

# 2009 Kansas KIDS COUNT Data

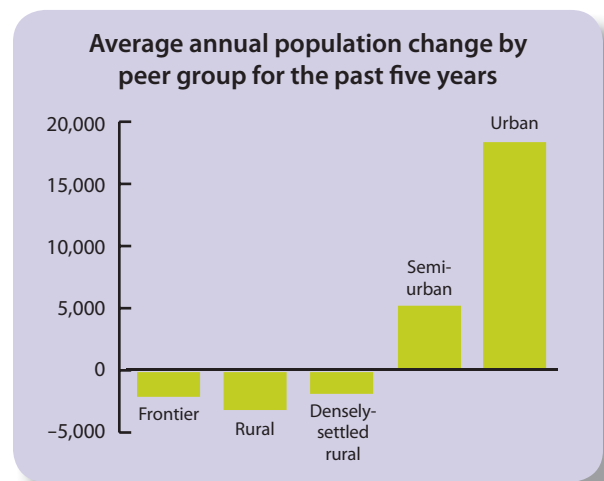
## The Kansas KIDS COUNT Project



For 17 years, Kansas Action for Children has released KIDS COUNT data, which measures how Kansas kids are doing on a number of indicators ranging from health care coverage to high school graduation rates. But, simply providing a statewide rate for each indicator does not paint the entire picture. Starting in 2007, KAC began breaking down the KIDS COUNT data into five groups based upon population density. This breakdown by “peer group” provides a more comprehensive picture of child well-being in Kansas by identifying the strengths and weaknesses that are unique to small, mid-size and larger communities.

Not unlike other Midwestern states, the population in Kansas has gradually been shifting from rural areas of the state and becoming more concentrated in urban areas. In fact, KIDS COUNT data shows that rural areas in Kansas have lost an average of 6,000 residents each year while, at the same time, urban areas in the state have gained an average of 23,000 residents each year.

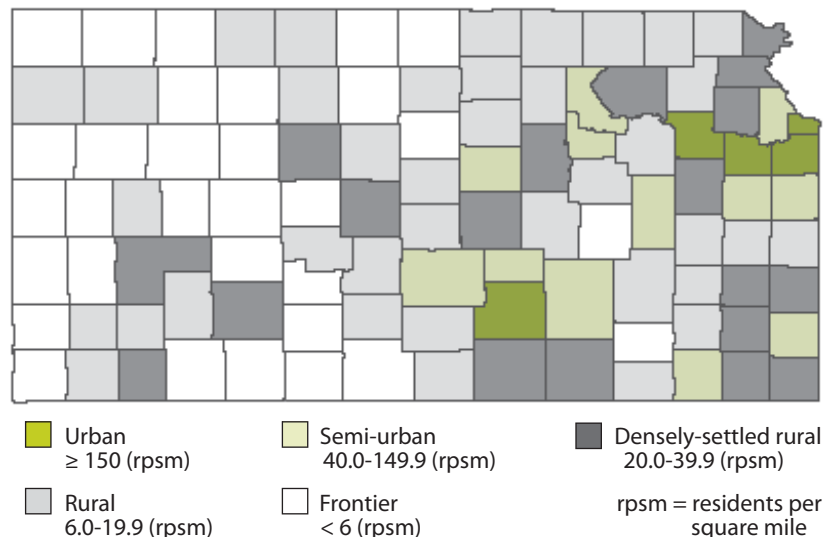
As the state’s population becomes more and more concentrated in urban areas, it’s important to recognize how health, education and economic factors may differ for Kansas children living in rural communities from those children growing up in urban communities.



### What are Peer Groups?

A peer group is comprised of counties with similar population densities. States routinely assign counties to “peer groups” in order to better compare data. The five peer groups used in the Kansas KIDS COUNT project were originally developed for use by the Kansas Department of Health & Environment. Today, those same peer group definitions are used by a variety of state agencies and nonprofits for data analysis. Peer groups are adjusted every 10 years based on U.S. Census data.

### County Peer Group Designations



**PEER GROUPS**

**Urban**

Douglas  
Johnson  
Sedgwick  
Shawnee  
Wyandotte

**Semi-urban**

Butler Lyon  
Crawford Miami  
Franklin Montgomery  
Geary Reno  
Harvey Riley  
Leavenworth Saline

**Densely-settled rural**

Allen Ford  
Atchison Jefferson  
Barton Labette  
Bourbon McPherson  
Cherokee Neosho  
Cowley Osage  
Dickinson Pottawatomie  
Doniphan Seward  
Ellis Sumner  
Finney

