

KIDS COUNT STATE GRANTEE RESOURCE KIT



By
Brett Brown, Kyleen Hashim, and Pilar Marin
Child Trends

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Introduction

This resource guide is designed to provide KIDS COUNT Network members with a general overview of the purpose of the KIDS COUNT Initiative, the make-up of the KIDS COUNT Network and the resources that are available to KIDS COUNT grantees. This guide covers both the structure of the Network, its relationship to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the role that Casey staff plays in supporting Network activities. Both veteran KIDS COUNT staff and new Network members should use this guide to ensure they have full access to all Network resources.

History and Background¹

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private, charitable organization dedicated to helping build better futures for disadvantaged children in the United States. It was established in 1948 by Jim Casey, one of the founders of UPS, and his siblings, who named the Foundation in honor of their mother. The primary mission of the Foundation is to foster public policies, human service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. In pursuit of this goal, the Foundation makes grants that help states, cities, and neighborhoods fashion more innovative, cost-effective responses to these needs.²

Out of its desire to foster decision-making at all levels based on the best available data, KIDS COUNT was launched in 1990 with the release of the first KIDS COUNT Data Book featuring 10 comparable key measures of well-being for each of the 50 states, as well as other state-level data for monitoring the status of children.³ The Data Book has been released every year and is still the flagship report of the Foundation.

In an effort to bring this approach to the state and local levels where the majority of policy decisions which affect children's lives are made, AECF began to fund state-level organizations in order to produce individual state data books and more generally to bring high quality data to state and local policy discussions affecting children and their families.

By 1996, there were KIDS COUNT grantees in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Over the next few years, grantees were added from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Most lead grantees were established child advocacy organizations, though some universities and state government agencies also took the lead. Most continue as grantees to the present time.

¹For a more detailed treatment of the history and mission, see O'Hare, W. (2007) Data-Based Child Advocacy: Using Demographic Indicators to Increase Public Awareness of Child Well-Being in the United States. Paper delivered at the Applied Demography Conference, San Antonio, TX, January 2007. Paper available from author on request.

²Paragraph supplied by staff of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

³The KIDS COUNT Data Books were originally produced with the assistance of the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP). www.cssp.org.

Organizational Expectations

The 53 organizations which receive funding to do state/territory-level KIDS COUNT work are collectively known as the KIDS COUNT Network. Members of the Network are expected to:

- Have a high level of credibility and respect;
- Be THE resource for comprehensive data on children and families in their state;
- Produce at least one data product (usually more) annually;
- Provide on-line access to state and local data;
- Enhance decision-makers, media, and the public's knowledge and use of the data;
- Produce data products with relevance for key policy decisions affecting child and family well-being; and
- Partner in the National Data Book release.

The KIDS COUNT Network

The KIDS COUNT Network allows members to draw on each other's skills, experiences, products, and insights to better inform and support work within their own states. Network functions include:

- Peer support and information sharing;
- Identification and development of common resources; and
- Coordinating with the National KIDS COUNT staff and the Foundation in areas of mutual concern.

Annie E. Casey Staff and Network Management

The KIDS COUNT Initiative is currently administered by four full-time staff. The team includes a National KIDS COUNT Coordinator, a State KIDS COUNT Coordinator, a Program Associate and an Administrative Assistant. Currently, the team also includes a Senior Fellow working primarily on research and data issues at the national level. As a group, their responsibilities include:

- Oversight of KIDS COUNT state grants;
- Oversight of the development and dissemination of the annual KIDS COUNT Data Book;
- Management and development of the KIDS COUNT Data Center, an on-line data resource for city and state level child well-being;
- Oversight of the production of other publications including data snapshots, fact sheets, and research reports;
- Monitoring and evaluating new sources of state and local data that may be of use to national and state KIDS COUNT efforts;
- Coordination of technical assistance to support the work of state grantees, including oversight of contracts to outside organizations that provide assistance (see below for details);
- Providing state grantees with information, training, and assistance for communications, policy, research, and data;

- Developing an annual KIDS COUNT Network Work Plan with the KIDS COUNT Steering Committee that guides and coordinates Network activities in the coming year, including the annual conference and other meetings;
- Oversight and maintenance of the Network Web site and listserv;
- Development and oversight of CLIKS, the on-line data system housing state and county level data supplied by each of the state KIDS COUNT grantees; and
- Connecting grantees to other initiatives of the Foundation and with “lessons learned” from other Foundation work.

