

WHAT'S NEW WITH KIDS?

January 2007

Site of the Month

In the June and September 2006 *KIDS COUNT Newsletters*, I reviewed articles pertaining to children living in rural America. For this newsletter I'll switch gears and report on an article about children living in cities. The article, published by The Brookings Institution, is titled *Kids in the City: Indicators of Child Well-Being in Large Cities from the 2004 American Community Survey*, which is available online at: http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20060810_KidsCity.pdf.

The Brookings Institution categorizes the nation's 50 largest cities into five city types based upon their population growth and racial/ethnic composition and provides child well-being data on each of the 50 cities, including Las Vegas, and city types. They report child poverty rates and discuss factors that may influence poverty rates including family structure (single parenthood), labor-force participation (no parent in the labor force), and education (household head did not complete high school).

The Brookings Institution placed Las Vegas, whose population between 1990 and 2000 increased by 85 percent, into the city type, "melting pot fast gainers" (MPFG). The 14 cities in this category are "largely located in the Southwest and California, and have significant Hispanic (and in the case of a few Texas cities, black) populations." The child poverty rate for MPFG in 2004 was 25 percent, lower than the 28 percent for the 50 largest cities, but higher than the 18 percent for the nation. Of the five city categories, the MPFG had the second-lowest poverty rate, which is attributed to "their lower rates of single parenthood and their smaller proportion of children without working parents." MPFG performed better than the aggregate 50 largest cities on percent of children in single-parent families and percent of children with no parent in labor force. See table below.

Child Well-Being Indicators by City Type and the 50 Largest Cities Category

	Melting Pot Fast Gainers	50 Largest Cities
Child poverty rate	25%	28%
Percent of children in single-parent families	37%	43%
Percent of children with no parent in labor force	11%	14%
Percent of children living with a householder who did not complete high school	30%	27%

Las Vegas was rated low on the percent of children in poverty and medium on the other three child well-being indicators presented in the table. The low poverty rating, as suggested by the Brookings Institution, may be a result of Las Vegas having "relatively high concentrations of wealthy families, singles, and retirees."