



# A Roadmap to Improve Child Well-Being in Louisiana

2020 EDITION



**Agenda for  
CHILDREN**

*...a voice for Louisiana's children and families*



**THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION** uses data from 16 different indicators of child well-being to create an overall ranking for all 50 states in its annual KIDS COUNT Data Book. The 16 indicators are organized into four domains: economic well-being, education, health, and family and community. The Foundation converts the data for each indicator to a standard score, and the standard scores are then added together to create a standard score for each domain. These domain-level standard scores are then added together to produce each state's unique score. These scores are then ranked, with 1 being the best and 50 being the worst.

States do not tie for an overall ranking, but can tie for rankings on specific indicators. For example, Louisiana ranked 49th overall in child well-being, meaning that 48 states had better standard scores based on all 16 indicators. However, it tied with 11 other states for 6th place for the percentage of children without health insurance, while four states tied for second place. As a result, improving by just one ranking on this measure would mean moving from 6th place to 2nd place. In this instance, a relatively small change (connecting an additional 7,900 children to health insurance) would result in a big improvement on our ranking. In instances where several states share a ranking, this report describes what it would take to improve by "1+" or "5+" rankings.

It is also important to note that Louisiana's rankings are dependent on the performance of other states. Our estimates of what it would take to improve a ranking are based on point-in-time data reported in the 2019 Data Book; changes in other states' outcomes (positive or negative) will affect Louisiana's future rankings. This means that even if Louisiana improves on an indicator from one year to the next, its ranking may not rise if other states improve at the same, or faster, rate.



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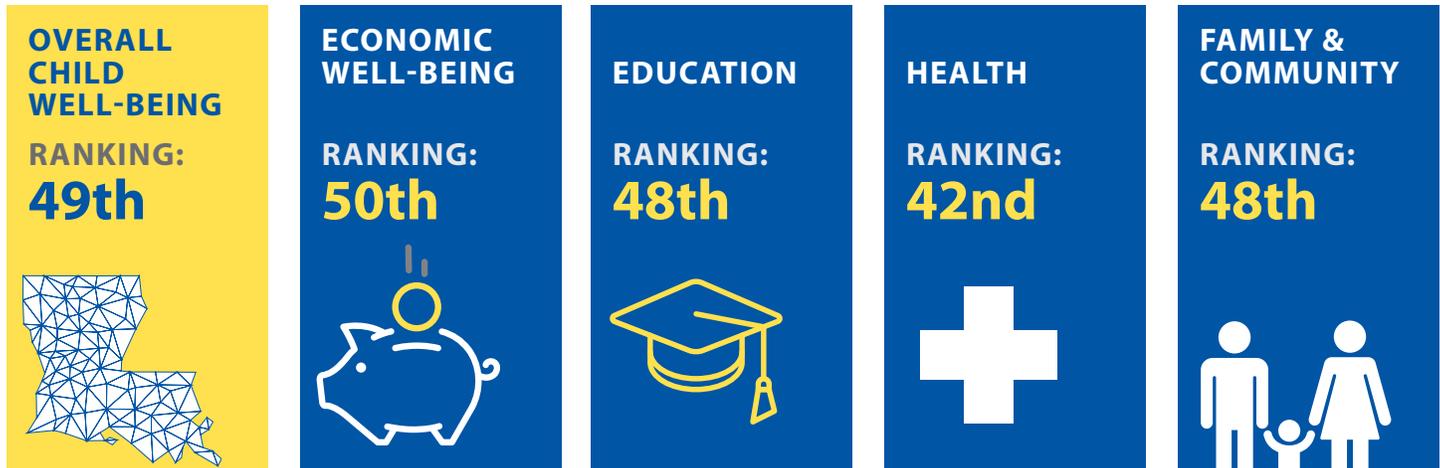
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# A Roadmap to Improve Child Well-Being in Louisiana



*Louisiana's 2019 KIDS COUNT Data Book Rankings: Overall and by Domain*

**Louisiana's future prosperity** depends on our collective ability to make sure that children growing up in our state are healthy, safe and well-educated. In just 15 years, today's first graders will enter adulthood and become the workforce of tomorrow. If we make the right decisions and investments in children now, we can build a strong, thriving Louisiana.

Louisiana should be especially invested in the well-being of our children because, more than any other state, our population is made up of people who were born and raised here. In 2018, 78% of Louisiana residents were born here, making us the state with the largest proportion of residents who were born in that state.<sup>1</sup> Our unusually low rate of mobility means that any investments we make in our children today are likely to continue paying off for generations to come. If we polled Louisiana residents, we suspect that nearly everyone would agree that children are our future. However, the data make it clear that we have not successfully made children our priority. One way that we can show that children are our priority is through the state budget. Truly prioritizing children and improving outcomes for all Louisiana children will require significant new investments, but the alternative-maintaining the status quo-will prove to be much more costly for our state in the long term.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's annual KIDS COUNT Data Book seeks to answer the simple question, "How are the children?" by collecting and analyzing data on a wide range of measures of child well-being. Each year, the Data Book confirms the fact that children in Louisiana are much less likely than their peers in other states to enjoy economic stability, good health, a solid education and a stable family and community. In the 2019 Data Book rankings, Louisiana was 49th overall, behind every other state except for New Mexico.

<sup>1</sup> Census Bureau, American Community Survey, State of Residence by State of Birth: 2018

Despite all appearances to the contrary, this is not yet another report about Louisiana being at the top of every bad list and at the bottom of every good list. On the following pages, you will find a roadmap for how we can improve child well-being in Louisiana. For each of the 16 indicators in the Data Book, we researched what it would take for Louisiana to improve by one ranking, by five rankings, and what it would take to become #1. For each indicator, we also propose high-impact policy recommendations that, if enacted, would support these improvements.

These evidence-based recommendations were chosen based on their potential to significantly move the needle on any given indicator, as well as an indication that there is a measure of popular and political momentum, as evidenced by polling and/or coalitions actively working on these issues, thereby increasing their political viability.

To make Louisiana better for our children, we must build on our existing successes, accelerate improvements, and use the best available evidence to invest in programs and policies that will make the biggest difference for children in our state. Many significant improvements in child well-being are evident in Louisiana. In fact, we are actually leading the nation in some areas. The data shows that Louisiana children are more likely than the national average to have health insurance and to attend preschool or nursery school. Our successes in health insurance and preschool can be directly tied to the availability of both federal and state funding, as well as innovative practices designed to ensure program quality and increase the number of children enrolled.

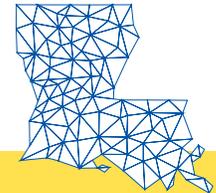
For example, Louisiana pioneered the use of SNAP data to verify children's eligibility for LaCHIP and Medicaid, which gave thousands of children access to health insurance virtually overnight.

