

New Hampshire is Kid-Friendly

State rated best in nation

New Hampshire was first among all states in a national composite ranking of child-related indicators. The *1999 Kids Count Data Book of State Profiles of Child Well-Being* published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. The 1999 indicators are based on 1996 data, the latest available.

The *Kids Count Data Book* assessed each state on ten indicators from two selected years, 1985 and 1996. The indicators measure trends in educational, social, economic, and physical well-being of children. In seven of the ten indicators, New Hampshire improved between 1985 and 1996. In three categories, rate of teen deaths, infant mortality rate, and percent who are high school dropouts, New Hampshire bettered the 1985 rate by more than 45 percent. The poorest category for the state was the percent of families with children headed by a single parent. It went from 17 percent in 1985 to 24 percent in 1996, a 41 percent difference.

Each state is accorded a composite score, determined by summing its ten measures. A 1 is highest/best with 51 the lowest/worst. The ranking includes the District of Columbia. In the 1999 state profile New Hampshire was ranked best in three indicators, second best in two indicators, third in two indicators, and sixth, twelfth, and thirteenth in one indicator each.

The publication further summarized rankings in relation to state medians.

- More than 20 percent better than state median
- Up to 20 percent better than state median
- Up to 20 percent worse than state median
- More than 20 percent worse than state median

New Hampshire exceeded the state median (50th percentile) in all ten indicators, nine of which fell in the more than 20 percent better category.

The New England states composite national rankings were:

Kids Count Assessment Based on 10 Indicators									
	NH	US	National Ranking (1=best)						
			NH	CT	ME	MA	RI	VT	
Percent low birth-weight babies (less than 5.5 pounds)	4.8%	7.4%	1	21	9	14	19	11	
Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	5.0	7.3	2	16	1	2	4	23	
Child death rate (deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-14)	18	26	3	16	8	2	1	11	
Rate of teen deaths by accident, homicide, and suicide (deaths per 100,000 teens ages 15-19)	33	62	2	5	11	3	1	9	
Teen birth rate (births per 1,000 females ages 15-17)	15	34	1	13	4	6	21	1	
Percent of teens who are high school dropouts (ages 16-19)	6%	10%	6	2	10	10	38	10	
Percent of teens not attending school and not working (ages 16-19)	5%	9%	3	6	11	11	22	19	
Percent of children living with parents who do not have full-time, year-round employment	23%	30%	12	25	20	22	40	14	
Percent of children in poverty	10%	20%	1	23	11	22	23	6	
Percent of families with children headed by a single parent	24%	27%	13	29	8	20	35	13	

Rank	State	Rank	State
1	New Hampshire	9	Vermont
6	Maine	12	Connecticut
8	Massachusetts	17	Rhode Island

Between 1990 and 1999 New Hampshire garnered the top ranking seven times. The other three years it was rated second best once and third best twice.

Henry Goode