

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

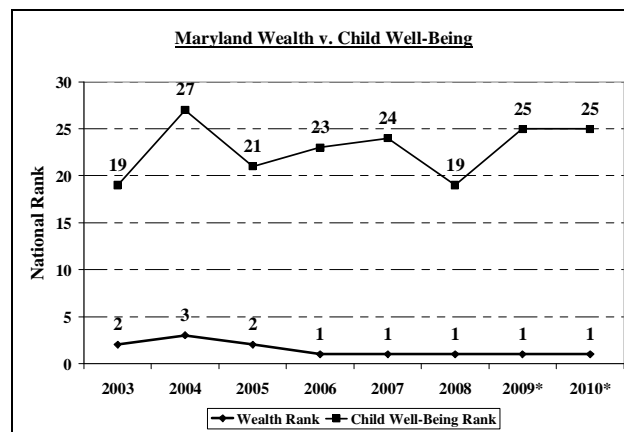
Well-Being vs. Wealth

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.