Network Listserv

This is the principal communications vehicle for information of common interest to state grantees. All staff at state grantee organizations who work on any part of the state’s KIDS COUNT project are encouraged to sign up for the listserv. Common listserv announcements include:

- Important new data releases;
- New publications from state grantees;
- Announcements concerning KIDS COUNT conference calls, meetings and workshops;
- Guidelines for proposals and reports; and
Notices of supplemental funding opportunities.

In addition, the listserv is the principal means for grantees to tap into each other’s expertise by sharing with the group important questions they are currently facing. This is a moderated listserv, meaning that a staff person at the Foundation reviews all communications prior to their release.

To sign up for the listserv, contact Carol Rickel at crickel@aecf.org. Only registered listserv members can submit postings to the list serve. All communications should be submitted to KIDSCOUNT@lists.aecf.org

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, which includes representatives from 10 state-level grantees,⁴ acts as an advisory and coordination group for both the national and state efforts of KIDS COUNT. The committee is primarily tasked with identifying common policy and technical assistance issues for KIDS COUNT grantees and advising staff on potential connections between foundation work and KIDSCOUNT grantee efforts. Committee responsibilities also include the following:

- Oversee the work of established working groups;
- Assign work to the work groups;
- Create new, ad hoc committees as needed; and
- Receive input from the working groups and the national staff in producing a coordinated annual KIDS COUNT working plan.

⁴State-level in this context also includes grantees from the Territories and the District of Columbia.

Members of the committee meet four times per year. Members serve rotating terms of three years. New members are nominated by existing members of the committee and by self-nomination. Every attempt is made to keep the committee representative in terms of the type of grantee (advocate, university-based, state agency), geographical location, race, and gender.

Information Sharing Working Group⁵

The Information Sharing Working Group focuses on developing ideas, processes and structures that facilitate and promote easier communication between and among KIDS COUNT grantees. 2008 activities include:

- Developing a Network Experts List;
- Conducting an evaluation of the KIDS COUNT Network Web site;
- Creating an Information Sharing toolkit as a part of the Network Web site. (The toolkit is designed to provide easy access for Network members to a variety of tools and information sources focused on priority issues and advocacy skills.)

The Network Experts List and other tools can be found at www.kidscount.org/kcnetwork/.

Evaluation Working Group

The Evaluation Working Group focuses on developing, testing, and deploying tools and techniques that will enable Network members to better measure the effectiveness of their work. 2008 activities include:

- Conference call series on evaluation topics;
- Promoting the use of evaluation tools that have been developed by Network members in conjunction with evaluation consultants over the past several years; and
- Monitoring pilot evaluation projects coordinated by Network consultants where several grantees are engaged in testing new evaluation tools and processes.

Strategic Communications Working Group

The Strategic Communications Working Group seeks to provide much needed support to Network members in the area of external communication. 2008 activities included:

- Developing a communications toolkit that includes items such as models for strategic communications plans, draft press releases and other communications-related tools for use by grantees; and
- Organizing and hosting regular conference calls on communications issues.

The Brown bag events are announced in advance on the Network listserv. Elements of the toolkit will be available on the Network Web site as they are identified.

⁵Sections within quotes for the working group descriptions were taken directly from the 2007 KIDS COUNT annual conference agenda.

KIDS COUNT Network Web site
www.kidscount.org/kcnetwork/

The Network Web site is a core resource for state KIDS COUNT grantees to get ideas for new projects, catch up on the latest news, link to valuable online resources, obtain personal technical assistance, and check the calendar for planned KIDS COUNT events like workshops and webinars. It is also a place to access and manage your state CLIKS data. New information is being added all the time and grantees are strongly encouraged to visit the site every two to four weeks.

Here is what you can find there:

- *Grantee Contact Information and Web site Address* - Contact information for all members of the KIDS COUNT Network.
- *New and Notable* - A regularly updated listing of links to new items of interest produced by Network members and other advocacy organizations.
- *Publications of State Grantees* – A regularly updated library of publications from KIDS COUNT groups and other national advocacy organizations. A great resource for finding new topics and examples of more effective ways of presenting KIDS COUNT data. Foundation staff regularly solicits new publications from the Network via the listserv.
- *Toolkits* - The KIDS COUNT working groups are identifying and/or developing tools that can be used by grantees to increase their effectiveness in communications, internal evaluation/development, and data analysis. Tools will be identified and offered on an ongoing basis, and are available on the Network Web site. Tools that are already available include:
 - o Evaluation: Technical assistance providers have developed a self-assessment tool covering major grantee activities that can be used by advocacy groups to establish a baseline of data on areas of potential development for their organization. The toolkit also includes a wide variety of workshop, data book and information request feedback forms that can be used to track outcomes and engagement levels.
 - o Communications: The FrameWorks Institute produced a series of short online E-zines that cover a variety of communications strategies and information topics of particular interest to KIDS COUNT grantees.
 - o Data Analysis:
 - The Population Reference Bureau has developed a guide to getting and using data from the American Community Survey (ACS), a vital source of state and county level data on children.
 - Child Trends has produced a simple analytical tool that allows grantees to create confidence intervals and perform analyses of statistical significance.

- *Calendars* - Stay up to date on all KIDS COUNT events by checking the Network calendar. Dates for Steering Committee, working group meetings as well as Network meetings, workshops and webinars are listed on the calendar, which is updated on a regular basis.
- *Annual Meeting Information / Archives* - If you are new or if were not able to make the annual meeting, this is a great way to catch up on what is happening within the Network and with key issues of concern to KIDS COUNT groups.

KIDS COUNT Technical Assistance

The Annie E. Casey Foundation partners with some of the top organizations in the country to provide grantees with technical assistance on all aspects of their mission, including data issues (choice, analysis, presentation, and management); strategic communications; organizational development; and fiscal and policy issues. (*Updated information on technical assistance providers is available on the KIDS COUNT Network Web site.*)

Data Issues

- Child Trends: Provides assistance for issues concerning all sources of state and local level data on children's well-being from the federal statistical system, issues related to indicator selection, publication design, and research related to child well-being. Contact: Brett Brown, bbrown@childtrends.org, 202-572-6000, www.childtrends.org.
- Population Reference Bureau: PRB staff has particular expertise in using national, state, and local data from the American Community Survey, Current Population Survey, Decennial Census, and Vital Statistics records. Contact: Jean D'Amico jdamico@prb.org or Mark Mather, mmather@prb.org, 202-483-1100, www.prb.org.
- The Center for Social and Demographic Analysis (CSDA): CSDA has significant expertise on indicators of child well-being for children in immigrant and native-born families. Center staff are available for questions and guidance on data issues related to immigrant children and families. Contact: Donald J. Hernandez at DonH@albany.edu, 518-442-4668, www.albany.edu/csda/.

Communications

- Velir Studios: Velir provides all technical assistance related to using the CLIKS data system. In addition, they provide limited support on general Web design issues. Contact Mark Gregor at Mark@Velir.com.
- FrameWorks Institute: FrameWorks is available to KIDS COUNT grantees to assist with the strategic communications challenges of data-based advocacy. In addition, they produce an on-line publication called E-Zines, which cover topics of particular interest to grantees. Contact Diane Benjamin at dbenjamin@frameworksinstitute.org or visit www.frameworksinstitute.org.

Organizational Development

- Alliance for Justice: The Casey Foundation has partnered with the Alliance for Justice to help KIDS COUNT organizations build their capacity to participate in public policy issues. This includes on-site workshops and one-on-one technical assistance, and publications concerning federal and IRS advocacy regulations. For more information on AFJ, visit their Web site at www.afj.org or email them at advocacy@afj.org.
- Management Assistance Group: MAG provides one-on-one technical assistance to KIDS COUNT projects on a variety of issues in the area of fund-raising, board development, management, planning, and adjusting to growth and change. Contact Robbie Tisch at RobTisch@magmail.org.
- Voices for America's Children: Voices (formerly NACA) provides KIDS COUNT Network members with a variety of organizational supports including advocacy training peer-to-peer learning opportunities through national meetings, and policy analysis support via several regular publications. The Foundation has partnered with Voices for America's Children in several different capacities over the past few years. Currently, over 70 percent of KIDS COUNT state grantees are members of Voices and the majority of Voices members are KIDS COUNT grantees. The Foundation supports Voices' work with members through grants for technical assistance and direct staff-to-staff collaboration to ensure that services aren't duplicated across Networks. Visit their Web site for more information on their work at www.voices.org.