Through our analysis, we have identified several areas where Louisiana has the best chance at improving outcomes for children through improved public policy, and is also very close to overtaking other states in the rankings below:

- child and teen death rate
- teen birth rate
- low birthweight babies
- young children not in school
- fourth graders not proficient in reading
- high school students not graduating on time

In each of the above areas, we would have needed to prevent fewer than 1,000 negative outcomes in order to move up at least one ranking in the 2019 Data Book. For some measures, the numbers were incredibly small. Preventing just twenty deaths would have resulted in Louisiana moving from 47th to 45th place on the child and teen death rate. Likewise, preventing just 96 births to teens would have moved Louisiana's ranking for the teen birth rate from 46th to 44th place.

This is not to say that we do not have a long way to go to improve outcomes for our children. To move from 50th to 48th place (a ranking shared by New Mexico and Mississippi on



### **UNDERSTANDING KIDS COUNT RANKINGS**

States do not tie for an overall ranking, but can tie for rankings on specific indicators. For example, Louisiana ranked 49th overall in child well-being, meaning that 48 states had better overall scores based on 16 indicators. However, it tied with eleven other states for 6th place for the percentage of children without health insurance (at 3%), while four states tied for second place (at 2%). As a result, in some places in this report, you will see what it would take to improve by "1+" rankings, which indicates that the next-best ranking is shared by multiple states.

child poverty), Louisiana would need to lift over 6,600 children out of poverty. Bringing our child poverty rate down to the same level as the #1 ranked state (New Hampshire) would require a reduction of 63%, from 307,000 children to just 113,800.

Making change at scale is going to take dedicated, coordinated efforts from Louisianans at every level. This is what we believe can and should be done:

- **BUILD COMMUNITY ADVOCACY:** Every day, hundreds of thousands of Louisiana residents work to have a positive impact on children, whether it is through our roles as professionals (teachers, doctors, mental health professionals, etc.), volunteers or parents. However, many of us miss critical opportunities to let our elected officials know that we care about children's issues and are willing to invest in programs that support children and families.
- **ESTABLISH SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS:** Local and state policymakers need to find sustainable ways to fund child-supporting programs (from job programs for parents to strong public education systems) and hold those programs and systems accountable for results.
- **CREATE MEASURABLE GOALS AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS:** Local institutions (including businesses, schools, hospitals, WIC clinics, city and parish governments) can use the data in this report to create realistic, measurable goals to improve how kids in our communities fare. For example, if each parish, on average, could prevent just four babies from being born at low birthweight, Louisiana could move from 49th to 48th on that indicator. If we commit to improving by five rankings on that measure over the next five years, each parish, on average, would need to reduce the number of low birthweight babies by just 2.2 each year for five years. Because local communities know their children best, they are best equipped to create targets for making measurable improvements for children, by using their unique resources (i.e., expertise, experience and money) to positively impact child outcomes.
- **COLLABORATE & INNOVATE:** Philanthropic organizations can challenge individuals and organizations to develop innovative solutions to help improve child well-being in the areas addressed in this report. They can also reward the winners by providing them with financial and other support to help them create demonstration projects for others to see and emulate.

In the aftermath of a decade of budget cuts at the state level, we have seen many local communities step up to the plate for children and families. In New Orleans, for example, the city government recently dedicated funding specifically to support early childhood, making it the first city government to fund free early childhood education for children under the age of three. Throughout the state, local communities are coming together through local early childhood community networks to increase children's access to high quality early care and education. When our state's revenues are stretched thin, we can also benefit from government's ability to convene stakeholders to identify ways to coordinate efforts and improve services.

As Louisiana moves forward, we have to make critical investments in children and families. It is possible for us to stop appearing "at the top of every bad list and the bottom of every good list" if we take a strong, evidence-based approach to strengthening our children and families. Children will benefit if we can ensure that parents have access to good jobs with family-supporting wages and paid parental leave. Our economy will benefit from policies that allow more parents to participate in the labor force, and it will also benefit if we give more children the foundation they need to be successful in school and in life.

**WE CAN USE THE DATA AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS REPORT TO STRENGTHEN OUR COLLECTIVE EFFORTS TOWARDS IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR ALL OF OUR CHILDREN.**

# Louisiana KIDS COUNT profile

**ECONOMIC WELL-BEING**

**RANKING: 50th**



**CHILDREN IN POVERTY**

**28%**  
2017: 307,000

Improved since 2016 (29%)

Worse than US average (18%)

**CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK SECURE EMPLOYMENT**

**33%**  
2017: 371,000

Improved since 2016 (35%)

Worse than US average (27%)

**CHILDREN LIVING WITH A HIGH HOUSING COST BURDEN**

**30%**  
2017: 330,000

Improved since 2016 (31%)

Better than US average (31%)

**TEENS NOT IN SCHOOL AND NOT WORKING**

**10%**  
2017: 27,000

Improved since 2016 (11%)

Worse than US average (7%)

**EDUCATION**

**RANKING: 48th**



**YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 3 AND 4) NOT IN SCHOOL**

**48%**  
2015-17: 61,000

Improved since 2014-2016 (49%)

Better than US average (52%)

**FOURTH-GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN READING**

**74%**

Worsened since 2015 (71%)

Worse than US average (65%)

**EIGHTH-GRADERS NOT PROFICIENT IN MATH**

**81%**

Improved since 2015 (82%)

Worse than US average (67%)

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME**

**22%**

Worsened since 2015-16 (21%)

Worse than US average (15%)

**HEALTH**

**RANKING: 42nd**



**LOW BIRTH-WEIGHT BABIES**

**10.7%**  
2017: 6,519

Worse than 2016 (10.6%)

Worse than US average (8.3%)

**CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE**

**3%**  
2017: 36,000

Same as 2016 (3%)

Better than US average (5%)

**CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS PER 100,000**

**39**  
2017: 454

Same as 2016 (39 per 100,000)

Worse than US avg. (26 per 100,000)

**TEENS WHO ABUSE ALCOHOL OR DRUGS**

**4%**  
2016-17: 14,000

Same as 2015-16 (4%)

Same as US average (4%)

**FAMILY & COMMUNITY**

**RANKING: 48th**



**CHILDREN IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES**

**45%**  
2017: 467,000

Same as 2016 (45%)

Worse than US average (34%)

**CHILDREN IN FAMILIES WHERE THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD LACKS A H.S. DIPLOMA**

**13%**  
2017: 141,000

Improved since 2016 (14%)

Same as US average (13%)

**CHILDREN LIVING IN HIGH-POVERTY AREAS**

**20%**  
2013-17: 226,000

Improved since 2012-16 (21%)

Worse than US average (12%)

**TEEN BIRTH RATE (PER 1,000 FEMALES AGES 15-19)**

**29**  
2017: 4,269

Improved since 2016 (31 per 1,000)

Worse than US avg. (19 per 1,000)

# Children Living in Poverty

## 2019 RANKING



28%

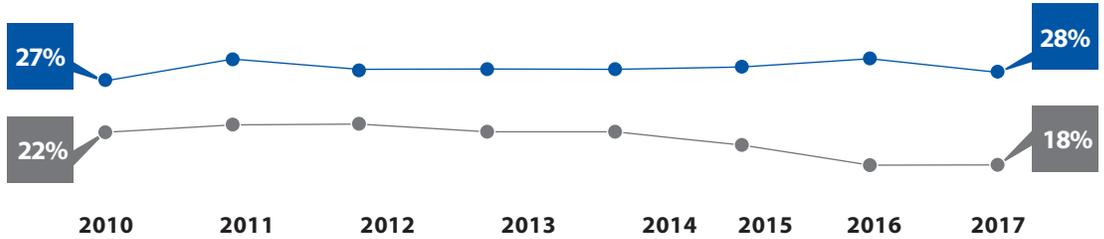
of children lived in poverty in 2017



307,000

children lived in poverty in 2017

## CHILDREN IN POVERTY



● LOUISIANA  
● UNITED STATES



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**HELP LOW-INCOME WORKING FAMILIES** keep more of their earnings by expanding Louisiana's Earned Income Tax Credit and enacting long-term budget reform to make Louisiana tax policies less regressive.

