

USVI KIDS COUNT is an annual project of the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI). Funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT tracks the status of children state by state in the US and in participating US territories.

CFVI has compiled and published the USVI KIDS COUNT Data Book report annually since 2000. Through KIDS COUNT, CFVI works with our community partners towards strategies driven by facts, evidence, analysis, results, and heightened standards of political and public accountability for children and families.

Created to serve donors and non-profit organizations of the US Virgin Islands, CFVI is committed to building a growing collection of permanent funds, and using the income to enhance the educational, physical, social, cultural and environmental well-being of the islands' people.

Today, CFVI manages more than one hundred named funds, administers scholarships and awards programs, and coordinates the establishment of memorial funds. CFVI was established in 1990 with a \$500,000 endowment, grown now to \$8 million.

This year more than \$2 million was distributed in grants, awards and scholarships to the people and nonprofit organizations of St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John and Water Island.

CFVI is managed by a professional staff and governed by a volunteer Board of Directors made up of Virgin Islands community leaders.

CFVI is a public charity.

Contributions are deductible to the fullest extent of the law.



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USVI Kids Count 2013 Data Book is available online at www.cfvi.net

1990 2000 2010

PAUSING FOR REVIEW



A 20-YEAR LOOK AT VI CHILDREN'S LIVES

US VIRGIN ISLANDS KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK 2013



The STATUS of CHILDREN in the US VIRGIN ISLANDS

The USVI KIDS COUNT Data Book 2013 provides a review of US Virgin Islands children's progress from 1990-2010.

Tracking major trends over the past twenty years, this special report provides data on areas of gain — or loss — in the well-being of all the territory's children.

Note: USVI Kids Count Data Book 2013 uses latest figures available, ie. 2010 data, and 2011 data where available.

Fewer and smaller families...but with increased income.

Virgin Islanders' incomes fell in the 1990's, but gained strength from 2001 to 2010.

- Families' **median income** rose to \$37,254 in 2010 (up \$9K since 1995), due in part to a raised economy, and more women in the workforce.
- In 2010 there were 10% fewer families with children compared to 1990. Family size became smaller too, with fewer children and, increasingly, a single parent.
- In 2011, VI women's average lifetime births lowered to 2.3, from 3.7 births in 2000.
- The number of VI children shrank by 24% in the 20 years between 1990 and 2010. Out-migration of families, women's rising educational levels, greater use of birth control, and increased single parenthood have contributed to this lower number.
- In 2010, almost half of children's families were headed by single mothers (48%), up significantly from 37% in 1990.

Less poverty for families with children – especially for 2-parent families.

Incomes rose for families with children, and poverty lessened in the 20 years since 1990.

- In 2010, 25% of VI families with children lived in poverty, a sharp improvement from 2000 (35%) and even from 1990 (29%).
- Similarly, the portion of children living in poverty lowered to 31% in 2010, from 37% in 1990 (after rising to an extreme of 42% in 2000).
- In 2010, 38% of families headed by single mothers were poor – an improvement by 8 percentage points from 1990 when 46% of single mothers were poor.
- But households left in poverty were increasingly headed by single mothers, as 2-parent families were better able to exit poverty, 1990-2010.
- In 2010, three quarters (75%) of all poor families with children were headed by single females, a sharp increase from 63% (less than 2/3) in 1990.

For infants & children: relatively low death risks, but low health coverage.

From 1990-2010, the number of live births fell by 27%, though the number of VI women rose in that time span. Fewer lifetime births per woman generally predict better lifetime health for mothers, and greater investments in their children's health and safety.

- VI infant mortality rate improved 1990-2010; falling from 14/1,000 to 6/1,000.
- From 2000-2010, child deaths averaged 5.7 deaths a year (or 24/100,000 children age birth to 14). The national rate was 17/100,000 in 2010.
- In 2010, more than a quarter of VI children (27%) lacked health insurance, up slightly from 2003 when 26% of children were without health insurance. The national rate of uninsured children: 8%.

For juveniles and teens: higher violent crime and death risks.

Since 1990, the VI's distressingly high rates of juvenile violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery, assault) and of teen deaths have been 2 to 3 times higher than in the nation.

- Between 1997 and 2011, arrests of juveniles (age 10 to 18) for violent crimes rose 98% (from 310/100,000 VI youth in 1997, up to 614/100,000 in 2011).
- From 2000-2010, teen deaths averaged 9 deaths a year, or 99/100,000 children age birth to 14 – twice as high as the national rate of 49/100,000 in 2010.

Too few kids access education at ages when it makes the most difference.

Two vital times for children's engagement in school are right at the start, and at the end. Preschool learning prepares 3 and 4-year olds with developmental skills for kindergarten success. Grades 9-12 prepare students to achieve a high school diploma, the credential necessary for higher education, military service, or other market-readiness path.

- In 2010, 27% of 3 & 4 year olds were not in pre-school, yet children who attend preschool prior to kindergarten have better cognitive outcomes, social skills and school achievement than those who do not attend preschool.
- One third (34%) of children entering public kindergarten lacked age-expected cognition skills: counting, pattern recognition, and logic ability.
- Half (50%) of children entering public kindergarten lacked age-expected word skills and comprehension skills necessary for kindergarten readiness.
- While educational attainment is vital for lifetime economic success, 320 teens age 15-17 were not in school in 2010: 7% of VI teens this age. The national rate: 4%.

More children who stay in school are achieving at grade-level expectations, as measured by USVI KIDS COUNT since 2004-5. In 2011:

- for 5th grade math: 62% of students achieved at or above grade level (32% in 2004-5)
- for 7th grade math: 64% of students (up from 30%)
- for 11th grade math: 53% of students (up from 37%)

- for 5th grade reading: 55% of students (up from 30% in 2004-5)
- for 7th grade reading: 30% of students (up from 18%)
- for 11th grade reading: 37% of students (up from 23%).

Alert: Only half of 11th graders are proficient in math, and only 37% are proficient in reading, indicating that significant academic improvements are still needed.