



# STOLEN CHILDHOODS

U.S. COMPLEMENT TO THE  
END OF CHILDHOOD REPORT 2017



Save the Children®



## CONTENTS

- 1 Stolen Childhoods: U.S. Complement
- 2 2017 End of Childhood State Ranking
- 4 Every Day, 64 Babies Die Before Their First Birthday
- 6 Thousands of American Kids Going Hungry
- 8 Lack of Education Traps Children in Poverty
- 10 Young American Lives Extinguished by Violence
- 12 Childhoods Cut Short by Early Motherhood
- 16 Recommendations
- 18 Complete End of Childhood State Ranking
- 20 Methodology and Research Notes

Published by Save the Children

501 Kings Highway East, Suite 400  
Fairfield, CT 06825  
United States  
(800) 728-3843  
[www.SavetheChildren.org](http://www.SavetheChildren.org)

© Save the Children Federation, Inc.

ISBN: 1-888393-33-5





# STOLEN CHILDHOODS: U.S. COMPLEMENT

Childhood should be the time when our nation’s youngest citizens safely grow, learn and play, developing into the adults who will care for and lead our country, our world and our shared future forward. Every child deserves a childhood of love, care and protection, so they can develop to their full potential. Yet, for millions of children in the United States – and hundreds of millions more children around the world – childhood is ending too soon.

## Why?

Because these children have encountered events or circumstances – “childhood enders” – that have robbed them of their childhoods. Childhood enders can come in many forms: poor health, severe malnutrition, child abuse, an incomplete education, early pregnancy, homelessness, drug or alcohol abuse, exposure to extreme violence or engagement in criminal activity, to name a few.

In commemoration of International Children’s Day, Save the Children is launching a new global report that examines some of the reasons why children around the world are missing out on childhood. The *End of Childhood Report* includes a unique *End of Childhood Index* that evaluates countries against a common set of life-changing events that signal the disruption of childhood. It ranks 172 countries based on where childhood is most intact and where it is most eroded. The United States ranks 36th, sandwiched in between Bosnia and Russia, well behind other developed nations, including Norway, France and the United Kingdom and even lagging behind Portugal, Spain, Japan, Lithuania and Greece.<sup>1</sup>

This supplemental report looks specifically at some of the major reasons childhoods are ending too soon in America, as measured by five childhood enders (see chart below).

Save the Children’s *End of Childhood State Ranking* shows which states are succeeding, and failing, to provide conditions that nurture and protect children and help them avoid serious threats to childhood. Worldwide, millions of children have their childhoods cut short because of who they are and where they live. While there have been major advances for children in the United States over the past 25 years, the United States still trails most industrialized countries, largely because of the huge disparities this childhood ranking makes apparent through our evaluation of state-by-state data.

## MILLIONS\* OF CHILDREN ARE MISSING OUT ON CHILDHOOD IN THE U.S.

- An estimated 750,000 children drop out before graduating high school each year
- More than 541,000 children live in households with severe food insecurity
- Nearly 230,000 babies were born to girls aged 15 to 19 in the U.S. in 2015
- 23,455 babies died before their first birthday in 2015
- Roughly 5,000 children were murdered or committed suicide in 2015

\* Children often experience more than one childhood ender. See Methodology and Research Notes for details.

## CHILDHOOD ENDERS

Ender	Indicator
Child dies	Infant mortality rate
Child is malnourished	Child food insecurity rate
Child drops out of school	Rates of children not graduating from high school on time
Child is a victim of violence	Child homicide and suicide rate
Child has a child	Adolescent birth rate

<sup>1</sup> Save the Children. *End of Childhood Report 2017: Stolen Childhoods*. (Fairfield, Connecticut: 2017). Page 29.

# 2017 END OF CHILDHOOD STATE RANKING

Save the Children's first annual *End of Childhood State Ranking* reveals children in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Vermont are far more likely to experience safe, secure and healthy childhoods than children in Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and New Mexico. Each state's rank was determined by averaging its ranking for the five childhood enders considered in this review.

## Among the findings:

- Mississippi and Delaware reported the nation's highest infant mortality rates in 2015: 9.3 and 9.0 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, respectively – more than twice the infant death rate in eight states, and well above the national average of 5.9.

- Food insecurity rates for children across America remain high, with 20 percent of all children living in households that lack access to adequate food sometime during the year. Nearly 2.1 million children in California and 1.8 million children in Texas were food insecure in 2014. Mississippi and New Mexico were the states with the highest child food insecurity rates: 27.4 and 27.2 percent, respectively.

- Nationwide, 16.8 percent of high school students failed to graduate on time in the 2014-15 school year. Iowa had the lowest percentage of students not graduating, with a rate of 9.2 percent, closely followed by New Jersey at 10.3 percent. The states with the highest percentage of students failing to graduate were New Mexico (31.4 percent), Nevada (28.7 percent) and Oregon (26.2 percent).

- Alaska and South Dakota had the highest rates of violent deaths, as measured by homicides and suicides, among children aged 0 to 19 in 2015, each with rates of at least 17 violent deaths per 100,000 children – nearly three times the national average of 6.1. Other states with double digit violent death rates include Wyoming (11.7) and Louisiana (10.5).

- Arkansas reported the highest teen birth rate in 2015 at 38 teen births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 – a rate nearly twice the national average of 22. Five states, including Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont and New Jersey, reported 12 or fewer births per 1,000 girls.

See the complete *End of Childhood State Ranking* and an explanation of the methodology, beginning on page 18.