**ESTABLISH** a state minimum wage that exceeds the federal minimum wage and index it to rise with inflation. Allow local and parish governments to establish minimum wages above the state minimum wage. Research shows that increasing the minimum wage can reduce child poverty.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

### TO MOVE UP 1+ RANKING

48th



2% drop



in child poverty for a rate of 27%.



6,600

fewer children in poverty



### TO MOVE UP 5 RANKINGS

45th



16% drop



in child poverty for a rate of 24%.



50,400

fewer children in poverty



### TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP

1st



63% drop



in child poverty for a rate of 10%.



192,700

fewer children in poverty



Definition: Children (ages 0-17) living in families with incomes below \$24,858 for a family of two adults and two children  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2017

# Children in Families without Secure Employment

## 2019 RANKING

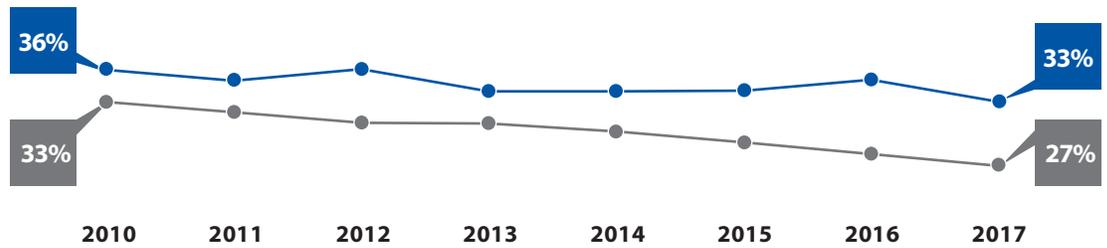


33% of children lived in families without secure employment in 2017

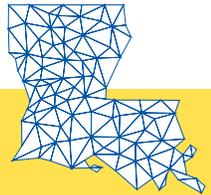


371,000 children lived in families without secure employment in 2017

## CHILDREN LIVING IN FAMILIES WHERE NO PARENT HAS FULL-TIME, YEAR-ROUND EMPLOYMENT



● LOUISIANA  
● UNITED STATES



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**ENABLE MORE PARENTS** to participate in the labor force through policies that support working families, including guaranteeing 12 weeks of paid family leave for all employees.

**USE EXISTING FEDERAL FUNDING** (TANF & WIOA) to expand job training and case management services for parents to support them

in attaining the education and industry credentials needed to earn a family-supporting income.

**INCREASE THE NUMBER** of employed parents by providing incentives to employers to offer jobs and skill-building opportunities to people with barriers to employment, including people with criminal records, disabilities or long-term unemployment.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING  
44th



6% drop ↓  
in children in families without secure employment for a rate of 31%.



22,600 fewer children in families without secure employment



TO MOVE UP 5 RANKINGS  
41st



9% drop ↓  
in children in families without secure employment for a rate of 30%.



33,700 fewer children in families without secure employment



TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP  
1st



42% drop ↓  
in children in families without secure employment for a rate of 19%.



155,700 fewer children in families without secure employment



# Children Living in Households with High Housing Cost Burdens

## 2019 RANKING

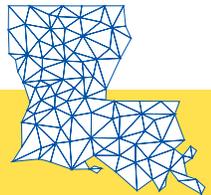
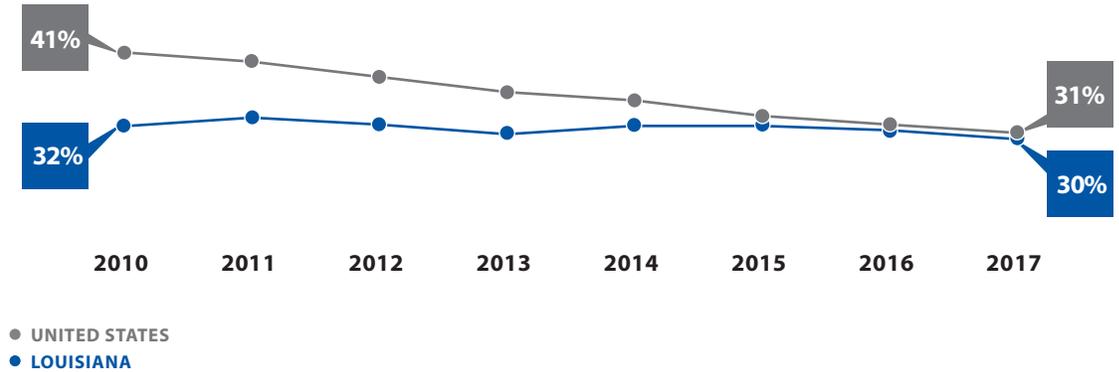


**30%**  
of children lived in households with high housing costs in 2017



**333,000**  
children lived in households with high housing costs in 2017

## CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLDS THAT SPEND MORE THAN 30% OF THEIR INCOME ON HOUSING



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**ESTABLISH** a dedicated funding source for the Louisiana Housing Trust Fund, which will increase and preserve the supply of decent affordable housing for very low-income households.

**ENSURE THAT SUBSIDIZED HOUSING** remains sustainably affordable for the long term by

establishing longer affordability requirements for all state and local housing subsidy programs.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENTS** can incentivize housing developers to create more affordable housing units through the creation of inclusionary zoning ordinances.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

**TO MOVE UP 1+ RANKING**  
29th



**1% drop** ↓  
in children in households with high housing costs for a rate of 29%.



**4,300**  
fewer children in households with high housing costs



**TO MOVE UP 5+ RANKINGS**  
24th



**8% drop** ↓  
in children in households with high housing costs for a rate of 27%.



**26,500**  
fewer children in households with high housing costs



**TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP**  
1st



**38% drop** ↓  
in children in households with high housing costs for a rate of 18%.



**126,400**  
fewer children in households with high housing costs



Definition: Children (ages 0-17) in households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2017

