 and 2011)

EDUCATION

FOURTH-GRADE (MEAP READING): The numbers reflect fourth-graders whose performances on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) reading test did not meet the standard of proficiency; they scored at Level 4 (Apprentice) or Level 3 (Basic) in 2008 and 2012. These performance levels are defined by a panel of educators and other stakeholders and approved by the Michigan Board of Education. The data are based on the new cut scores implemented in 2011; 2008 test results were recalculated on the new cut scores. The percentages are based on the numbers of fourth-graders whose reading test scores were included in the report. Source: Michigan Department of Education [http://www.mich.gov/meap]

EIGHTH-GRADE (MEAP MATH): The numbers reflect eighth-graders whose performances on the MEAP math test did not meet the standard of proficiency; they scored at Level 4 (Apprentice) or Level 3 (Basic) in 2008 and 2012. These performance levels are defined by a panel of educators and other stakeholders and approved by the Michigan Board of Education. The data are based on the new cut scores implemented in 2011; 2008 test results were recalculated on the new cut scores. The percentages are based on the numbers of eighth-graders whose math test scores were included in the report. Source: Michigan Department of Education [http://www.mich.gov/meap]

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (MME READING): The numbers reflect 11th-graders whose performances on the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) reading test did not meet the standard of proficiency; they scored at Level 4 (Not Proficient) or Level 3 (Partially Proficient) in 2008 and 2012. These performance levels were recommended by a panel of educators and other stakeholders and approved by the Michigan State Board of Education. The data are based on the new cut scores implemented in 2011; 2008 test results were recalculated on the new cut scores. The percentages are based on the numbers of 11th-graders whose reading test scores were included in the report. Source: Center for Educational Performance Information [http://www.mich.gov/cepi]

STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME: The counts include students who entered Grade 9 in 2003 and 2007 and did not graduate four years later. The percent is based on the cohort of students entering Grade 9 in those years. Some inconsistent data have been reported each year with occasional high counts of students listed as “off-track continuing”. Source: Center for Educational Performance Information [http://www.mich.gov/cepi]

DEFINITIONS

Population Estimates: Rates for non-census years are based on population estimates available from the Census Bureau; the 2010 census estimates were the latest available when rates were calculated for this publication.

Rates: Except where noted, rates are calculated when incidents total more than five. Three years of data are used to calculate an average annual rate for most health indicators because they are less likely to be distorted than rates based on single-year numbers; this three-year averaging also allows rates to be calculated for many counties with small populations. Rates based on small numbers of events and small populations can vary dramatically and are not statistically reliable for projecting trends or understanding local impact.

Percentage Change: Change is calculated by dividing the difference between the recent and base year rates by the base year rate (Recent rate-base rate/base rate). Rising rates indicate worsening conditions for children on measures in this report. Changes on some indicators such as victims of abuse or neglect may reflect state or local policies or staffing levels. The calculation is based on unrounded rates; calculations using rounded rates may not produce identical results.

Rank is assigned to a county indicator based on the rounded rate of the most recent year reported or the annual average of a three-year period. A rank of 1 is the “best” rate on the measure. Only counties with a rate in the most recent year are ranked on a given indicator.
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