Fiscal and Policy Issues

- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: The CBPP provides information and assistance to KIDS COUNT grantees in the areas of budget and fiscal analysis. CBPP staff is available to assist grantees on a variety of policy and data issues. Contact Nick Johnson at johnson@cbpp.org.
- Center for the Study of Social Policy: CSSP has worked closely with KIDS COUNT grantees over the last several years in the development of the Policy Matters publications and tools. CSSP will continue to assist interested KIDS COUNT grantees in the state level application of Policy Matters materials. For more information on Policy Matters, contact Noel Bravo at Noel.Bravo@cssp.org.

If you have a question or a problem in any of these areas, you are encouraged to contact the technical assistance providers listed above. If you are unsure which of these groups will best meet your particular need, contact the national KIDS COUNT staff and they will refer you to the proper organization. For the most up-to-date descriptions of the services they offer and contact information, go to the Technical Assistance section of the Network Web site (see link above).

In addition to these organizations, grantees can and often do turn to their fellow grantees for assistance. The Network established several programs to promote mentoring and cross-site assistance.

KIDS COUNT Mentoring and Cross-Site Visit Programs

KIDS COUNT Network Mentoring Program

www.kidscount.org/kcnetwork/resources/documents/Mentoringprogram.doc

This program pairs new KIDS COUNT staff with an experienced member of the Network who has similar job responsibilities. The mentoring relationship is intended to exist formally for six months. Mentors provide:

- Initial contact to welcome the new staff and introduce them to the KIDS COUNT Network;
- Periodic check-ins with new staff members to offer assistance and expertise on KIDS COUNT functions and the ongoing work of the Network and the national KIDS COUNT initiative;
- Links to existing resources within the KIDS COUNT Network;
- General availability to help new KIDS COUNT staff as they become oriented to their role and functions in their state and in the KIDS COUNT Network; and
Introductions to colleagues at KIDS COUNT meetings (e.g., data seminars, the annual conference, etc).⁶

New staff who are interested in having a mentor should contact Carol Rickel at crickel@aecf.org.

Cross-Site Visit Fund

Even in the digital age, there are times when a face to face meeting with colleagues is the most efficient and effective way to learn and exchange ideas. In order to facilitate such fruitful exchanges between grantees, the Casey Foundation has established a fund to support grantees in visiting other grantee sites. Up to \$500 is available to support travel, lodging or other costs. For details on the program and how to apply, visit the Network Web site.

Meetings, Workshops, and Conferences

While Web sites, webinars, listservs and e-mail have revolutionized many aspects of professional communication, meetings remain an indispensable means of sharing information, receiving training, and building strong professional ties.

⁶Taken from “KIDS COUNT Network Mentoring Program,” downloaded November 27, 2007 from www.kidscount.org/kcnetwork/resources/documents/Mentoringprogram.doc.

Annual Meeting

Each fall, representatives from all state grantee organizations gather in Baltimore for a three-day conference that covers every aspect of KIDS COUNT work including:

- Data (what's new, how to use it);
- Policy (developments at the national, state and local levels affecting children and their families);
- Advocacy (successful strategies and techniques for more effective advocacy);
- Communications (effective techniques, packaging, framing); and
Organization management and evaluation.

Presenters include nationally known experts as well as national KIDS COUNT staff and state grantees. In addition, the following activities take place at the annual meeting:

- *Working Group Meetings:* Annual meetings of the information, communications, and evaluation work groups. These are usually scheduled for the morning of the first day, prior to other workshop activities.
- *One-on-One Technical Assistance:* Representatives from organizations contracted to provide technical assistance to KIDS COUNT grantees throughout the year are available to meet individually with grantees. This is an opportunity to receive expert assistance face to face. (See technical assistance section of this report for a description of the organizations that provide such assistance, most of which are represented at the annual conference.)
- *Orientation for New KIDS COUNT Staff:* The conference includes a one-hour orientation meeting between new staff (anyone who has joined KIDS COUNT since the last annual meeting) and KIDS COUNT Foundation staff. New staff are provided with an overview of the purpose, history, and resources of the KIDS COUNT Network, and are given the opportunity to ask questions of Foundation staff.
- *Networking Fair:* The Network Fair provides Network members and other advocacy organizations an opportunity to share their latest work, publications, successes and challenges with their peers in an informal setting.

Network members are responsible for providing their own transportation to the conference but hotel accommodations and conference meals are provided at no cost for up to three staff members from each KIDS COUNT grantee. The Steering Committee leads the planning for the conference but solicits ideas from other Network members, reviews previous conference evaluations for suggestions, and relies heavily on the Network for presenters and facilitators. Network members are notified by listserv during the summer regarding the exact time, place, and session content of the conference.