# Teens Not in School and Not Working

## 2019 RANKING

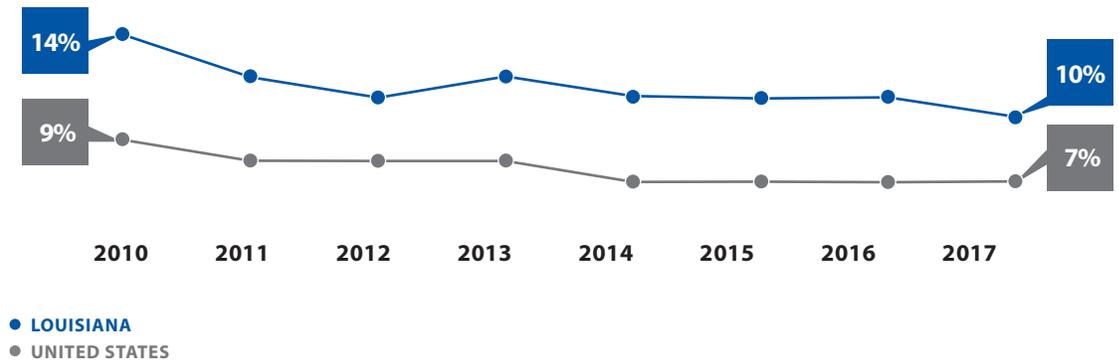


**10%**  
of teens were not in school or working in 2017



**27,000**  
teens were not in school or working in 2017

## TEENS AGES 16 TO 19 NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND NOT WORKING



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**REPLICATE** the work of New Orleans' EMPLOY Collaborative in other areas of the state to connect young people to employment, reduce barriers to employment, foster the soft skills needed for career success, and share data systems.

**INCREASE FUNDING** for Go Grants, which provide college scholarships for low-income Louisianans.

**EXPAND ACCESS** to apprenticeship opportunities and G.E.D. programs.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

**TO MOVE UP 1+ RANKING**  
45th



**8% drop** ↓  
in teens not in school or working for a rate of 9%



**2,100**  
fewer teens not in school or working



**TO MOVE UP 5+ RANKINGS**  
38th



**18% drop** ↓  
in teens not in school or working for a rate of 8%



**4,700**  
fewer teens not in school or working



**TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP 1st**



**57% drop** ↓  
in teens not in school or working for a rate of 4%



**15,100**  
fewer teens not in school or working



Definition: Teens (ages 16 to 19) not attending school and not working  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2017

# Young Children Not in School

## 2019 RANKING



48%

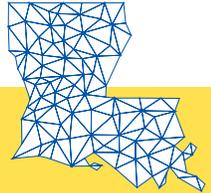
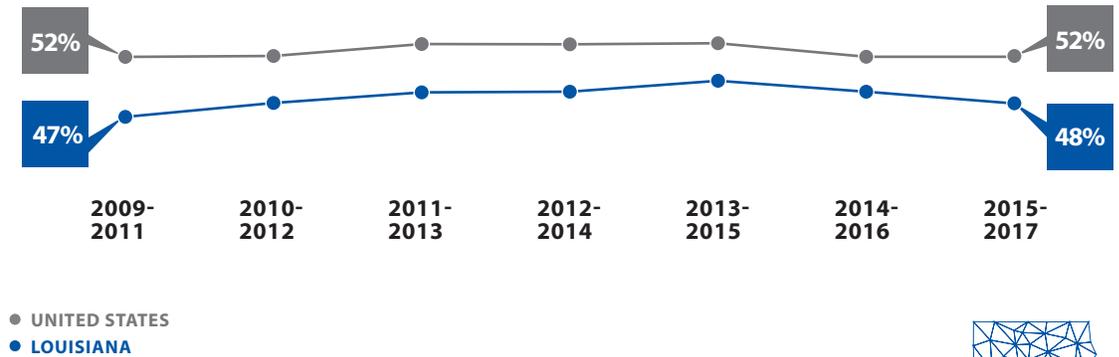
of young children were not in school in 2015-2017



61,000

young children were not in school in 2015-2017

## YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 3-4) NOT IN SCHOOL



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**ENABLE EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS** to provide high-quality early care and education by increasing subsidies to market rate for all publicly funded early learning seats, including those funded through the Child Care Assistance Program, LA4 and NSECD.

**EXPAND ACCESS** to the Child Care Assistance

Program (CCAP) by increasing state funding and extending temporary CCAP benefits to families seeking work.

**CREATE ADDITIONAL DEDICATED FUNDING STREAMS** to fund the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund, which provides for state matching of local initiatives.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING  
7th



2% drop  
in young children not in school for a rate of 47%



920  
fewer young children not in school



TO MOVE UP 5 RANKINGS  
3rd



14% drop  
in young children not in school for a rate of 41%



8,500  
fewer young children not in school



TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP  
1st



26% drop  
in young children not in school for a rate of 35%



16,070  
fewer young children not in school



Definition: The share of children ages three and four not enrolled in school, including nursery school, preschool, pre-K, Head Start, and kindergarten during the previous three months

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2017

# Fourth Graders Scoring Below Proficient in Reading

## 2019 RANKING



74%

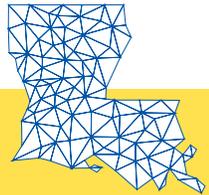
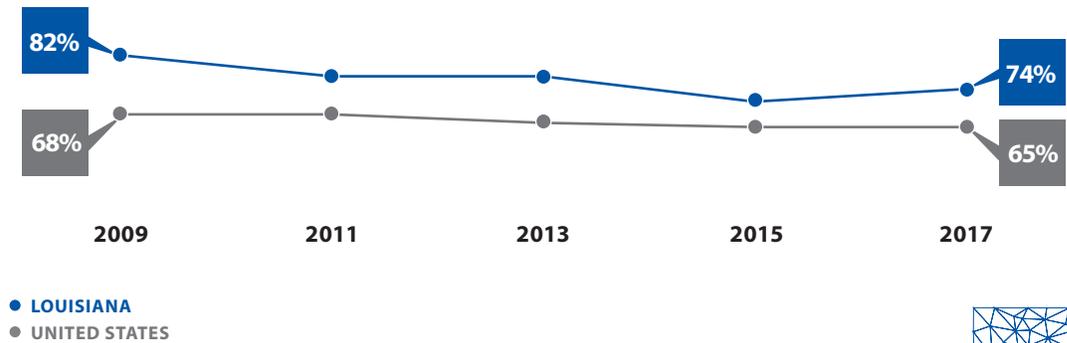
of fourth graders scored below proficient in reading in 2017



41,600

Louisiana fourth graders were estimated to be below proficient in reading in 2017

## 4TH GRADERS SCORING BELOW PROFICIENT IN READING



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**EXPAND THE DEFINITION OF QUALITY** in elementary schools by piloting initiatives to incorporate assessments of teacher-child interactions (such as CLASS) in grades PK-2 into schools' Performance Scores. High quality interactions have been proven to augment academic outcomes and reduce achievement gaps.

**IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY** by investing in teacher preparation, increasing resources for student support and improving teacher retention by raising pay to the national average and indexing it to inflation.

