

## Our Children Now!

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.

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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 ninety 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 \$6 million. This year \$1.5 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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# HOW DO WE COMPARE?



US Virgin Islands  
Kids Count  
Data Book 2009  
Executive Summary

# The STATUS of CHILDREN in the US VIRGIN ISLANDS

The **USVI KIDS COUNT Data Book 2009** provides an updated look at how children and families in the US Virgin Islands are doing.

Tracking trends over the past ten years, this annual report provides data on areas of gain — or increased risk — in the well-being of all the territory's children.

Note: **USVI Kids Count Data Book 2009** uses latest figures available, ie. 2007 data

## Population

- The VI population of children (age birth to 18) is decreasing ...(in 2007: 27,903 children, or 24% of VI population ...in 1997: 36,179 children, or 32% of VI population).

## Children in Families

### **Challenges '97-'07:**

- 46% of VI families with children are single-mother families ...(US rate: 19%).
- 55.8% of VI children live in single parent families. 14% live with single fathers; 42% live with single-mothers ...(in '97: 31% lived with single mothers)

## Economic Security

### **Positives '97-'07:**

- VI family median income rose to \$42,673 in 2007 ...(in 1997: \$30,530).
- VI family median income in '07 was the highest measured in the past ten years.

### **Challenges '07:**

- 29% of all VI families with children live in poverty.
- VI family median income is about \$16,000 less than the nation's ...(US family median income: \$58,480).

## Children/Families in Poverty

### **Positives '97-'07:**

- VI child poverty rate (34%) is just under the VI 12-year average rate (35%).

### **Challenges '07:**

- One of every three VI children is living in poverty -- 9,515 children.
- At 34% the VI child poverty rate is almost twice the national rate of 18%.
- 39% of STX children, and 29% of STT-STJ children live below poverty level.
- 70% of VI poverty-level families with children are headed by single mothers.

## Teen Births

### **Challenges '97-'07:**

- A climbing VI teen birth rate (247 births in 2007) reduces by 50% all progress made since '97.
- The VI teen birth rate is 57 births to 1000 girls age 15-19 ...(US rate: 42/1000).

## Teen Deaths

### **Challenges '97-'07**

- 10 deaths in '07 to VI teens age 15-19 (123 deaths/100,000) is a 50% rate increase in 10 years ...(in 1997: 82 deaths/100,000) ...(current US rate: 64 deaths/100,000).

## Juvenile Violent Crime

### **Challenges '97-'07**

- 539 arrests per 100,000 youth age 10-17 is a 74% rate increase in 10 years (in '97: 310 arrests/100,000)
- The VI rate is significantly higher than the nation's (US rate: 30/100,000).

## Early School Risk Assessments

### **Challenges '07**

- At least 20% of VI students entering public kindergarten have skills below expected age levels in ALL areas measured for development and school readiness.

## 2006-2007 Territorial Report Card

### **Challenges '07**

- reading proficiency...7th grade public school students: 22%... 11th grade: 30%
- math proficiency ...7th grade public school students: 41%... 11th grade: 45%.

## Dropouts age 16-19

### **Positives '97-'07**

- VI estimated dropout rate lowered: (in 1997: 22% ...in 2007: 13%)

### **Challenges '07**

- 13% VI estimated rate is almost twice as high as the nation's ...(US rate: 7%)
- 36% (more than a third) of VI youth age 18-24 lacked a high school diploma.

## 'Detached' Youth age 16-19 not Attending School and not Working

### **Challenges '97-'07**

- 17% of teens 16-19 are not in school and not working ...(in '97: 5%)
- The VI 'detached youth' rate is twice as high as the nation's ...(US rate: 8%).