## TOP 10 STATES

Where childhood is least threatened

Rank	State
1	New Hampshire
2	Massachusetts
3	New Jersey
4	Vermont
5	Iowa
6	Connecticut
7	Minnesota
8	Virginia
9	Wisconsin
10	Rhode Island

## BOTTOM 10 STATES

Where childhood is most threatened

Rank	State
41	Arizona
42	Nevada
43	Alabama
44	Arkansas
45	Alaska
46	Georgia
46	Oklahoma
48	New Mexico
49	Mississippi
50	Louisiana





*Alayshia, 8, South Carolina*



## EVERY DAY, 64 BABIES DIE BEFORE THEIR FIRST BIRTHDAY

While the death rates of babies under age 1 have declined about 15 percent during the past decade,<sup>2</sup> the United States continues to have one of the highest infant mortality rates among high-income, industrialized countries.<sup>3</sup> In 2015, the U.S. had an infant mortality rate of 5.9 deaths per 1,000 live births. Fifteen states reported significantly higher infant mortality rates, ranging between 7 and 9.3 deaths per 1,000 live births. In contrast, 10 states reported rates less than 5 deaths per 1,000 live births. In 2015, an estimated 23,455 babies in the United States died before their first birthday – more than the combined total of infant deaths in 40 European countries during the same year.<sup>4</sup>

Many political leaders have hailed progress made by their states in reducing infant mortality rates, but often much of this progress has taken place in wealthier communities, while rates in less affluent areas have remained persistently high.

Data from Texas illustrate this dichotomy. In 2015, Texas reported a total of 2,308 infant deaths, nearly 10 percent of all infant deaths in the United States. While the state's overall infant mortality rate in recent years has been at or slightly below the national average of 5.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, Texas had at least four large communities – Beaumont-Port Arthur, Waco, Tyler-Jacksonville and Fort Worth – with rates higher than 7.3 deaths per 1,000 live births.<sup>5</sup> Nine small, impoverished rural counties in Texas reported a combined average mortality rate of more than 22 per 1,000 live births in 2013. In contrast, Collin County, the state's wealthiest county with a population more than 1,000, reported a rate of only 4 deaths per 1,000 live births, helping mask higher rates elsewhere in the state and keeping the state's overall rate below the national average.<sup>6</sup>



The United States continues to have one of the highest infant mortality rates among high-income, industrialized countries.

Kaylie, 2 months, Mississippi

Photo: Susan Warner / Save the Children

<sup>2</sup> Matthews, T.J. and Driscoll, A.K. *Trends in Infant Mortality in the United States, 2005-2014*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. (Hyattsville, Maryland: 2017). Page 1.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME). *Levels and Trends in Child Mortality: Report 2015*. (New York, New York: 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Analysis included 40 of 42 European countries with available data on infant deaths, excluding Russia and Ukraine. The estimated number of infant deaths across the 40 European countries totaled 20,966 in 2015. Estimates were generated by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (IGME) and downloaded from <http://data.unicef.org>. For a complete list of European countries, see <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>. April 25, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Kormondy, M. and Archer, N. *2016 Healthy Texas Babies Data Book*. Division for Family and Community Health Services, Texas Department of State Health Services. (Austin, Texas: 2016).

<sup>6</sup> KIDS COUNT. Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Infant Mortality Rates by State and by County, 2013*. (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/3132-infant-mortality?loc=45&loct=2#ranking/5/any/true/36/any/8198>). April 25, 2017.

# INFANT MORTALITY STATE RANKINGS

Rank	State	Infant Deaths (Number, Aged 0-1, 2015)	Infant Mortality Rate (Aged 0-1, 2015)
1	New Hampshire	52	4.2 per 1,000
1	Iowa	166	4.2 per 1,000
3	Massachusetts	309	4.3 per 1,000
4	California	2,169	4.4 per 1,000
5	Vermont	27	4.6 per 1,000
5	New York	1,087	4.6 per 1,000
5	Idaho	106	4.6 per 1,000
5	Colorado	309	4.6 per 1,000
9	New Jersey	487	4.7 per 1,000
10	Washington	432	4.9 per 1,000
11	Wyoming	39	5.0 per 1,000
12	Utah	257	5.1 per 1,000
12	Oregon	232	5.1 per 1,000
12	New Mexico	131	5.1 per 1,000
15	Minnesota	360	5.2 per 1,000
15	Nevada	190	5.2 per 1,000
17	Arizona	469	5.5 per 1,000
18	Connecticut	200	5.6 per 1,000
18	Rhode Island	62	5.6 per 1,000
20	Nebraska	153	5.7 per 1,000
20	Texas	2,308	5.7 per 1,000
22	Wisconsin	386	5.8 per 1,000
23	Virginia	612	5.9 per 1,000
23	Hawaii	108	5.9 per 1,000
23	Kansas	232	5.9 per 1,000
26	Illinois	953	6.0 per 1,000
26	Montana	75	6.0 per 1,000
28	Pennsylvania	862	6.1 per 1,000
29	Florida	1,400	6.2 per 1,000
30	Missouri	490	6.5 per 1,000
31	Maine	83	6.6 per 1,000
31	Michigan	744	6.6 per 1,000
33	Maryland	490	6.7 per 1,000
33	Kentucky	375	6.7 per 1,000
35	Alaska	78	6.9 per 1,000
36	Tennessee	570	7.0 per 1,000
36	South Carolina	405	7.0 per 1,000
38	North Dakota	81	7.2 per 1,000
38	West Virginia	142	7.2 per 1,000
38	Ohio	1,005	7.2 per 1,000
41	North Carolina	884	7.3 per 1,000
41	Indiana	611	7.3 per 1,000
41	South Dakota	90	7.3 per 1,000
41	Oklahoma	386	7.3 per 1,000
45	Arkansas	293	7.5 per 1,000
46	Louisiana	498	7.7 per 1,000
47	Georgia	1,024	7.8 per 1,000
48	Alabama	495	8.3 per 1,000
49	Delaware	100	9.0 per 1,000
50	Mississippi	356	9.3 per 1,000
	United States	23,455	5.9 per 1,000

Top Performing States

Middle Performing States

Bottom Performing States



One in every five children lives in a household that does not have regular access to food.

*A young boy waits in the Upper Des Moines Opportunity food pantry in Storm Lake, Iowa. Storm Lake has a low unemployment rate, vibrant downtown and tree-lined neighborhoods, but it's also facing a surge in hunger that's familiar to rural communities across the country.*

Photo: Charlie Neibergall / AP

## THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN KIDS GOING HUNGRY

Millions of families across America struggle to put healthy food on their tables. One in every five children lives in a household that does not have regular access to food throughout the year. The federal government categorizes these households as “food insecure.”<sup>7</sup> In addition, more than half a million children live in households with “very low food security,” according to the latest government figures.<sup>8</sup> Children in these households face a much higher risk of malnutrition, obesity and hunger, which could hinder their physical and mental development and reduce their chances of growing up strong and healthy.