**STEM SUMMER LEARNING LOSS** by expanding access to summer enrichment opportunities.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING

48th



1% drop

in fourth graders not proficient in reading for a rate of 73%



340

fewer fourth graders not proficient in reading



TO MOVE UP 5 RANKINGS

44th



4% drop

in fourth graders not proficient in reading for a rate of 71%



1,460

fewer fourth graders not proficient in reading



TO MOVE UP TO TOP

1st



33% drop

in fourth graders not proficient in reading for a rate of 49%



13,800

fewer fourth graders not proficient in reading



Definition: Fourth graders scoring below proficient in reading on the National Assessment of Education Progress

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009-2017; Louisiana Department of Education, Public School Enrollment by Grade, 2016-2017

# Eighth Graders Scoring Below Proficient in Math

## 2019 RANKING

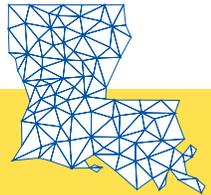
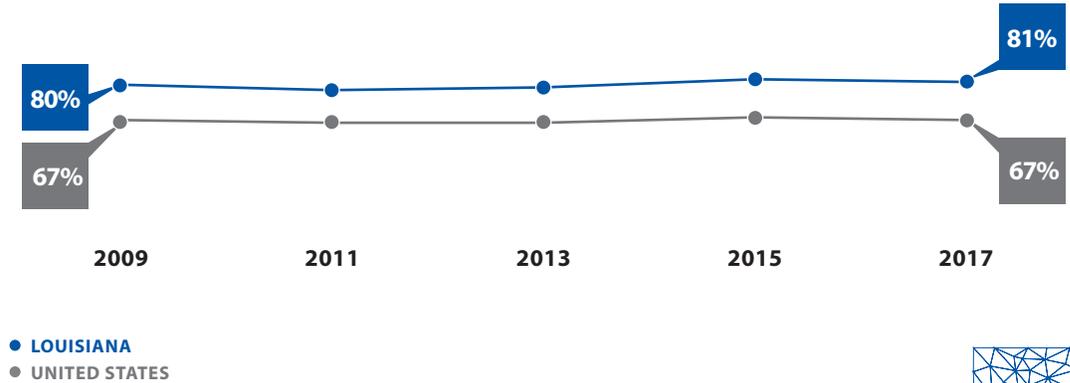


**81%**  
of eighth graders were below proficient in math in 2017



**41,800**  
eighth graders were estimated to be below proficient in math in 2017

## EIGHTH GRADERS SCORING BELOW PROFICIENT IN MATH



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**PROVIDE SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS** with the funding and training necessary to acquire and implement Tier 1 curriculum (highly aligned to state college- and career-ready standards).

**CONTINUE THE EFFORTS** of the Louisiana Believe and Prepare Impact Collaborative to improve teacher preparation programs' effectiveness in helping students improve their math skills throughout the elementary years.

**INCREASE ACCESS** to afterschool and summer learning programs that incorporate real-world applications of math and science concepts.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

**TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING**  
49th



**1% drop** ↓  
in eighth graders below proficient in math for a rate of 80%



**310**  
fewer eighth graders below proficient in math



**TO MOVE UP 5 RANKINGS**  
45th



**6% drop** ↓  
in eighth graders below proficient in math for a rate of 76%



**2,370**  
fewer eighth graders below proficient in math



**TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP**  
1st



**38% drop** ↓  
in eighth graders below proficient in math for a rate of 50%



**15,790**  
fewer eighth graders below proficient in math



Definition: Eighth graders scoring below proficient in math on the National Assessment of Education Progress

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009-2017; Louisiana Department of Education, Public School Enrollment by Grade, 2016-2017

# High School Students Not Graduating on Time

## 2019 RANKING



22%

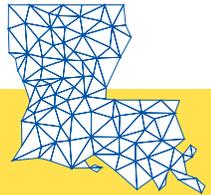
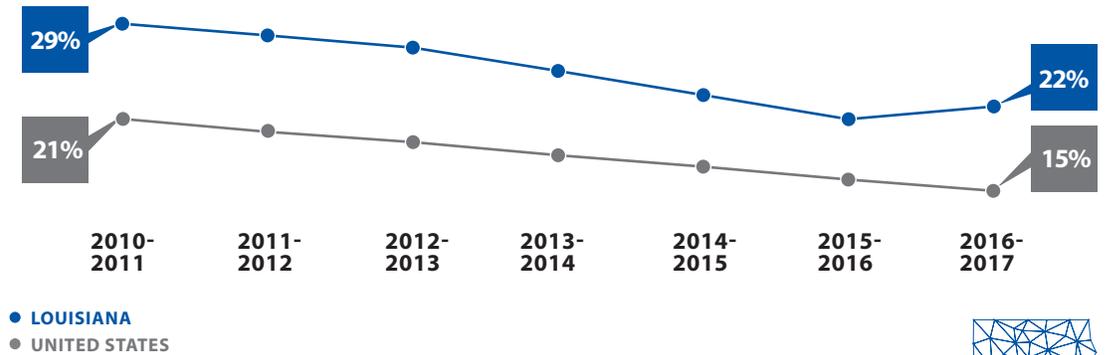
of high school students did not graduate on time in 2016-2017



12,400

high school students did not graduate on time in 2016-2017

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NOT GRADUATING ON TIME



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**REDUCE THE USE** of suspensions and expulsions, and work to eliminate racial disparities in the use of suspensions and expulsions. Research shows that students who are suspended or expelled are much less likely to graduate from high school.

**ENSURE CONTINUITY** of education for children currently involved with the child welfare or juvenile

justice systems, as well as children exiting those systems, to ensure that students are on track to accumulate the credits needed to graduate.

**CONTINUE EFFORTS** to engage students by offering a range of opportunities to earn credentials while in high school (e.g. AP courses, industry certifications and dual enrollment).

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

### TO MOVE UP 1+ RANKING

44th



2% drop



in high school students not graduating on time for a rate of 21%



280

fewer high school students not graduating on time



### TO MOVE UP 5+ RANKINGS

40th



11% drop



in high school students not graduating on time for a rate of 19%



1,410

fewer high school students not graduating on time



### TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP

1st



57% drop



in high school students not graduating on time for a rate of 9%



7,050

fewer high school students not graduating on time



Definition: Members of a freshman class not graduating in four years according to the Adjusted Cohort Graduate Rate; this measure is not the same as the percentage of students who actually drop out

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2010-2017; Louisiana Department of Education, Public School Enrollment by Grade, 2013

# Low Birthweight Babies

## 2019 RANKING



10.7%

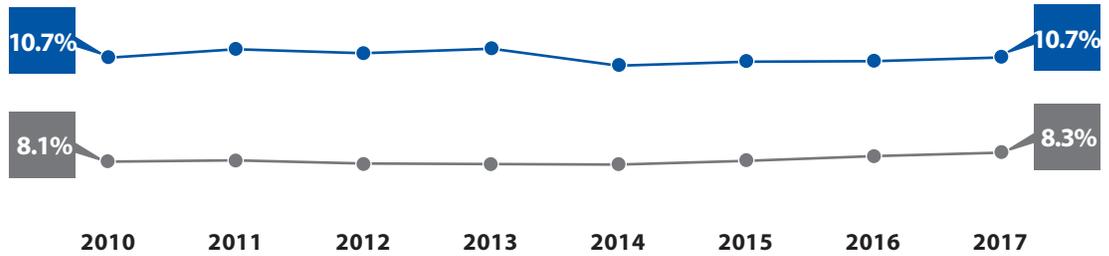
of babies were born at a low birthweight in 2017



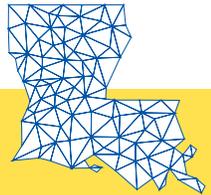
6,519

babies were born at a low birthweight in 2017

## BABIES BORN AT A LOW BIRTHWEIGHT



● LOUISIANA  
● UNITED STATES



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**IMPROVE WOMEN'S HEALTH** by protecting Medicaid expansion and continuing to perform outreach to ensure that all eligible women get enrolled in Medicaid. Preconception health is a significant predictor of birth outcomes, and ensuring that more women have access to health care will increase the number of mothers who are healthy at the time of conception.

