

Factoids

Oregon's children

Oregon remains in the middle of the pack nationwide in terms of child well-being, but financial threats to the stability of many households with children could signal a downward trend, according to a press release from Children First for Oregon.

Oregon ranked 25th nationally in a child's overall well-being. The state improved between 1990 and 2000 on six out of 10 measures that reflect children's quality of life.

Here are some of the study's findings. (Figures are for 2000 unless otherwise noted.)

Economic conditions

■ Oregon saw its population of children increase by 17 percent from 724,130 in 1990 to 846,526 in 2000; rural areas saw a 2-percent decline in population while urban areas increased by 26 percent.

■ Oregon's median income of families with children is \$47,600. Nationally, the figure is \$50,000.

■ Six percent of children in Oregon live in extreme poverty (income below 50 percent of poverty level).

■ Female-headed families receiving child support or alimony was at 40 percent.

Health issues

■ Children under the age of 6 in paid childcare while parents work was at 32 percent.

■ Twelve percent of Oregon's children did not have health insurance, while 75 percent of children had been immunized.

Technology/isolation

■ Children without Internet access at home: 47 percent. Nationally, that figure is 52 percent.

■ Children without telephones in the home in 2001: 2 percent.

■ Children without vehicles: 4 percent.

Education

■ Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in nursery school, preschool or kindergarten: 41. (National percentage is 49.)

■ Number of fourth-graders who scored below basic science level: 33 percent.

Reducing the cost of being poor

■ The Average Earned Income Tax Credit for recipient households with children was \$1,915. Nationally, it was \$1,968.

■ Twenty-six percent — the number of households in Oregon eligible for food stamps but not receiving them.