



REPORT CARD 2007

The Status of Children in Oregon

Presented by:



STATUS OF CHILDREN 2007

We all hope for a future where every child grows up healthy, safe and secure. Children First for Oregon's 2007 Report Card on the Status of Children reflects the struggles that children and working families continue to face, but also provides hope for the future. Despite another disappointing overall grade (D), we hope that the investments to which Oregon has recently committed reflect a genuine shift in how children are treated in our state. The 2007 Legislature made significant strides in putting children first, but there's far more work left for us all to do.

This past year has shown a marked advancement in the investments made for children and working families. Hard, thoughtful work is still required to move each category on the Report Card -- particularly "Health" and "Early Care and Education" -- to an "A," but recent investments in these two categories will prove significant in the long-run (see tables at right). The dedication of funding to early care and education will improve that category's grade in the coming years as the data begins to catch up with our renewed financial commitment.

The momentum for positive change has begun to build, but it will not continue without the thoughtful dedication of every Oregonian, from elected leaders to everyday citizens.

As health care costs have continued to rise, more Oregon employers have dropped or drastically reduced health care benefits. This move has left tens of thousands of Oregon children and families without adequate health insurance, and has produced a never-ending financial burden for taxpayers who foot the bill for expensive emergency room

treatments. In order to move forward, Oregon must make sure all of our children have access to affordable health care. The crisis of uninsured children cannot wait any longer for a solution.

We also continue to see increasing rates of child maltreatment, and sadly, the children who suffer abuse or neglect remain subject to a child welfare system badly in need of reform. The nearly 16,000 Oregon children in foster care still fail to have the supports they need to return home safely, or find another stable alternative. We must recognize that foster kids are *our* kids. All of Oregon must stand united and do what is right for these children, which will improve their life outcomes, and save taxpayers' money in the long run.

Oregon remains a state full of potential despite where we stand today. We are starting to realize the ability of our collective commitment to children, and the impact it will have on the future of our state. The road we must walk together is neither easy nor quick, but our history is one of perseverance and dedication.

The momentum for positive change has begun to build, but it will not continue without the thoughtful dedication of every Oregonian, from elected leaders to everyday citizens. Together, we *can* make this a state where all children thrive. To learn about solutions and what you can do, visit our website at www.cffo.org.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Making sure Oregon's children are healthy, safe and secure requires a sustained commitment from all members of our state, whether public or private sectors, individuals or communities. Public investment is an essential part of any comprehensive solution to improving child well-being. In 2007, the State Legislature made the most of a resurgent economy and invested strongly in children for the first time in more than a decade. How will this affect our children? Here is a look at the potential impact on one category, Early Care and Education:

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION	2007-09 STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS
Child Care Supply	\$40 million to improve the Employment Related Day Care Program to help working parents and their child care providers, making child care more affordable for everyday Oregon families.
Head Start / Oregon Prekindergarten	\$39 million to expand Head Start in Oregon to reach all eligible children, making more spots available, and allowing thousands more children to access this proven program and arrive at school ready to learn.
3rd Grade Reading and Math Proficiency	\$6.25 billion for K-12 education across Oregon, to ensure a full school year, move towards smaller class sizes, and invest in teacher mentoring programs, all proven to improve student achievement at all levels.

A healthy future for Oregon children requires us to ensure their healthy development today -- today's children are tomorrow's citizens, parents, and community leaders. That's why we have a responsibility as a state to make sure that our collective resources are being used to build the strongest foundation for our kids. Ensuring every child access to high quality affordable health care will establish this foundation, and guarantee a strong future for us all. Here's how comprehensive health care coverage would impact select indicators in the Health category:

HEALTH	FUTURE IMPACT OF HEALTH CARE REFORM
Uninsured Children	The child uninsurance rate would decline, meaning that more kids could get the health care they need when they need it.
Prenatal Care	Mothers would have greater access to critical prenatal care during the first trimester of pregnancy to ensure a long and healthy life for their child.
Immunizations	Children would receive timely vaccinations to prevent diseases such as measles and whooping cough that can endanger kids and communities.

