

# WHAT'S NEW WITH KIDS?

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September 2008

## Site of the Month

### THE RIGHT START

Each year we publish our *Nevada KIDS COUNT Data Book*, which provides the best available data on child well-being. Our book, although fairly comprehensive, does not compare Nevada to other states on child well-being indicators because sources of data differ from state to state. The Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) reports data and state rankings on 10 key indicators in their annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book*. Likewise, they report data and state and 50-largest-city rankings for indicators related to newborns and mothers in another publication titled *The Right Start*, an on-line report released in August 2008. This newsletter will summarize the data from *The Right Start* for Nevada and Las Vegas.

The data in *The Right Start* indicate that there are good news and bad news related to birth conditions in Nevada. First, we start with the good news. The percent of births to females less than 20 years of age decreased from 11.9 in 2001 to 10.7 in 2005; and, the percent of births to mothers who smoked during pregnancy decreased from 11 in 2001 to 7.7 in 2005.

The bad news is that Nevada ranked in the bottom quartile on several of the indicators. Also, the percent of births to unmarried women increased from 37.2 in 2001 to 40.9 in 2005; and, the percent of births to women receiving late or no prenatal care inched its way up from 7.4 in 2001 to 8.2 in 2005.

How Nevada and Las Vegas rank on some of the indicators presented in the report can help tell the story of the current state of birth conditions. The following bullets highlight 5 of the 13 birth-condition indicators. A ranking of 1 indicates the best among the states and a ranking of 50 indicates the worst.

#### *Nevada*

- 31<sup>st</sup> on the percent of total births to teens (10.7 percent)
- 41<sup>st</sup> on the percent of teen births to women who were already mothers (20.5 percent)
- 43<sup>rd</sup> on the percent of total births to unmarried women (40.9 percent)
- 27<sup>th</sup> on the percent low-birthweight births (less than 5.5 pounds) (8.3 percent)
- 42<sup>nd</sup> on the percent preterm births (less than 37 completed weeks of gestation) (13.9 percent)

#### *Las Vegas*

- 19<sup>th</sup> on the percent of total births to teens (10.9 percent)
- 23<sup>rd</sup> on the percent of teen births to women who were already mothers (20.8 percent)
- 20<sup>th</sup> on the percent of total births to unmarried women (43.6 percent)
- 19<sup>th</sup> on the percent low-birthweight births (less than 5.5 pounds) (8.3 percent)
- 41<sup>st</sup> on the percent preterm births (less than 37 completed weeks of gestation) (14.8 percent)

To access the data on the 13 birth-condition indicators go to *The Right Start*, available on-line at: <http://www.kidscount.org/datacenter/>. *The Right Start* is a joint project of the AECF and Child Trends.