When it comes to those lacking access to food, most live in poverty. While nearly 9 of 10 households nationwide have enough food, nearly 1 in every 3 households with an income below the poverty threshold experienced food insecurity in 2015. Households headed by single women had similarly high rates of food insecurity. About 20 percent of all African-American and Hispanic households also lack access to adequate food

sometime during the year. The prevalence of food insecurity is highest for households located in rural areas.<sup>9</sup>

Our state ranking shows Mississippi with the highest rate of food insecurity at 27.4 percent, more than twice that of North Dakota, which has a rate of only 11.4 percent. North Dakota reported the lowest child food insecurity rate of any state.<sup>10</sup>

Overall, 13.1 million children<sup>11</sup> lived in households that lacked access to adequate food sometime during 2015. Of greatest concern are the estimated 541,000 children who live in households that experienced “very low food security” – the lowest food security ranking by the federal government. For these children, the situation was “so severe that caregivers reported that children were hungry, skipped a meal, or did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Coleman-Jensen A., Rabbitt, M., Gregory, C., & Singh, A. *Household Food Security in the United States in 2014*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (Washington, DC: 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Page 13.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.


<sup>11</sup> Coleman-Jensen, A., Rabbitt, M., Gregory, C., & Singh, A. *Household Food Security in the United States in 2015*. (2016). U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (Washington, D.C.: 2016). Page 6.


<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



# MALNUTRITION STATE RANKINGS

Rank	State	Food Insecure Children (Number, Aged 0-18, 2014)	Child Food Insecurity Rate (Aged 0-18, 2014)
1	North Dakota	19,070	11.4 %
2	Massachusetts	210,050	15.1 %
3	Minnesota	195,660	15.2 %
4	New Hampshire	41,350	15.5 %
5	Virginia	299,050	16.0 %
6	New Jersey	338,690	16.8 %
6	Wyoming	23,130	16.8 %
8	Iowa	129,270	17.8 %
8	Delaware	36,380	17.8 %
10	Connecticut	140,290	18.1 %
10	Colorado	226,350	18.1 %
12	Utah	164,440	18.2 %
13	Maryland	247,560	18.3 %
14	South Dakota	39,030	18.5 %
15	Vermont	23,310	19.1 %
15	Wisconsin	248,570	19.1 %
17	Pennsylvania	521,750	19.3 %
17	Idaho	83,110	19.3 %
19	Illinois	583,000	19.5 %
20	Nebraska	92,230	19.7 %
20	Michigan	437,100	19.7 %
22	Montana	45,110	20.1 %
23	Rhode Island	43,210	20.3 %
24	Alaska	38,080	20.4 %
25	Missouri	289,210	20.8 %
26	New York	884,170	20.9 %
27	Washington	337,320	21.0 %
28	Indiana	335,410	21.2 %
29	Kansas	153,940	21.3 %
30	West Virginia	82,220	21.5 %
31	Kentucky	222,380	21.9 %
32	Hawaii	67,690	22.0 %
33	California	2,099,120	22.9 %
34	Maine	60,010	23.3 %
35	South Carolina	253,340	23.4 %
36	Ohio	628,580	23.8 %
36	Oklahoma	226,390	23.8 %
38	Tennessee	357,920	24.0 %
39	Nevada	161,260	24.3 %
40	Oregon	210,290	24.5 %
40	Louisiana	272,760	24.5 %
42	North Carolina	564,240	24.6 %
43	Florida	1,007,870	24.9 %
44	Texas	1,821,820	25.6 %
45	Georgia	650,970	26.1 %
46	Arkansas	185,660	26.3 %
47	Alabama	292,330	26.4 %
48	Arizona	434,840	26.8 %
49	New Mexico	136,070	27.2 %
50	Mississippi	200,600	27.4 %
	United States	15,323,000	20.9 %

 Top Performing States

 Middle Performing States

 Bottom Performing States


## LACK OF EDUCATION TRAPS CHILDREN IN POVERTY

While the percentage of high school students not graduating on time has fallen significantly in the past five years, from 21 percent in the 2010-11 school year to 16.8 percent in 2014-15, wide disparities in graduation rates remain among states across America.<sup>13</sup> The states with the lowest rates, Iowa and New Jersey, see about 10 percent of their high school population not graduating on time, while the country's highest dropout rates are in the southwest, with New Mexico and Nevada hovering at dropout rates at roughly 30 percent.<sup>14</sup> In addition, Oregon, Mississippi and Alaska all reported dropout rates of 24 percent or higher.

Many educators are extolling the merits of higher graduation rates, noting those rates spur economic growth and lead to economic benefits for individuals, communities and the nation as a whole.<sup>15</sup> But the progress in graduation rates has also been met with skepticism. Some critics have noted that the higher graduation rates are not translating into more students leaving high school prepared for college and career success.

For millions of young adults, however, the current debate over graduation rates doesn't matter. They have dropped out of school and now face a life of endless struggle, with few prospects of finding a job with a livable wage, buying a home or supporting a family. Each year, an estimated 750,000 students drop out of school<sup>16</sup> and join the ranks of some 5.5 million U.S. youth aged 16-24 who are neither in school nor working.<sup>17</sup>

Many experts say the critical time to address the dropout problem is in the earliest years of education, even before a child enters kindergarten. Proficiency in reading by the end of third grade is crucial to a child's educational development and linked to his or her likelihood to graduate high school on time. Beginning in fourth grade, children use reading to learn other subjects, so their ability to master reading coincides with their ability to keep up academically. Children who reach fourth grade not reading at grade level are more likely to drop out of high school, reducing their earnings potential and chance for success later in life.<sup>18</sup>



Each year, an estimated 750,000 students drop out of school and join the ranks of some 5.5 million U.S. youth aged 16-24 who are neither in school nor working.

Essence, 8, South Carolina

Photo: Susan Warner / Save the Children

<sup>13</sup> DePaoli J.L., Balfanz R., Bridgeland, J., Atwell, M., Ingramrogress, E.S. *Building a Grad Nation: Progress and Challenges in Raising High School Graduation Rates. 2017 Annual Update.* (Washington, D.C.: 2017).

