

WHAT'S NEW WITH KIDS?

September 2012

Teens Not Attending School and Not Working Is Trending Upwards

As I stated in an earlier *Newsletter*, I plan to write about each of the 16 indicators that comprise the Annie E. Casey Foundation's (AECF) new index that ranks states on child well-being.¹ In this *Newsletter*, I discuss the percent of teens not attending school and not working—one of the four indicators of Economic Well-Being.² This indicator is also referred to as idle teens or disconnected teens.

In 2010, 15 percent of Nevada teens ages 16 to 19 neither attended school nor worked.² Among the states, Nevada ranked 50th on this indicator. Vermont and Nebraska ranked best (4 percent). The average rate for the nation was 9 percent, better than Nevada's.

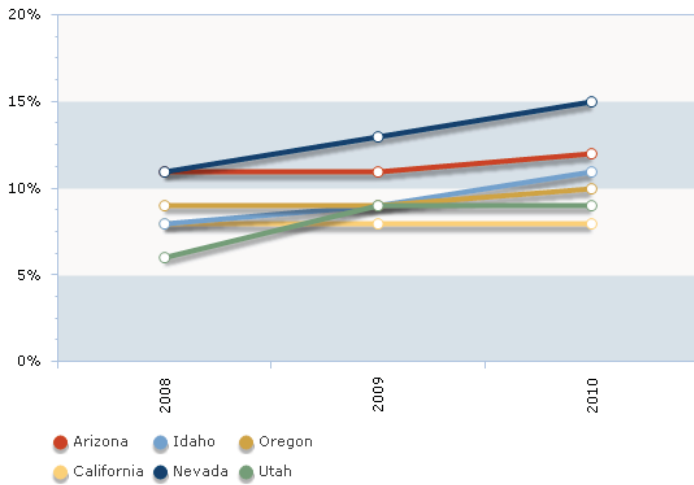
Between 2008 and 2010, the percent of disconnected teens in Nevada increased from 11 to 15, a 4 percentage point or a 36 percent increase (Figure 1).³ The change represents an increase of 7,000 teens—from 15,000 to 22,000. Four of Nevada's neighboring states also show an increase in the percent of disconnected teens since 2008 (Figure 1). Utah led with a 50 percent increase, followed by Idaho with 38 percent, Oregon with 11 percent, and Arizona with 9 percent. California's rate remain unchanged. The rate for the United States increased from 8 percent in 2008 to 9 percent in 2010—a 13 percent increase (Figure 2).

¹In the June *Newsletter*, I introduced you to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's (AECF) new index ranking states on child well-being. The new index incorporates four domains that capture what children need most to thrive: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health, and (4) Family and Community. Each of the four domains is comprised of four individual indicators for a total of 16.

²"Teenagers between age 16 and 19 who are not enrolled in school (full- or part-time) and not employed (full- or part-time)," AECF KIDS COUNT Data Center, <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>, 8/9/12.

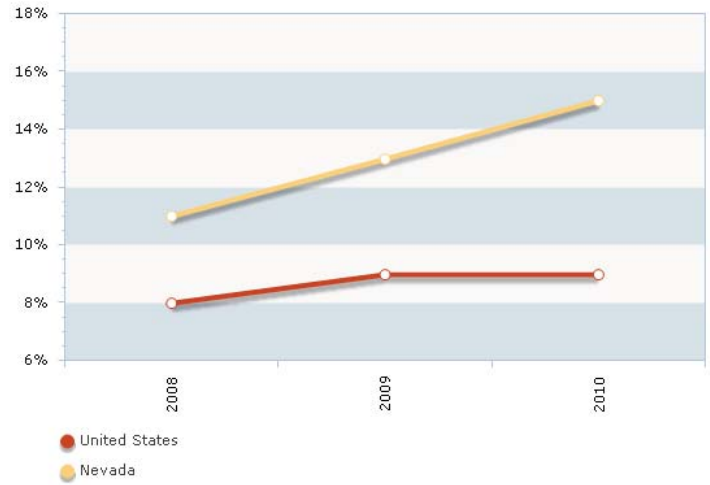
³The data source for this indicator is the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). Due to changes in the wording of the labor force questions in the 2008 ACS, the Census Bureau recommends caution in making data comparisons from 2008 or later with data from prior years. Therefore, this was not done, which precludes a pre- and post-Great Recession comparison.

Figure 1. Percent of Teens Not in School and Not Working, Nevada and Neighboring States: 2008 to 2010



Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 - 2010 American Community Survey, retrieved from the AECF KIDS COUNT Data Center, 8/9/12.

Figure 2. Percent of Teens Not in School and Not Working, Nevada and the United States: 2008 to 2010



Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 - 2010 American Community Survey, retrieved from the AECF KIDS COUNT Data Center, 8/6/12.

Our youth are Nevada’s future. So, what can be done to reduce the number of disconnected youth to help ensure a healthy Nevada? Shore and Shore (2009), in a *KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief* for the AECF, recommend six strategies that can help:

1. “Re-engage disconnected youth and young adults in education
2. Provide workforce development programs geared to the needs of disconnected youth and young adults
3. Include disconnected youth in economic recovery investment and planning
4. Address impediments to employment
5. Create developmental opportunities that recognize the importance of social networks
6. Aim for comprehensive reform, with a focus on cross-system collaboration.”⁴

⁴Shore, Rima and Barbara Shore, “Reducing the Number of Disconnected Youth,” *KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation,” July 2009, p. 2.