

Gap Widens Between State's Wealth and Child Well-Being

Only Alaska Has Larger Performance Gap

Executive Summary

The gap between Maryland wealth and child well-being is second largest in the nation, according to the latest *Kids Count* report. Maryland is the wealthiest state but ranks 25th in child well-being. To address this persistent gap, Maryland must switch funding to proven programs that help families help themselves.

Introduction

Each year, the Annie E. Casey Foundation publishes its *Kids Count* report with national rankings for each State on child well-being.

Child Well-Being in Maryland

Maryland's overall Kids Count ranking for 2010 is 25th in the nation. Two years ago, Maryland ranked 19th. Maryland's infant mortality ranking fell to 42nd, two years ago, Maryland ranked 31st. For percent of low-birthweight babies, Maryland ranks 38th. Maryland's child death rate ranking is 27; two years ago it was 6th best (see chart below).¹

| Indicator | 2008 Rank | 2010 Rank |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Overall rank | 19 | 25 |
| Percent low-birthweight babies | 39 | 38 |
| Infant mortality rate | 31 | 42 |
| Child death rate | 6 | 27 |
| Teen death rate | 24 | 26 |
| Teen birth rate | 14 | 14 |
| Percent of teens who are high school dropouts | 15 | 15 |
| Percent of teens not attending school and not working | 27 | 21 |
| Percent of children living in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment | 7 | 4 |
| Percent of children in poverty | 1 | 2 |
| Percent of children in single-parent families | 28 | 29 |

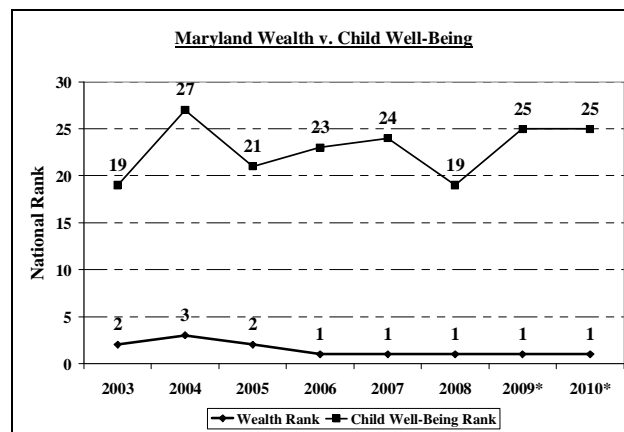
Well-Being vs. Wealth

Maryland is the wealthiest state in the nation, with the highest median household income. The gap between its wealth and child well-being rankings is second largest, with only Alaska worse (see chart to the right showing states with performance gaps).

¹ National rankings are based on 2007 and 2008 data. Maryland recently released 2009 data on children's health. For more detailed information, see www.acy.org.

| State | Income Rank | Kids Count | Gap | Gap Rank |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Alaska | 4 | 38 | -34 | 1 |
| Maryland | 1 | 25 | -24 | 2 |
| Nevada | 15 | 36 | -21 | 3 |
| Georgia | 23 | 42 | -19 | 4 |
| Arizona | 22 | 39 | -17 | 5 |
| Hawaii | 5 | 22 | -17 | 5 |
| Delaware | 11 | 27 | -16 | 7 |
| California | 9 | 19 | -10 | 8 |
| Wyoming | 19 | 28 | -9 | 9 |
| Illinois | 16 | 24 | -8 | 10 |
| Louisiana | 41 | 49 | -8 | 10 |
| Virginia | 8 | 16 | -8 | 10 |
| Colorado | 13 | 20 | -7 | 13 |
| Texas | 27 | 34 | -7 | 13 |
| Connecticut | 3 | 8 | -5 | 15 |
| New Jersey | 2 | 7 | -5 | 15 |
| South Carolina | 40 | 45 | -5 | 15 |
| Florida | 33 | 35 | -2 | 18 |
| New Mexico | 44 | 46 | -2 | 18 |
| Alabama | 46 | 47 | -1 | 20 |
| Indiana | 32 | 33 | -1 | 20 |
| Washington | 10 | 11 | -1 | 20 |

The gap between Maryland's wealth and child well-being has persisted over the past 8 years.²



Conclusion

The key to addressing the persistent, large gap between Maryland's wealth and how its children are doing is to switch funding to proven strategies that prevent problems and enable more families to help themselves. In short: smarter government can improve outcomes for children at no extra cost.

² Wealth comes from *U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey*. 2009 and 2010 assume no change in ranking from 2008, the most recent year of data.