<sup>14</sup> Cutler D., Lleras-Muney, A. *Education and Health Policy Brief #9.* National Poverty Center. Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: 2007).

<sup>15</sup> DePaoli J.L., Balfanz R., Bridgeland, J., Atwell, M., Ingramrogress, E.S. *Building a Grad Nation: Progress and Challenges in Raising High School Graduation Rates. 2017 Annual Update.* (Washington, D.C.: 2017).

<sup>16</sup> Alliance for Excellent Education. *Progress is No Accident: Why ESEA Can't Backtrack on High School Graduation Rates.* (Washington, D.C.: 2015). Page 1.


<sup>17</sup> Lewis, K., Burd-Sharps, S. *Zeroing In on Place and Race: Youth Disconnection in America's Cities, Measure of America.* (Brooklyn, New York: 2015).


<sup>18</sup> KIDS COUNT. Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Fourth Grade Reading Achievement Levels, 2015.* (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/5116-fourth-grade-reading-achievement-levels?loc=1&loc2=1#detailed/1/any/false/573,36,867,38,18/1185,1186,1187,1188/11560>). April 25, 2017.





# HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUT STATE RANKINGS

Rank	State	High School Students Not Graduating on Time (Percentage, 2014-15)
1	Iowa	9.2 %
2	New Jersey	10.3 %
3	Alabama	10.7 %
4	Texas	11.0 %
5	Nebraska	11.1 %
6	Wisconsin	11.6 %
7	New Hampshire	11.9 %
8	Kentucky	12.0 %
9	Tennessee	12.1 %
10	Missouri	12.2 %
11	Vermont	12.3 %
12	Maine	12.5 %
13	Massachusetts	12.7 %
14	Connecticut	12.8 %
15	Indiana	12.9 %
16	Maryland	13.0 %
17	North Dakota	13.4 %
18	West Virginia	13.5 %
19	Montana	14.0 %
20	Virginia	14.3 %
20	Kansas	14.3 %
22	Illinois	14.4 %
22	Delaware	14.4 %
22	North Carolina	14.4 %
25	Arkansas	15.1 %
26	Utah	15.2 %
26	Pennsylvania	15.2 %
28	South Dakota	16.1 %
29	Rhode Island	16.8 %
30	Oklahoma	17.5 %
31	California	18.0 %
32	Minnesota	18.1 %
33	Hawaii	18.4 %
34	Ohio	19.3 %
35	South Carolina	19.7 %
36	Michigan	20.2 %
37	Wyoming	20.7 %
38	New York	20.8 %
39	Idaho	21.1 %
40	Georgia	21.2 %
41	Washington	21.8 %
42	Florida	22.1 %
43	Louisiana	22.5 %
44	Arizona	22.6 %
45	Colorado	22.7 %
46	Alaska	24.4 %
47	Mississippi	24.6 %
48	Oregon	26.2 %
49	Nevada	28.7 %
50	New Mexico	31.4 %
	United States	16.8 %

 Top Performing States

 Middle Performing States

 Bottom Performing States

A photograph showing a man in a black jacket and cap walking with two young boys across a street. In the background, a white car is parked near a crime scene cordoned off with yellow police tape. A house number '366' is visible on a utility pole.

**In 2015, homicide and suicide accounted for nearly 5,000 deaths among children aged 19 and younger in the United States.**

A family walks past the scene of a shooting in Altadena, Calif. in 2016. Los Angeles County Sheriff's officials say a 4-year-old boy was killed and the man he was with was wounded in a drive-by shooting.

Photo: Nick Ut / AP

## YOUNG AMERICAN LIVES EXTINGUISHED BY VIOLENCE

In 2015, homicide and suicide accounted for nearly 5,000 deaths among children aged 19 and younger in the United States. Our U.S. ranking shows that youth suicide and homicide rates vary widely by state, ranging from a low in New York of 3.4 violent deaths per 100,000 children to a high in Alaska of 17.6. Among youth aged 15 to 19, these violent deaths represent the leading cause of death behind accidents, a broad category that includes self-inflicted fatal accidents such as drug overdoses, as well as car crash fatalities.<sup>19</sup> In comparing child homicide rates worldwide, Save the Children's global *End of Childhood Index* finds homicides more common among children in the U.S. than in any other developed country with available data. Homicide rates among young people in many Latin American countries are significantly higher.<sup>20</sup>

But homicide and suicide rates alone do not tell the whole story of violence facing America's youth. More than half of all U.S. youth experience some form of physical assault in their lifetime, according to one recent national survey.<sup>21</sup> In a separate 2015 survey of youth in grades 9 to 12, nearly one in four reported being in a physical fight in the past year, and more than one in four male students reported carrying a gun, knife or club to school in the 30 days preceding the survey.<sup>22</sup>

Child abuse and drug dependence also disrupt the lives of hundreds of thousands of U.S. children each year. In 2015, there were 683,000 reported victims of child abuse. Three out of four were victims of neglect, 17 percent were physically abused and 8 percent were sexually abused. A nationally estimated 1,670 children died of abuse and neglect.<sup>23</sup>

An estimated 1.3 million adolescents across America aged 12 to 17 had a substance use disorder in 2014, even before they reached the peak years of drug abuse between 18 and 25.<sup>24</sup> Car crashes due to excessive drinking claim the lives of more than 1,500 young people under 21 each year.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, drug overdose deaths among teens and young adults have skyrocketed – more than doubling among people aged 12 to 25, from 3.1 deaths per 100,000 in 1999-2001 to 7.3 deaths in 2011-2013. The most recently reported overdose death rates were highest in West Virginia (12.6 per 100,000) and lowest in North Dakota (2.2 per 100,000).<sup>26</sup> Nationwide, an estimated 4,235 young people aged 15 to 24 died of drug overdoses in 2015.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Fatal Injury Data. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (<https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html>). April 10, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> Save the Children. *End of Childhood Report 2017: Stolen Childhoods*. (Fairfield, Connecticut: 2017). Page 23.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Justice. *Engaging Communities, Empowering Victims: 2015 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide*. (Washington, D.C.: 2015). Page 17.