**EXPAND ACCESS TO FAMILY PLANNING** to ensure that more pregnancies are intended, and that pregnancies are adequately spaced.

**IDENTIFY WOMEN AT HIGH RISK** for preterm births and provide them with specialized care to reduce their risk of delivering preterm.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING

48th



3% drop



in low birthweight babies for a rate of 10.3%



210

fewer babies born at a low birthweight



TO MOVE UP 5 RANKINGS

44th



11% drop



in low birthweight babies for a rate of 9.5%



700

fewer babies born at a low birthweight



TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP

1st



42% drop



in low birthweight babies for a rate of 6.2%



2,710

fewer babies born at a low birthweight



Definition: Babies born weighing less than 5.5 pounds

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), National Vital Statistics Reports, 2010-2017

# Children without Health Insurance

## 2019 RANKING

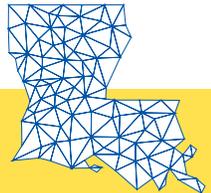
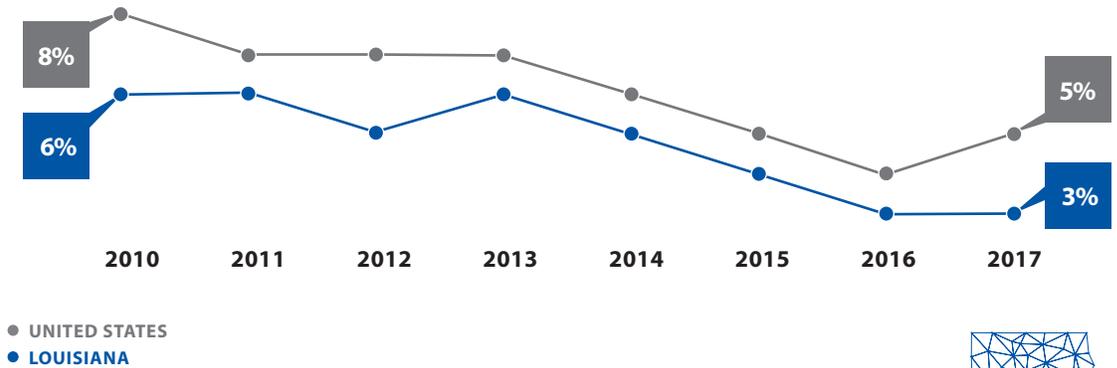


**3%**  
of children lacked health insurance in 2017



**36,000**  
children lacked health insurance in 2017

## CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**LOUISIANA SHOULD JOIN** the 34 other states that have applied for a waiver to remove the 5-year waiting period for lawfully residing immigrant children to become eligible for Medicaid.

parents have access to Medicaid, their children are also more likely to get coverage as well.

**PROTECT MEDICAID EXPANSION** for adults and avoid adding any barriers to participation, such as work requirements. Research shows that when

**PUBLICIZE DATA** on the adequacy of Medicaid and LaCHIP coverage. This data can identify gaps in critical services, including developmental screenings, regular preventative care, and appropriate dental and mental health.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

**TO MOVE UP 1+ RANKING**  
**2nd**



**22% drop** ↓  
in children without health insurance for a rate of 2%



**7,900**  
fewer children without health insurance



**TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP**  
**1st**



**54% drop** ↓  
in children without health insurance for a rate of 1%



**19,600**  
fewer children without health insurance



# Child and Teen Deaths

## 2019 RANKING



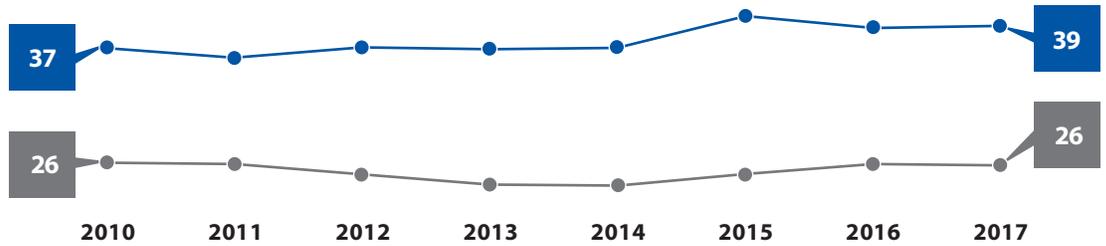
**39**  
deaths per  
100,000 children  
and teens



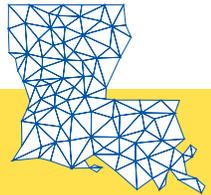
**454**  
children and teens  
died in 2017

## CHILD AND TEEN DEATHS

(Rate per 100,000 children and teens ages 1-19)



● LOUISIANA  
● UNITED STATES



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**EXPAND ACCESS** to evidence-based parenting classes, home visiting programs and other programs that can prevent child abuse and neglect.

**INSTITUTE** universal behavioral and mental health screening for all K-12 students each school year. Screenings can help schools proactively identify and intervene with our most vulnerable and at-risk

students, and provide data that local officials and policymakers can use to allocate resources.

**EXPAND STATEWIDE ACCESS** to the full continuum of mental health care services for children and teens by increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates, expanding Medicaid billable services and increasing capacity for inpatient care.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING

45th



**4% drop** ↓

in child and teen deaths for a rate of 37 per 100,000.

**20**

fewer child and teen deaths



TO MOVE UP 5+ RANKINGS

42nd



**12% drop** ↓

in child and teen deaths for a rate of 34 per 100,000.

**54**

fewer child and teen deaths



TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP

1st



**58% drop** ↓

in child and teen deaths for a rate of 16 per 100,000.

**264**

fewer child and teen deaths



Definition: Child and teen death rate (deaths per 100,000 children ages 1 to 19)

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Multiple Causes of Death Public Use Files for 2010-2017

# Teens Abusing Alcohol or Drugs

## 2019 RANKING

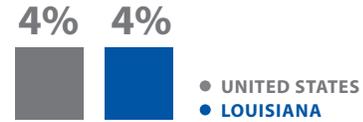


4%  
of teens abused  
drugs or alcohol



14,000  
teens abused drugs  
or alcohol

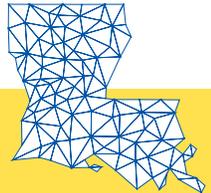
Teens ages 12 to 17 who  
abused alcohol or drugs in  
the past year 2016/2017



Definition: Teens (ages 12 to 17) who reported abusing alcohol or drugs in the past year, 2016/2017

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2016/2017

Trend data is not available for this indicator because the questions used to calculate this measure changed between 2014 and 2015.