After the conference, PowerPoint presentations from the sessions are posted on the KIDS COUNT Network Web site.

Regional Data Workshops

Each year, KIDS COUNT holds two to three regional workshops focusing on data issues.

Frequent topic areas include:

- New sources of state and local data;
- Technical issues related to data quality and statistical significance;
- Effective and innovative presentation techniques (Web and hardcopy);
- Data storage and retrieval; and
- New developments with the national KIDS COUNT report and databases.

The workshops are two days to two and one-half days long and cover a variety of topics. Both lectures and hands-on training sessions are included. Two to three identical workshops are given in different parts of the country for the convenience of participants and in order to keep the size of the meetings small. One of these workshops also generally includes a three-hour introductory session for new KIDS COUNT staff. The number of participants ranges from 15-30 per workshop. Participants are asked to cover their own travel and lodging costs. These workshops are generally held between January and April.

Other Workshops, Webinars, and Conference Calls

Other occasional workshops are organized to provide training in specific areas such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, effective communications techniques, internal evaluation and management. In addition, conference calls and webinars are held regularly on topics of special interest to the grantees. All of these events are announced on the KIDS COUNT Listserv.

KIDS COUNT Web site

www.kidscount.org

Online Data

The KIDS COUNT national data effort maintains three major online data systems.

- The KIDS COUNT Data Center offers over 100 indicators at the national, state and city level from a variety of federal data sources.
- The CLIKS database contains data supplied by the state KIDS COUNT grantees that are generated from local data sources and not comparable across states.
The 2000 Census Data Online system contains data from the decennial census and provides population estimates at the national, state, and local levels.

KIDS COUNT Data Center

This new online data system contains national, state and city-level estimates for over 100 indicators of child well-being. Included in the data system are all indicators in the KIDS COUNT Data Book and Right Start for Newborns, as well as many other indicators. Measures are updated as new estimates become available and new indicators are added on a regular basis. Data are available for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Estimates for Puerto

Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are included when they are available. In January 2008, the system was expanded to include data for the 50 largest cities in the U.S. as well as six other large cities across the U.S.

Topics covered include health, education, youth risk factors, poverty, employment and income, population and family characteristics, and children in immigrant families. Estimates are usually available for multiple years. Both numbers and percents are available. In addition to the estimates, the user is also provided with detailed information regarding definitions and original data sources. Rankings across states can be produced with ease.

Individual state profiles can be readily produced, as well as cross-state comparisons for all or selected states. Estimates can be displayed and downloaded as tables, figures, and maps that can be used in PowerPoint presentations and other documents, and as raw data in delimited files.

CLIKS (Community Level Information on Kids)

This system brings together data on the well-being of children collected by KIDS COUNT grantees from state and local sources. The unique system allows users to access state-specific inventories of data from local sources such as health departments, human services agencies, and schools. The content of state pages is determined by a participating KIDS COUNT partner using data from local jurisdictions.⁶

The CLIKS system is the most convenient and least expensive way for state grantees to make the data contained in their state data books available to the public online. Most grantees participate in the system and are expected to utilize either the CLIKS system or their own comparable online system to provide the public with easy access to current data.

Grantees manage and update their data through the CLIKS administrative data system. There is a “how to use CLIKS” section that can be accessed once you have signed into the system. To get a password into the system, contact Mark Gregor at Velir Studios, Mark@Velir.com. Once you are in the system, see the section on how to use CLIKS. Training on CLIKS is also sometimes offered at the KIDS COUNT regional data workshops or at the annual conference.

It should be noted that as this guide is being written, the CLIKS system is undergoing a dramatic update. We expect that the new system will be online in late 2008. At that time, CLIKS will become more fully integrated into the KIDS COUNT Data Center. However, the community level data system will continue to be the domain of the KIDS COUNT grantee and the grantee will continue to have sole responsibility for maintenance of the data for their specific states.

⁶From the CLIKS web page, www.kidscount.org/cgi-bin/cliks.cgi, November 21, 2007.

Census Data

This data system offers 2000 census data as well as some comparison data from the 1990 census for many geographic areas including the nation and individual states, metropolitan areas, large cities, counties, congressional districts, state legislative districts and American Indian/Alaska Native/Hawaiian Home Lands.

Data available on children and their families include the following topics: Income and poverty; parental employment; living arrangements; education; language; disability; neighborhood characteristics; age; sex; race; and Hispanic origin. Estimates for a particular outcome (e.g., percent in single-parent families) are often offered separately by race, Hispanic origin, poverty status, and age.