<sup>22</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. *Youth Violence: Facts at a Glance 2016*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ly-datashet.pdf>).

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. *Child Maltreatment 2015*. (Washington, D.C.: 2017) Page ii.

<sup>24</sup> America's Health Rankings. United Health Foundation. Drug Dependence or Abuse-Youth. ([http://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/2016-health-of-women-and-children-report/measure/youth\\_drug/](http://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/2016-health-of-women-and-children-report/measure/youth_drug/)). April 25, 2017.

<sup>25</sup> Alcohol Related Disease Impact (ARDI) Data. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([https://nccd.cdc.gov/DPH\\_ARDI/Default/Default.aspx](https://nccd.cdc.gov/DPH_ARDI/Default/Default.aspx)). April 25, 2017.


<sup>26</sup> Trust for America's Health. *Reducing Teen Substance Misuse: What Really Works 2015*. (Washington, D.C.: 2015). Page 23.


<sup>27</sup> The National Institute on Drug Abuse Blog Team. *Drug Overdoses in Youth*. (<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/drug-overdoses-youth>). April 28, 2017.




# VIOLENCE STATE RANKINGS

Rank	State	Homicides and Suicides (Number, Aged 0-19, 2015)	Homicide and Suicide Rate (Aged 0-19, 2015)
1	North Dakota	<10	*
1	Rhode Island	<10	*
1	Vermont	<10	*
4	New York	162	3.4 per 100,000
5	New Jersey	78	3.5 per 100,000
6	Massachusetts	57	3.6 per 100,000
7	Connecticut	33	3.8 per 100,000
8	New Hampshire	12	4.0 per 100,000
9	California	479	4.7 per 100,000
10	Maine	14	4.8 per 100,000
11	Hawaii	17	5.0 per 100,000
12	Texas	410	5.1 per 100,000
13	Virginia	108	5.2 per 100,000
14	Nebraska	27	5.2 per 100,000
15	West Virginia	22	5.2 per 100,000
16	Minnesota	78	5.5 per 100,000
17	Oregon	53	5.5 per 100,000
18	Pennsylvania	171	5.6 per 100,000
19	Idaho	27	5.7 per 100,000
20	North Carolina	145	5.7 per 100,000
21	Iowa	47	5.7 per 100,000
22	Wisconsin	85	5.9 per 100,000
23	Kansas	47	5.9 per 100,000
24	Mississippi	50	6.2 per 100,000
25	Florida	283	6.2 per 100,000
26	Arkansas	51	6.5 per 100,000
27	South Carolina	80	6.5 per 100,000
28	Arizona	119	6.6 per 100,000
29	Maryland	104	6.9 per 100,000
30	Kentucky	78	6.9 per 100,000
31	Michigan	172	6.9 per 100,000
32	Washington	125	7.0 per 100,000
33	Nevada	52	7.1 per 100,000
34	Georgia	202	7.3 per 100,000
35	Utah	74	7.4 per 100,000
36	Ohio	218	7.4 per 100,000
37	Illinois	246	7.5 per 100,000
38	Alabama	92	7.5 per 100,000
39	Indiana	133	7.6 per 100,000
40	Tennessee	128	7.7 per 100,000
41	Colorado	114	8.2 per 100,000
42	Delaware	20	8.7 per 100,000
43	New Mexico	51	9.2 per 100,000
44	Oklahoma	99	9.3 per 100,000
45	Missouri	145	9.4 per 100,000
46	Montana	25	9.9 per 100,000
47	Louisiana	129	10.5 per 100,000
48	Wyoming	18	11.7 per 100,000
49	South Dakota	40	17.0 per 100,000
50	Alaska	36	17.6 per 100,000
	United States	4,991	6.1 per 100,000

 Top Performing States

 Middle Performing States

 Bottom Performing States

\* For these 3 states, child homicides and suicides data were suppressed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention due to extremely small frequency counts of 10 or less.

## CHILDHOODS CUT SHORT BY EARLY MOTHERHOOD

Although the adolescent birth rate in the United States has declined by more than 60 percent over the past 25 years,<sup>28</sup> it is still higher than the rate of most other industrialized nations – about two-and-a-half times that of France and five times that of Japan and the Netherlands.<sup>29</sup>

In 2015, teenage girls gave birth to nearly 230,000 babies across the U.S.<sup>30</sup> States with large rural populations, above-average poverty and lower-than-average education levels had the highest rates of births to adolescents. These states include Arkansas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Kentucky and West Virginia. Arkansas' teen birth rate of 38 births per 1,000 girls aged 15 to 19 is by far the highest rate – nearly 4 times the rate of Massachusetts and Connecticut. Nationwide, about one in every 45 girls aged 15 to 19 had a baby in 2015.<sup>31</sup>

In many of the nation's poorest rural areas, teen birth rates are well above the national average. For example, in 2013, Phillips and St. Francis counties in Arkansas reported teen

birth rates of 91 and 87 births per 1,000 girls aged 15 to 19, respectively – rates higher than in most developing countries.<sup>32</sup> Fortunately, teen mothers and their newborns in rural Arkansas and across the U.S. have greater access to health care and much lower mortality rates than young mothers and newborns in the developing world.

Yet teenage mothers and their newborns face enormous challenges in the United States, with pregnancy effectively ending childhood for many young mothers, forcing them to enter adulthood before they are prepared. Numerous studies have shown that teenage pregnancy and childbearing can have long-term negative effects for both the mother and the child, including lack of education attainment, poverty and poor health.<sup>33</sup> Teenagers also have a higher risk of bearing low-birthweight and pre-term babies,<sup>34</sup> and the education and employment opportunities for teen moms are limited.<sup>35</sup> Babies born to teenage mothers are also more likely to become teen mothers themselves, continuing the cycle.<sup>36</sup>



In 2015, 1 in every 45 girls aged 15-19 had a baby.

Kadajah, 17, with her 17-month-old daughter, Ivori, South Carolina

Photo: Susan Warner / Save the Children

<sup>28</sup> Teen Birth Rate Comparison, 2015. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. (<https://thenationalcampaign.org/data/compare/1701>). May 1, 2017.

