

## C.F.V.I. Releases USVI Kids Count Data Book 2012

The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands released the US Virgin Islands KIDS COUNT Data Book 2012, "Strengthening Supports for Children!" at a community meeting earlier today. The findings of this thirteenth annual KIDS COUNT Data Book derived from the *2010 US Census*. They reflect a total VI population survey and are the most-recent data currently available on VI children and families.

The KIDS COUNT release also included coverage of solutions targeted to our islands. CFVI's President, Dee Baecher-Brown, commented, "By examining the best data territory-wide, VI KIDS COUNT offers a resource that can prompt and inform responses to the challenges facing our community – and strengthen our children's foundations for future success."

This most-recent KIDS COUNT report reflects positive improvements in the rate of births to VI mothers age 15-19, and in the rate of babies born at low birth weight in the territory. The juvenile violent crime arrest rate also improved, falling by half to a low rate last seen in 1997.

Negative, ongoing risks for VI children remain. They include high rates of child poverty (30%), father absence, and teen death, compared to children in the rest of the nation. Further negative rates include the high percentages of VI public school students demonstrating learning readiness and academic skills below age- or grade-expectations -- starting at age 5 and kindergarten entry, and extending through elementary, middle and high school.

This USVI KIDS COUNT Data Book is part of a nationwide initiative, sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, to create a detailed community-by-community picture of the condition of children nationwide. There are now KIDS COUNT projects in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands. The Annie E. Casey Foundation annually produces a summary document reporting state-level data and national trends.

The USVI KIDS COUNT Data Book has been compiled and published each year by the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI), a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization.



### MEDIA RELEASE

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