SUMMARY OF GRADES

OVERALL 2007 GRADE	D
FAMILY FINANCIAL STABILITY	C-
HEALTH	F
EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION	F
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION	C+
CHILD WELFARE	D

The letter grades are based on an objective analysis of:

1. Progress toward the 2010 Oregon Benchmark Targets, state performance measures or other measures over the last two years.
2. Progress over the last ten years.

Note: Indicators are based on the most recent data available. For information about data sources, please contact Ben Leftwich, Policy Assistant at (503) 236-9754 or ben@cffo.org.



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Children First is grateful to Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon for being the presenting sponsor of the 2007 Report Card

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OUR MISSION:

Children First works to make Oregon a place where all children thrive. We educate and engage Oregonians to promote programs and policies that **get results for kids.**

THANK YOU TO OUR 2007 CHILDREN'S CHAMPION SPONSORS:





FAMILY FINANCIAL STABILITY — C-

Childhood Poverty

16.8 percent of children (0-17) live in poverty. 141,000 Oregon children live in very low-income households, thus increasing their risk for negative outcomes. 2010 Benchmark Target (all Oregonians)..... 10

Child Support

60.4 percent of court-ordered child support payments are paid. More than one-third of court-ordered payments are not made, depriving children of a critical financial support. 2010 Benchmark Target 70

Affordable Housing

82 percent of low-income rental households do not have affordable housing. High housing costs force many families to choose between paying rent or meeting other basic needs. 2010 Benchmark Target 70

Affordable Child Care

49 percent of lower-income families find affordable child care. More than half of lower-income families with child care costs spend more than 10 percent of their income on child care, thus making it difficult to cover other basic needs. 2005 Benchmark Target 45 2010 Benchmark Target Not Set

Food Insecurity

11.9 percent of Oregonians are at risk of hunger. Oregon's national rank in food insecurity has continued to drop this past year, from 32nd in the nation to 29th. 2010 Benchmark Target 10th in national rank

Unemployment

5.4 percent of Oregon workers are unemployed. Oregon's unemployment rate has improved, but still sits at nearly 120 percent of the national rate, leaving many families with inadequate or no income. 2010 Benchmark Target 100 percent of national rate



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION — C+

8th Grade Reading and Math Proficiency
69 percent of 8th grade students met or exceeded state reading standards. 2010 Benchmark Target 80
70 percent of 8th grade students met or exceeded state math standards. 2010 Benchmark Target 80
The percent of 8th graders meeting reading and math standards increased over the previous school year. However, both math and reading scores remain below the benchmark targets.

High School Dropout
4.1 percent of high school students drop out of school. The high school dropout rate decreased slightly from the previous year. 2010 Benchmark Target 4.0

Juvenile Arrests
14.8 juveniles are arrested per 1,000 children under the age of 18 for person or property crimes. Arrests among Oregon's youth continue to decrease, and the current rate exceeds the benchmark. 2010 Benchmark Target 17.7

Substance Abuse
In a month...
31.9 percent of 8th grade students drink alcohol. 2010 Benchmark Target 17
15.7 percent of 8th grade students use illicit drugs. 2010 Benchmark Target 12
8.7 percent of 8th grade students smoke cigarettes. 2010 Benchmark Target 13
Alcohol and drug use continues to increase, while the smoking rate for 8th graders decreased over the past year.

Suicide Attempts
191.8 youths per 100,000 (ages 10-17) attempt suicide. 773 suicide attempts by youth were reported in 2005, a decrease from the previous year. 2010 Benchmark Target No Benchmark Set

HEALTH — F

Prenatal Care
79.3 percent of babies are born to mothers who receive early prenatal care. The percent of mothers who receive early prenatal care has decreased slightly. 2010 Benchmark Target 90