<sup>29</sup> Save the Children. *End of Childhood Report 2017: Stolen Childhoods*. (Fairfield, Connecticut: 2017). Page 19.

<sup>30</sup> Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Osterman, M.J.K, et. al. *Births: Final Data for 2015*. National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 66 No. 1. (Hyattsville, Maryland: 2017). Page 3.

<sup>31</sup> 2015 national rate of 22 births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 is the equivalent of 1 birth per 45 teenaged girls.

<sup>32</sup> KIDS COUNT. Annie E. Casey Foundation. Teenage Births, Arkansas By County. (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/6379-teenage-births?loc=5&loct=5#ranking/5/any/true/36/any/13258>). May 1, 2017. Save the Children. *End of Childhood Report 2017: Stolen Childhoods*. (Fairfield, Connecticut: 2017). Pages 30-34.

<sup>33</sup> The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. *Counting It Up: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing in Arkansas in 2010*. (Washington, D.C.: 2014).

<sup>34</sup> Martinez, G., Copen, C.E., Abma, J.C. *Teenagers in the United States: Sexual Activity, Contraceptive Use, and Childbearing, 2006–2010 National Survey of Family Growth*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Series 23, Number 31. (Hyattsville, Maryland: 2011).

<sup>35</sup> Hoffman, S.D., Maynard, R.A. *Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs & Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy*. (Washington, D.C.: 2008).

<sup>36</sup> Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. *Teenage Births: Outcomes for Young Parents and their Children*. (Albany, New York: 2008).



# ADOLESCENT BIRTH STATE RANKINGS

Rank	State	Teen Births (Number, Aged 15-19, 2015)	Teen Birth Rate (Aged 15-19, 2015)
1	Massachusetts	2,140	9.4 per 1,000
2	Connecticut	1,241	10.1 per 1,000
3	New Hampshire	468	10.9 per 1,000
4	Vermont	242	11.6 per 1,000
5	New Jersey	3,374	12.1 per 1,000
6	Minnesota	2,386	13.7 per 1,000
7	Rhode Island	530	14.3 per 1,000
8	New York	8,961	14.6 per 1,000
9	Maine	603	15.4 per 1,000
10	Wisconsin	3,040	16.2 per 1,000
11	Maryland	3,214	17.0 per 1,000
12	Virginia	4,508	17.1 per 1,000
13	Utah	2,021	17.6 per 1,000
13	Washington	3,773	17.6 per 1,000
15	Pennsylvania	7,218	17.7 per 1,000
16	Delaware	540	18.1 per 1,000
17	Iowa	1,943	18.6 per 1,000
18	California	24,175	19.0 per 1,000
18	Oregon	2,284	19.0 per 1,000
20	Colorado	3,270	19.3 per 1,000
21	Michigan	6,356	19.4 per 1,000
22	Hawaii	789	20.6 per 1,000
23	Florida	11,957	20.8 per 1,000
24	Illinois	8,764	21.1 per 1,000
25	Nebraska	1,388	22.0 per 1,000
26	North Dakota	527	22.2 per 1,000
27	Idaho	1,288	22.5 per 1,000
28	Ohio	8,755	23.2 per 1,000
29	North Carolina	7,641	23.6 per 1,000
30	Missouri	4,838	25.0 per 1,000
31	Montana	770	25.3 per 1,000
32	Kansas	2,479	25.5 per 1,000
33	Georgia	8,829	25.6 per 1,000
34	Indiana	5,813	26.0 per 1,000
35	South Carolina	4,021	26.2 per 1,000
36	Arizona	5,910	26.3 per 1,000
37	South Dakota	720	26.4 per 1,000
38	Nevada	2,369	27.6 per 1,000
39	Wyoming	501	29.2 per 1,000
40	Alaska	662	29.3 per 1,000
41	Alabama	4,739	30.1 per 1,000
42	Tennessee	6,267	30.5 per 1,000
43	West Virginia	1,719	31.9 per 1,000
44	Kentucky	4,503	32.4 per 1,000
45	Louisiana	5,055	34.1 per 1,000
46	New Mexico	2,320	34.6 per 1,000
46	Texas	32,687	34.6 per 1,000
48	Mississippi	3,536	34.8 per 1,000
48	Oklahoma	4,391	34.8 per 1,000
50	Arkansas	3,677	38.0 per 1,000
	United States	229,703	22.3 per 1,000

Top Performing States

Middle Performing States

Bottom Performing States

# I FELT LIKE I HAD NOBODY

When Breanne told her family she was expecting her first child, she was met with shock and disappointment. She was only 15 years old at the time. Her small town community didn't embrace her either. "Going to school pregnant made me an outcast. You have to grow up fast because you're responsible for a little life," she says.

Her commitment to her children, however, is unwavering. She's doing the best for her kids and her youngest children, Jesse and Serenity, who participate in Save the Children's early childhood education programs.

"Kids living in poverty can't really even be kids because they see drugs, drinking and guns. It steals their childhood. When you grow up poor, you have to deal with the tough reality of life before you're ready. I work hard every day to make things better for my kids than it was for me," Breanne shares.

"In the end, it's worth it because you have your baby. Feeling that love makes everything better."

*Breanne and her daughter Serenity, five months, with Save the Children Early Steps to School Success Coordinator Philip Ruybal.*





# “Humanity owes the child the best it has to give.”

– Eglantyne Jebb, Founder, Save the Children

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In September 2015, world leaders came together and agreed on an ambitious global framework for ending poverty called the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the SDGs. The SDGs promise a future in which all children have a full childhood – free from malnutrition and violence, with access to quality health care and education – and reinforces obligations to children set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Most importantly, this is a future where no child is left behind.

As this complement and the 2017 *End of Childhood Report* show, we have a long way to go to realize this vision. Millions of children around the world and in the United States are left behind, either by design or neglect. Leaving children behind, especially the most excluded, will hinder the world’s ability to meet the SDGs within a generation.

That is why Save the Children is dedicated to working with governments and other stakeholders to ensure progress is made on meeting the SDGs. Save the Children is committed to reaching *every last child* by tackling the obstacles that exclude millions of children from surviving, learning and being protected.

