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Contact: Norín Dollard | dollard@usf.edu | 913-974-3761

2017 Race for Results Report Shows Need for Policies That Don't Abandon Children of Color in Florida

TAMPA, Fla. — The third fastest growing state in the U.S., Florida had more than 19 million residents in 2014 and will likely have 2 million more by 2020. By 2028, the majority of Florida's population will come from an ethnic or racial minority group. For children, this day has already come. In 2014, 54.8 percent of Florida's children were children of color.

The nation's vitality and prosperity depends on the success of every child in this country, but the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2017 Race for Results report shows that persistent challenges to well-being and opportunities for success hinder children of color and those living in immigrant families, especially African-American, Latino and American Indian children.

"Hispanic and Latino and African-American children are disproportionately affected by poverty relative to white children," said Florida KIDS COUNT Director Dr. Norín Dollard. "While the needs of all impoverished children need to be addressed, the impact of poverty on Florida's Hispanic and Latino children is magnified disproportionately due to their rising numbers and high concentration living in areas of poverty. This has implications for their welfare as well as for Florida's economic well-being in the long run."

This is the second Race for Results (RFR) report by the Casey Foundation. The Foundation released the first report in 2014. The report measures children's progress on the national and state levels on key education, health and economic milestones by racial and ethnic groups. The report's index uses a composite score of these milestones on a scale of one (lowest) to 1,000 (highest), with higher scores reflecting better circumstances for children.

(more)

Florida KIDS COUNT
Department of Child and Family Studies
College of Behavioral and Community Sciences
University of South Florida
floridakidscount.org

The 2017 Race for Results shows that, as is true nationally, African-American children in Florida fare the worst among the racial and ethnic groups, with an index score of 364, a ranking of 28th in the nation. Scores for other ethnic groups were relatively better at 500 or higher. Looking at some of the individual indicators that make up the index, however, shows mixed progress for Florida's children.

While Florida has made great progress in getting children access to healthcare between 2010 and 2015, with 7 percent remaining without insurance (AECF, 2017), the state has not moved the needle on poverty rates at all and has more children living in areas of concentrated poverty. This is despite improvements in other economic indicators, including increases in parental employment and parent education levels, which better enable parents to support their families.

We need to do more to for all of Florida's children, but especially children of color who disproportionately live in poverty. The focus needs to remain on helping children out of poverty, including giving them access to health insurance and their parents access to affordable housing. Florida's parents are employed at higher rates than in 2010, but the cost of housing requires that someone earning minimum wage would need to work 102 hours per week just to rent a two-bedroom apartment (Out of Reach, 2017).

Release Information

The 2017 Race for Results report is available at www.aecf.org/raceforresults/. Additional information is available at www.aecf.org/. The website also contains the most recent national, state and local data on numerous indicators of child well-being. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about Race for Results can use the Data Center at datacenter.kidscount.org.

About Florida KIDS COUNT

Florida KIDS COUNT (FKC) is in Department of Child & Family Studies at the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, University of South Florida. The objective of FKC is to inform Floridians and their policy makers about the quality of life for Florida's children, and to build leadership and accountability for action on behalf of our children. Visit <http://floridakidscount.org/>

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation's children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit www.aecf.org. KIDS COUNT is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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