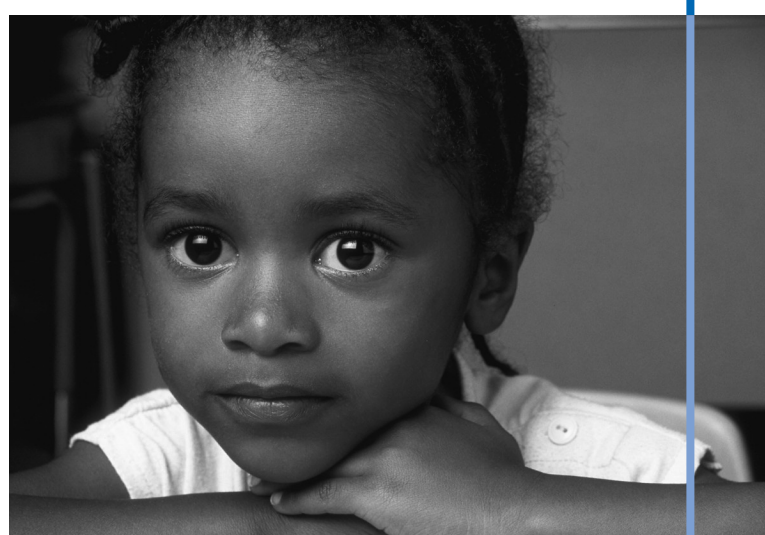
Infant Mortality
5.9 babies per 1,000 die before their first birthday. Oregon's infant mortality rate has increased slightly, but continues to be one of the lowest in the nation. 2010 Benchmark Target 4.5

Uninsured Children
12.6 percent of children under age 18 lack health insurance. The number of uninsured children has increased since last year, despite fewer children living below the federal poverty line. 2010 Benchmark Target (all Oregonians) 8

Immunizations
75.3 percent of two-year-olds are up to date on their immunizations. Oregon's rate of immunizations for toddlers decreased over the last year. 2010 Benchmark Target 90

Teen Pregnancy
26.5 per 1,000 girls (ages 15-17) become pregnant in Oregon. Teen pregnancy has increased slightly over the past year, but remains historically low. 2010 Benchmark Target 20

Obesity
24.9 percent of 11th grade students are overweight or at risk of being overweight. At 86 percent of the national rate, Oregon's indicator for youth obesity is better than other states, but still needs improvement. 2010 Target (CFFO measure) 65 percent of national rate



EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION — F

Child Care Supply
17 child care slots are available per 100 children under age 13. The availability of child care has not improved, continuing to leave families struggling to find quality, affordable child care. 2010 Benchmark Target 25

Head Start / Oregon Pre-K
57 percent of eligible 3 and 4-year-olds are enrolled in Head Start / Oregon Prekindergarten. Inadequate funding at the national and state level has kept high-need, low-income children from accessing this proven early education program. 2010 Target (state performance measure)..... 100

3rd Grade Reading and Math Proficiency
83 percent of 3rd grade students met or exceeded state reading standards. 2010 Benchmark Target 97
70 percent of 3rd grade students met or exceeded state math standards. 2010 Benchmark Target 90
Third graders showed improvement in state assessments for reading, but not math, in school year 2006-07

CHILD WELFARE — D

Child Abuse and Neglect
7.6 children per 1,000 are abused or neglected. 6,625 children were abused or neglected, a 10 percent increase from the previous year. 2010 Benchmark Target..... 5.6

Threat of Harm
6.2 children per 1,000 are at significant risk of abuse or neglect. 5,418 children were subjected to substantial risk of harm, a slight increase from the previous year. 2010 Benchmark Target..... 5.3

Recurrence of Maltreatment
6.7 percent of child abuse/neglect victims are re-abused within 6 months of prior victimization. This critical performance measure went in the right direction this year, down from 10.2 percent in 2005. 2010 Target (CFFO measure)..... 5.6

Foster Care Placement Stability
84.1 percent of children in foster care have two or fewer placement settings (for children in care 12 months or less). 15.9 percent of children in foster care do not have stable placements, a slight increase in the rate from the previous year. 2010 Target (CFFO measure)..... 90

This report is part of KIDS COUNT, a program of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and a generous supporter of Children First.



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