We call on world leaders, including those here in the United States, to value children and their right to survive, thrive and be protected by following through on the commitments made under the SDGs, and by taking immediate steps to implement the pledge to leave no one behind, especially not children. This pledge is a commitment to ensure that the SDG targets should be met for all nations, all people and all segments of society.

As Congress develops the fiscal year 2018 budget, we urge members to support robust funding for vital programs that help kids survive and thrive so no child loses out.

### **Invest in Early Childhood Education**

Support early childhood education programs, including Head Start, Child Care Development Block Grants, and Preschool Development Grants to the fullest extent possible. Children who participate in high-quality early childhood education programs are less likely to drop out of school, become a teen parent and be arrested for violent crime.

### **Continue to Fund Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)**

Home visiting is a successful program that has transformed the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and families living in poverty across America. From improving academic outcomes for children to helping parents become more economically secure, home visiting empowers families and helps kids.

### **Protect After-School Programs**

After-school programs ensure kids have a safe place to go at the end of the day, close the achievement gap, and boost our economy by enabling parents to continue working after the school day ends, knowing their child is safe. Studies have shown that after-school programs motivate students to stay in school through high school graduation. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program funds after-school programs for high-poverty schools. Eliminating the program would mean 1.6 million kids across America wouldn’t have a safe place to go after the school bell rings.



## SINCE 1932

Save the Children began working in the United States in 1932, serving Appalachia's hardest-hit children and families during the Great Depression. Today, we implement our programs in more than 150 of the most remote and vulnerable communities across the country. We seek to ensure that despite the gaps in education and health, all children have the best chance for success. Our programming is grounded in empirical research demonstrating that creating connections between family, school and community maximizes impact on children's learning, literacy development and ultimately, success in life. Our commitment to reach every last child is evidenced by our work across rural America.



Photo: Susan Warner / Save the Children



Photo: Susan Warner / Save the Children

# COMPLETE END OF CHILDHOOD STATE RANKING

Rank	State	Average Rank, All 5 Enders
1	New Hampshire	4.6
2	Massachusetts	5.0
3	New Jersey	5.4
4	Vermont	7.2
5	Iowa	9.6
6	Connecticut	10.2
7	Minnesota	14.4
8	Virginia	14.6
9	Wisconsin	15.0
10	Rhode Island	15.6
11	New York	16.2
12	North Dakota	16.6
13	Nebraska	16.8
14	California	19.0
15	Maine	19.2
16	Utah	19.6
17	Maryland	20.4
18	Pennsylvania	20.8
19	Idaho	21.4
20	Colorado	24.2
20	Hawaii	24.2
22	Washington	24.6
23	Texas	25.2
24	Kansas	25.4
25	Illinois	25.6
26	Oregon	27.0
27	Delaware	27.4
28	Michigan	27.8
29	Missouri	28.0
30	Wyoming	28.2
31	Montana	28.8
31	West Virginia	28.8
33	Kentucky	29.2
34	North Carolina	30.8
35	Indiana	31.4
36	Florida	32.4
37	Tennessee	33.0
38	South Carolina	33.6
39	South Dakota	33.8
40	Ohio	34.4
41	Arizona	34.6
42	Nevada	34.8
43	Alabama	35.4
44	Arkansas	38.4
45	Alaska	39.0
46	Georgia	39.8
46	Oklahoma	39.8
48	New Mexico	40.0
49	Mississippi	43.8
50	Louisiana	44.2

State	Child Dies (Rank)	Child is Malnourished (Rank)
Alabama	48	47
Alaska	35	24
Arizona	17	48
Arkansas	45	46
California	4	33
Colorado	5	10
Connecticut	18	10
Delaware	49	8
Florida	29	43
Georgia	47	45
Hawaii	23	32
Idaho	5	17
Illinois	26	19
Indiana	41	28
Iowa	1	8
Kansas	23	29
Kentucky	33	31
Louisiana	46	40
Maine	31	34
Maryland	33	13
Massachusetts	3	2
Michigan	31	20
Minnesota	15	3
Mississippi	50	50
Missouri	30	25
Montana	26	22
Nebraska	20	20
Nevada	15	39
New Hampshire	1	4
New Jersey	9	6
New Mexico	12	49
New York	5	26
North Carolina	41	42
North Dakota	38	1
Ohio	38	36
Oklahoma	41	36
Oregon	12	40
Pennsylvania	28	17
Rhode Island	18	23
South Carolina	36	35
South Dakota	41	14
Tennessee	36	38
Texas	20	44
Utah	12	12
Vermont	5	15
Virginia	23	5
Washington	10	27
West Virginia	38	30
Wisconsin	22	15
Wyoming	11	6



Child Drops Out of School (Rank)	Child is a Victim of Violence (Rank)	Child Has a Child (Rank)	Average Rank, All 5 Enders	Overall Rank
3	38	41	35.4	43
46	50	40	39.0	45
44	28	36	34.6	41
25	26	50	38.4	44
31	9	18	19.0	14
45	41	20	24.2	20
14	7	2	10.2	6
22	42	16	27.4	27
42	25	23	32.4	36
40	34	33	39.8	46
33	11	22	24.2	20
39	19	27	21.4	19
22	37	24	25.6	25
15	39	34	31.4	35
1	21	17	9.6	5
20	23	32	25.4	24
8	30	44	29.2	33
43	47	45	44.2	50
12	10	9	19.2	15
16	29	11	20.4	17
13	6	1	5.0	2
36	31	21	27.8	28
32	16	6	14.4	7
47	24	48	43.8	49
10	45	30	28.0	29
19	46	31	28.8	31
5	14	25	16.8	13
49	33	38	34.8	42
7	8	3	4.6	1
2	5	5	5.4	3
50	43	46	40.0	48
38	4	8	16.2	11
22	20	29	30.8	34
17	1	26	16.6	12
34	36	28	34.4	40
30	44	48	39.8	46
48	17	18	27.0	26
26	18	15	20.8	18
29	1	7	15.6	10
35	27	35	33.6	38
28	49	37	33.8	39
9	40	42	33.0	37
4	12	46	25.2	23
26	35	13	19.6	16
11	1	4	7.2	4
20	13	12	14.6	8
41	32	13	24.6	22
18	15	43	28.8	31
6	22	10	15.0	9
37	48	39	28.2	30

Top Performing States

Middle Performing States

Bottom Performing States

# METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH NOTES

Every child has a right to childhood. The concept of childhood is defined in the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC).<sup>37</sup> It represents a shared vision of childhood: healthy children in school and at play, growing strong and confident with the love and encouragement of their family and an extended community of caring adults, gradually taking on the responsibilities of adulthood, free from fear, safe from violence, protected from abuse and exploitation. This ideal contrasts starkly with the childhood many children experience.