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**EXPAND ACCESS TO EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING** to foster children's social and emotional development so that they are better prepared to handle adversity and build positive relationships with peers.

**DEVELOP AND FUND LOCAL COALITIONS** to reduce the incidence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) across the population and mitigate the impact ACEs have on the lives of children and their parents.

**PREVENT TEENS FROM SELF-MEDICATING** with alcohol or drugs by expanding access to mental healthcare services, both in schools and in community-based settings.

**FUND REHABILITATION OPTIONS** for teens with alcohol or drug problems, with a particular emphasis on early intervention.

## What would it take for Louisiana to improve even more?

TO MOVE TO THE TOP  
1st



15% drop  
in teens abusing  
drugs or alcohol  
for a rate of 3%



2,100  
fewer teens abusing  
drugs or alcohol



TO IMPROVE 50%



50% drop  
in teens abusing  
drugs or alcohol  
for a rate of 2%



7,000  
fewer teens abusing  
drugs or alcohol



TO IMPROVE 75%



75% drop  
in teens abusing  
drugs or alcohol  
for a rate of 1%



10,500  
fewer teens abusing  
drugs or alcohol



# Children in Single-Parent Families

## 2019 RANKING



45%

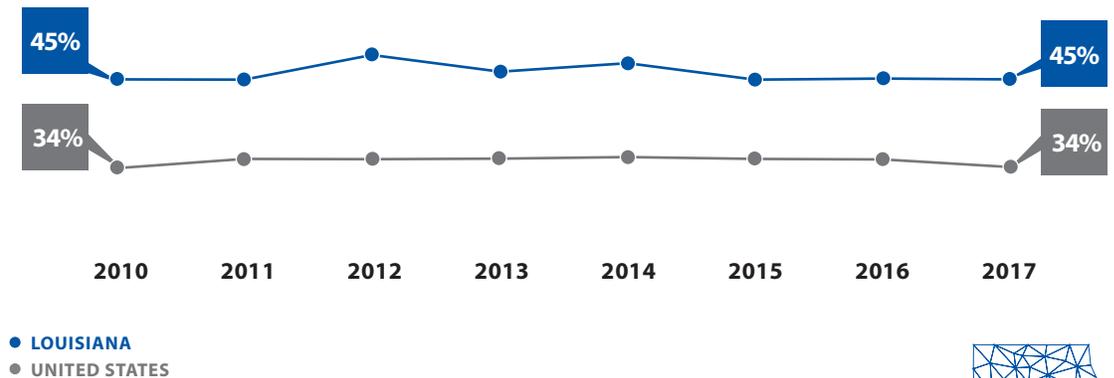
of children lived in single-parent families in 2017



467,000

children lived in single-parent families in 2017

## CHILDREN LIVING IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**ACCELERATE EFFORTS** to reduce Louisiana's high teen birth rate, including expanding access to sex education and contraceptives.

nation's largest gender wage gap, this could improve the economic stability of the 35% of Louisiana children who live in families headed by a single mother.

**IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC STABILITY** of female-headed households by passing an Equal Pay Act in Louisiana, which would help to reduce gender-based disparities in wages. Because Louisiana has the

**CONNECT NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS** to employment and job training, and provide incentives for employment, such as partial forgiveness of back child support that is owed.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING  
47th



11% drop  
in children in single-parent families for a rate of 40%



49,100  
fewer children in single-parent families



TO MOVE UP 5+ RANKINGS  
36th



17% drop  
in children in single-parent families for a rate of 37%



80,100  
fewer children in single-parent families



TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP  
1st



57% drop  
in children in single-parent families for a rate of 19%



266,300  
fewer children in single-parent families



Definition: Children (ages 0-17) in single-parent families  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2017

# Children in Families where the Household Head Lacks a High School Diploma

## 2019 RANKING

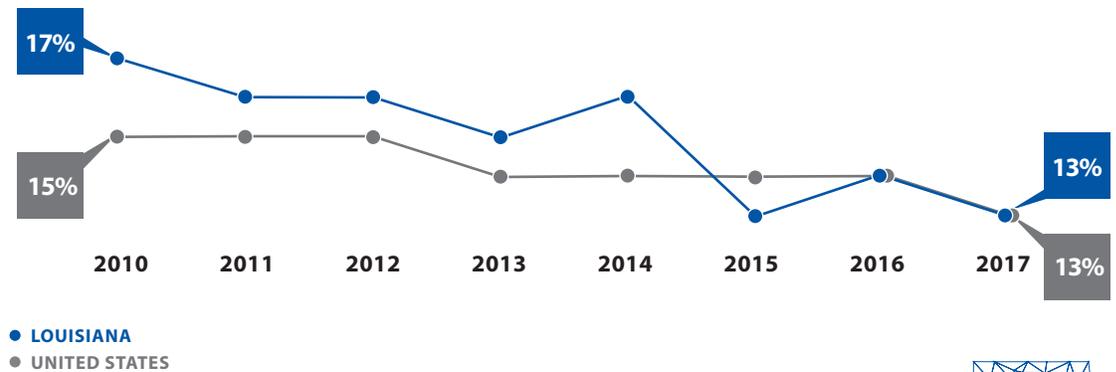


**13%**  
of children lived in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma



**141,000**  
children lived in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma in 2017

## CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA



## What Louisiana can do to improve

### PROVIDE MORE COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORTS

for young parents, including case management and assistance with child care, so that parents without a high school diploma can participate in high school equivalency programs.

at risk of dropping out are able to complete the requirements for a high school diploma.

**CONTINUE TO INVEST IN PROGRAMS** that connect high school students to careers and college, including Jump Start and Dual Enrollment, and work to ensure that Jump Start options in every community are diverse and rigorous.