Profiles for particular geographic areas can be generated on a variety of topics. Comparisons and rankings across areas can be produced. Generated tables and figures can be studied online or printed. Complete raw data for any geographic area can be downloaded as a delimited file as analyzed offline using Excel or a variety of statistical packages.

National KIDS COUNT Publications

<http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/PublicationsSeries/KCDatabookProds.aspx>

The National KIDS COUNT project offers a variety of publications including: the annual KIDS COUNT Data Book; a Data Snapshot series covering particular topics; special data reports and working papers; technical reports; and evaluations of the KIDS COUNT effort. All state grantees and new staff can benefit in several ways by familiarizing themselves with these products:

1. Because many national KIDS COUNT publications receive coverage at the state level, you may need to be able to answer questions from your local press, advocates, and legislative staff. For example, some data published in national Data Books on your state may differ from similar measures in your own state data book because different data sources are often used.
2. You will find a lot of information that will be useful for your own work including technical information on available data and measures, examples of effective data presentation and packaging, and information on how KIDS COUNT as a whole is perceived by key user groups.

The National KIDS COUNT Data Book

This is the core publication for KIDS COUNT and The Annie E. Casey Foundation. It has been published annually since 1990. Approximately 50,000 hard copies are printed each year and many times that number are downloaded in PDF format. The National KIDS COUNT Data Book is released in May or June each year.

Each Data Book begins with an essay from Foundation President Doug Nelson on a topic of particular interest to the foundation. The 2008 Data Book, for example, focused on juvenile justice issues. Also included is a summary overview of trends nationally and across the 50 states, including breakdowns for key indicators by race and Hispanic origin.

Finally, there are 2-page State Profiles for each state and D.C. (data for Puerto Rico was also recently added to the Summary and Findings section of the Data Book). The right-hand page for each profile provides trend data for the 10 key indicators that are used to create the overall KIDS COUNT state ranking. These indicators are limited to data that are available for and comparable across all states. These measures are fairly stable from one edition to the next, though occasionally one is dropped and another added. The left-hand pages of the state profiles contain additional indicators that vary from year-to-year including, at least one indicator (usually 2 – 3) that has some policy relevance and is connected to the year's essay topic.

KIDS COUNT staff work with state grantees well in advance of the annual release, sharing advance copies and coordinating the dissemination effort primarily through the Network listserv and a series of conference calls. State grantees are encouraged to be an integral part of the release, producing their own state press releases, helping to make contacts, providing recorded sound-bites and pre-release feedback.

In addition to the Data Book, KIDS COUNT publishes a variety of connected publications including pocket guides, data wheels, and resource guides. All publications can be found on the KIDS COUNT Web site and in the Knowledge Center of the main Foundation site (www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter.aspx).

Special Data Reports

In addition to the Data Book, KIDS COUNT produces special reports featuring data from several rich data sources containing state-level estimates of child and youth well-being. These include:

- *Snapshots*: Snapshots are 4-page pieces that focus on a particular indicator from the KIDS COUNT online data system. Each publication features national and state- or city-level estimates and rankings, a brief discussion of the importance of the topic, and resources for taking action to improve outcomes. Snapshots are produced several times each year, and are available both online and in PDF format. (www.kidscount.org/sld/snapshot.jsp)
- *Census/American Community Survey Reports*: Papers produced in cooperation with the Population Reference Bureau featuring socio-demographic data from the 2000 Census and the American Community Survey. These reports often feature special populations such as rural and urban children, immigrant children, and children from specific race/ethnicity groups;
- *Other Data Reports*: For example, state fact sheets on the health and well-being of children featuring data from the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) and the American Community Survey.

Research Reports and Working Papers

These are technical reports addressing topics such as the validity of the KIDS COUNT State index, factors that predict state differences in the ranking, and rankings for all children compared with low-income children; a general history of child well-being indices; assessments of the quality of data from particular data sources such as the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and the American Community Survey (ACS); and a users guide to the American Community Survey.

Evaluations of KIDS COUNT

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has produced several reports assessing the success of the KIDS COUNT effort. These include a series of reports on the perceptions of KIDS COUNT held by key target audiences including state legislative leaders, business leaders, members of the media, county officials, and Internet users. These reports will be useful in informing marketing and dissemination strategies of all state KIDS COUNT grantees. An analysis of media coverage of the 2004 KIDS COUNT Databook is also available.