States differ greatly in their ability to protect childhood. The *End of Childhood State Ranking* explores this variation across states, revealing where and how children are being robbed of the childhoods they deserve. Save the Children hopes this report will stimulate discussion and action to ensure that every last child fully experiences childhood.

## Childhood Enders

This ranking does not capture the full extent of deprivations or hardships affecting children. Instead, it focuses on some key rights or “guarantees” of childhood: life, healthy growth and development, education and protection from harm. If a child experiences all of these, his/her childhood is considered to be “intact.”

The ranking tracks a series of events that, should any one of them occur, mark the end of an intact childhood. These events are called “childhood enders” and include: child dies, child is malnourished, child drops out of school, child is a victim of violence, child has a child.

Ender events erode childhood. Depending on the number and severity of enders experienced, the loss of childhood could be complete or only partial. But once a child experiences an ender, childhood becomes fractured rather than complete. Each event represents an assault on childhood. At some point, as the assaults mount up, childhood ends.

States were ranked according to performance across this set of enders, revealing where childhood is most and least threatened.

## Indicators, Definitions and Data Sources

The following five indicators were selected because they best represent these childhood enders, are available for all states, and are regularly updated. Data were obtained by reliable and reputable sources, typically U.S. government agency data, which are publicly available and transparent sources of information, and also cited in this report.

### Infant mortality rate:

Deaths occurring to infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births in 2015. The data are reported by the place of residence, not the place of death. *Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics.*

### Food insecurity rate:

Children under 18 living in households that experienced food insecurity at some time during the year. These rates are for 2014, the latest year available for child food insecurity rates by state. Food insecurity is defined as limited or uncertain access to food. Food insecurity is a household-level economic and social condition of limited access to adequate food. It is distinct from hunger, an individual-level physiological condition that may result from food insecurity. *Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap 2016: A Report on County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2014.*

### High school graduation rate:

Public high school 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for the United States and all 50 states during school year 2014-15. The 4-year ACGR is the number of students who graduate in 4 years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class. From the beginning of ninth grade (or the earliest high school grade), students who are entering that grade for the first time form a cohort that is “adjusted” by adding any students who subsequently transfer into the cohort and subtracting any students who subsequently transfer out, emigrate to another country or die. This rate was subtracted from 100 to give the share of children not graduating from high school on time. *Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics.*

### Child homicide and suicide rate:

Violence-related injury deaths, which include homicides and suicides to children from birth through age 19 per 100,000 children in 2015. *Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.*

### Teen birth rate:

Adolescent to teenagers living in the United States aged 15 to 19 per 1,000 females in 2015. Data reflect the mother’s place of residence, rather than the place of birth. *Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics.*



Photo: Susan Warner / Save the Children

<sup>37</sup> Childhood means more than just the time between birth and adulthood. It refers to the state and condition of a child’s life – to the quality of those years. As the most widely endorsed human rights treaty in history, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and ratified by all but one country, represents a global consensus on the terms of childhood. Although there is not absolute agreement on the interpretation of each and every provision of the Convention, there is substantial common ground on what the standards of childhood should be. *Source: UNICEF. The State of the World’s Children 2005.*



## Calculations

For each childhood ender, a ranking of states was calculated. States with a higher ranking (closer to number one) have better results on that child indicator. An average rank for each state based on all five indicators was calculated by adding each of the five indicator ranks together and dividing by five:

**Step 1:** Rank1 + Rank2 + Rank3 + Rank4 + Rank5 = Rank Sum

**Step 2:** Rank Sum / 5 = Average Rank

States were then re-ranked from 1 to 50 based on this average rank.

For three states (Vermont, North Dakota and Rhode Island), the child homicide and suicide data were suppressed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention due to extremely small frequency counts of 10 or less. To account for these missing data, the three states were given a ranking of 1 on the child is a victim of violence ender. Because these states had extremely low numbers of homicides and suicides, it was determined that the most appropriate approach to addressing the suppressed data was to estimate that their calculated homicide and suicide rates would also be very low, yielding a ranking of 1 for this indicator.



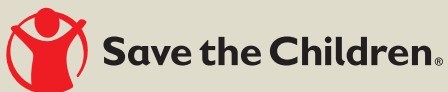
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was written by Sara Neumann, Jeremy Soulliere and Mike Kiernan. Research and analysis was provided by Stephanie Schaefer. Production of this report would not have been possible without valuable inputs and feedback from many colleagues across the organization. Very special thanks to Susan Ridge, Wendy Christian, Kristen Lacey and Kandace Doyle for

strategic oversight; Tracy Geoghegan, Beryl Levinger and Nikki Gillette for technical review and feedback; Joseph Ansah, Angelica Cadavid, Ian Carr, Penny Crump, Senad Ibrahimbegovic, Matthew Morrison, Mary Redmond and Susan Warner for content, design and production support. Finally, many thanks to several leaders and technical experts from Save the Children Action

Network and Save the Children's U.S. Programs, including Bill Corwin, Natalie Vega O'Neil, Rich Bland, Colleen Vivori, Brendan Daly, Diana Onken and Allie Wright, and the hundreds of staff and program specialists on the ground making a difference for kids every day across the United States.

Design by Gregory Smith



501 Kings Highway East  
Suite 400  
Fairfield, CT 06825

899 North Capitol Street, NE  
Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20002

1-800-728-3843

[www.SavetheChildren.org](http://www.SavetheChildren.org)

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In the United States and around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard.

We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

**ON THE COVER:**

*Brianna, 8, from Union County, South Carolina, where 1 in 3 children grows up in poverty.*

Photo: Gary Dowd / Save the Children