### FUND ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS AND CREDIT RECOVERY PROGRAMS

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

**TO MOVE UP 1+ RANKING**  
**35th**



**3% drop** ↓  
in children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma for a rate of 12%



**3,900**  
fewer children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma



**TO MOVE UP 5+ RANKINGS**  
**27th**



**11% drop** ↓  
in children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma for a rate of 11%



**15,000**  
fewer children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma



**TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP**  
**1st**



**65% drop** ↓  
in children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma for a rate of 4%



**92,600**  
fewer children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma



# Children Living in High-Poverty Areas

## 2019 RANKING



20%

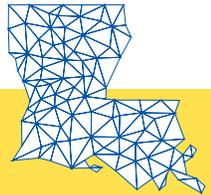
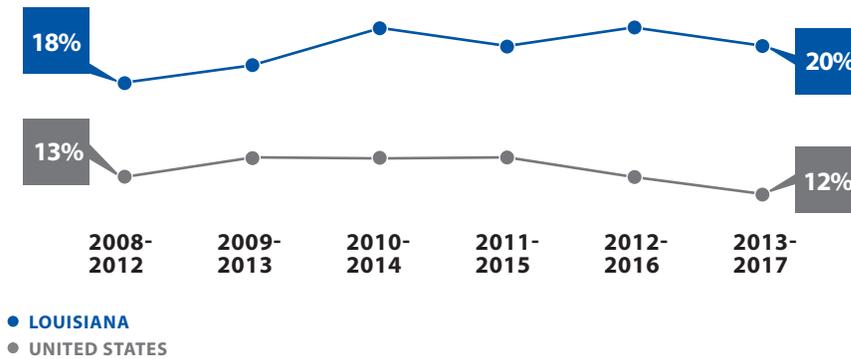
of children lived in high-poverty areas in 2013-2017



226,000

children lived in high-poverty areas in 2013-2017

## CHILDREN LIVING IN HIGH-POVERTY AREAS



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**LOCAL GOVERNMENTS** should use data to inform where resources, such as libraries and job training programs, are located. Evidence shows that access to these resources can reduce the harmful impacts of living in a high-poverty neighborhood.

connect families in high-poverty neighborhoods to jobs and services, such as full-service grocery stores and medical care.

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS** can invest in affordable, reliable public transportation to better

**LOCAL ECONOMIC** development authorities can make funding and tax breaks to new businesses contingent upon hiring residents from nearby high-poverty communities.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

### TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING

46th



14% drop



in children in high-poverty areas for a rate of 17%



32,000

fewer children in high-poverty areas



### TO MOVE UP 5+ RANKINGS

42nd



24% drop



in children in high-poverty areas for a rate of 15%



54,300

fewer children in high-poverty areas



### TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP

1st



98% drop



in children in high-poverty areas for a rate of <1%



221,200

fewer children in high-poverty areas



Definition: Children (ages 0-17) living in high-poverty areas, which are defined as census tracts with poverty rates of 30% or more  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008-2017

# Teen Birth Rate

## 2019 RANKING



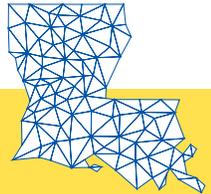
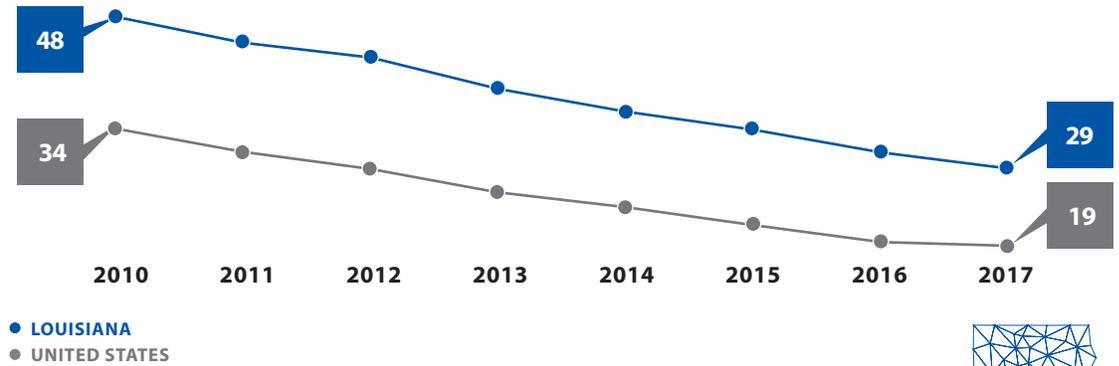
**29**  
births per 1,000  
teen girls ages 15-19  
in 2017



**4,269**  
births to teens  
ages 15-19 in 2017

## TEEN BIRTHS

(Rate per 1,000 females age 15-19)



## What Louisiana can do to improve

**THE LEGISLATURE SHOULD ELIMINATE** current restrictions on the provision of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) that prohibit questions about teens' sexual behaviors so that researchers and practitioners can gain better insight into trends in risky behaviors in our state, as well as evaluate whether prevention programs are effective.

**INCREASE FUNDING** for mentorship programs and expand access to comprehensive sex education and contraception.

**CREATE INCENTIVES AND GRANT PROGRAMS** for schools and community organizations to offer extra-curricular activities and summer learning opportunities for teens.

## What would it take to improve Louisiana's ranking?

**TO MOVE UP 1 RANKING**  
**44th**



**2% drop** ↓  
in teen births for a rate  
of 28 births per 1,000  
females ages 15-19



**96**  
fewer teen births

**TO MOVE UP 5+ RANKINGS**  
**41st**



**6% drop** ↓  
in teen births for a rate  
of 27 births per 1,000  
females ages 15-19



**243**  
fewer teen births

**TO MOVE UP TO THE TOP**  
**1st**



**71% drop** ↓  
in teen births for a rate  
of 8 births per 1,000  
females ages 15-19



**3,035**  
fewer teen births

Definition: Teen births per 1,000 females ages 15 to 19

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), National Vital Statistics birth data, 2010-2017

**RANKINGS SOURCE**

KIDS COUNT Data Book, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2018 and 2019

**DATA SOURCES**

**Children Living in Poverty:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2010-2017

**Children in Families without Secure Employment:** Census Bureau, ACS, 2010-2017

**Children Living in Households with High Housing Cost Burdens:** Census Bureau, ACS, 2010-2017

**Teens Not in School and Not Working:** Census Bureau, ACS, 2010-2017

**Young Children Not in School:** Census Bureau, ACS, 2009-2017

**Fourth Graders Scoring Below Proficient in Reading:** National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009-2017 and Louisiana Department of Education (LDE), Public School Enrollment by Grade, 2016-2017

**Eighth Graders Scoring Below Proficient in Math:** National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP, 2009-2017 and LDE, Public School Enrollment by Grade, 2016-2017

**High School Students Not Graduating on Time:** U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2010-2017; Louisiana Department of Education, Public School Enrollment by Grade, 2013

**Low Birthweight Babies:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), National Vital Statistics Reports, 2010-2017

**Children without Health Insurance:** Census Bureau, ACS, 2009-2017

**Child and Teen Deaths:** CDC, NCHS, Multiple Causes of Death Public Use Files for 2010-2017

**Teen Alcohol and Drug Abuse:** Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2015/2016 and 2016/2017

**Children in Single-Parent Families:** Census Bureau, ACS, 2010-2017

**Children in Families where the Household Head Lacks a High School Diploma:** Census Bureau, ACS, 2010-2017

**Children Living in High-Poverty Areas:** Census Bureau, ACS, 2008-2017

**Teen Birth Rate:** CDC, NCHS, National Vital Statistics birth data, 2010-2017



# Agenda for CHILDREN

*...a voice for Louisiana's children and families*



VISIT [WWW.AGENDAFORCHILDREN.ORG](http://WWW.AGENDAFORCHILDREN.ORG) AND [HTTPS:// DATACENTER.KIDSCOUNT.ORG](https://datacenter.kidscount.org)  
FOR MORE DATA ON CHILD WELL-BEING.