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Child Well-Being In Louisiana at a Glance **2007 KIDS COUNT Louisiana Fact Sheet**

Louisiana ranks 49th in the nation in a new state-by-state study on the well-being of America's children. The 2007 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* reveals that Louisiana improved on three of the 10 measures reflecting child well-being and experienced setbacks on seven since 2000. The 2007 Essay discusses the need for all children in foster care to develop strong, lasting family connections. The Essay also sets an ambitious national goal to preserve, strengthen, rebuild, or find permanent families for every American child who is at risk of not having one.

Over 6,700 Louisiana children are in need of a permanent family connection.

In 2004, 6,743 children under age 18 in Louisiana lived in foster care at some point during the year, a rate of 6 per 1,000 children. That year, 265 children in the state aged out of the system without having a permanent family. Nationwide, 10 children per 1,000 under age 18 lived in foster care with 22,718 leaving the system at age 18 without a stable family environment.

Louisiana placed in the bottom ten nationally in nine out of ten categories.

Nationally, Louisiana ranked within the bottom ten in nearly all categories, aside from its teen dropout rate. Its infant mortality rate was the worst in the nation at 10.5 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2004, compared to the national rate which was 6.8. This rate had increased by 17 percent in Louisiana since 2000, while the national rate had improved marginally over the same period.

Rate of idle teens reduced by one-third.

The percentage of teens not attending school and not working fell by 33 percent between 2000 and 2005 from 15 percent to 10 percent, which was the largest improvement Louisiana experienced among any indicator. Nationally the rate only improved by 11 percent.

Louisiana's high school dropout rate improves.

The best indicator for the state was its high school dropout rate, which dropped by 27 percent, from 11 percent in 2000 to 8 percent in 2005, and is comparable to the national trend, which fell from 11 percent to 7 percent in the same period of time.

Higher percentage of teens dying.

While the national teen death rate fell slightly from 2000 to 2004, Louisiana experienced a 13 percent increase. In 2004, 96 teens died per 100,000 in the state, up from 85 in 2000.