**Rural**

Anderson Harper Norton Sherman  
Brown Haskell Ottawa Stafford  
Chautauqua Jackson Pawnee Stevens  
Clay Kingman Phillips Thomas  
Cloud Linn Pratt Wabaunsee  
Coffey Marion Republic Washington  
Ellsworth Marshall Rice Wilson  
Grant Mitchell Rooks Woodson  
Gray Morris Russell  
Greenwood Nemaha Scott

**Frontier**

Barber Graham Logan Stanton  
Chase Greeley Meade Trego  
Cheyenne Hamilton Morton Wallace  
Clark Hodgeman Ness Wichita  
Comanche Jewell Osborne  
Decatur Kearny Rawlins  
Edwards Kiowa Rush  
Elk Lane Sheridan  
Gove Lincoln Smith

**A Different Perspective:  
Data by Peer Group**

**Frontier Counties.** Thirty-one counties in Kansas are defined as “Frontier Counties,” meaning they have fewer than six residents per square mile. Frontier Counties are located primarily in Western Kansas. Less than three percent of Kansas children live in a Frontier County.

**Strengths:** Frontier Counties have the highest rate of children receiving immunizations on time, the highest percentage of schools meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), and the second best high school graduation rate.

**Areas for improvement:** Frontier Counties have the highest rate of low birth weight babies, the second highest rate of childhood poverty, and the highest rate of binge drinking among teens.

**Rural Counties.** Thirty-eight Kansas counties are defined as “Rural Counties,” making it the largest peer group. Counties in this peer group have between 6.0 and 19.9 residents per square mile, and 8.6 percent of Kansas children live in a Rural County. **Strengths:** Rural Counties serve the highest number of eligible children in Head Start and have the best high school graduation rate. **Areas for improvement:** Rural Counties have the highest reported use of tobacco by youth, and are one of two peer groups that are experiencing an increase in low birth weight babies.

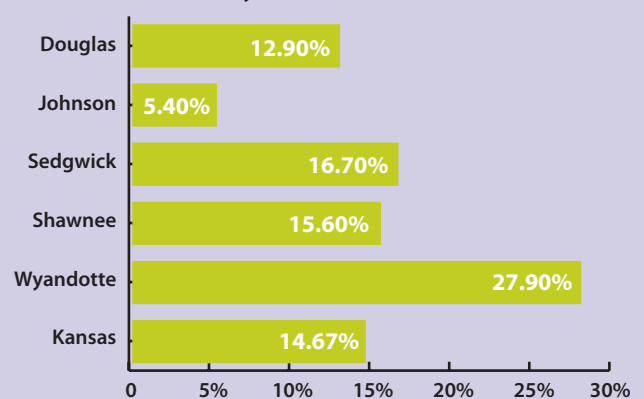
**Densely-Settled Rural Counties.** Nineteen Kansas counties are defined as “Densely-Settled Rural Counties.” These counties have between 20.0 and 39.9 residents per square mile, and 15.4 percent of Kansas children live in a Densely-Settled Rural County. **Strengths:** Densely-Settled Rural Counties have the lowest rate of low birth weight babies and, over time, have shown the greatest improvement on this indicator. **Areas for improvement:** Families in these counties are less economically secure than families living in other peer group counties. Densely-Settled Rural Counties have the highest rate of childhood poverty and the highest rate of births to mothers without high school diplomas. More than half of the school children in this peer group participate in the Free or Reduced Price Lunch program.

**Semi-Urban Counties.** Twelve Kansas counties are defined as “Semi-Urban Counties,” which means they have between 40.0 and 149.9 residents per square mile. Nineteen percent of Kansas children live in a Semi-Urban County.

**Strengths:** This peer group has the second lowest rate of childhood poverty and the lowest rate of births to mothers without high school diplomas. Additionally, Semi-Urban Counties serve the greatest number of children eligible for Early Head Start and have the highest rate of 5th grade reading proficiency. **Areas for improvement:** Semi-Urban Counties rank second lowest on the percentage of schools meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and lowest on the percentage of schools offering Pre-K or Four-Year-Old At-Risk programs.

**Urban Counties.** Five Kansas counties are defined as “Urban Counties,” meaning they have greater than 150 residents per square mile. Though Urban Counties are the smallest peer group in the state, these five counties are home to the majority (54.4 percent) of Kansas children. **Strengths:** Urban Counties have the lowest reported use of tobacco among teens, the second lowest rate of low birth weight babies, and the second lowest rate of reported binge drinking among teens. Urban Counties also have the lowest rate of childhood poverty; however, three of the five counties in this peer group have a poverty rate higher than the state rate. **Areas for improvement:** Urban Counties have the lowest rate of high school graduation, serve the smallest number of eligible children for Head Start, and have the lowest rate of on-time immunizations.

**Childhood Poverty Rates in Urban Counties (2007)**



**KIDS COUNT Data Center**  
<http://datacenter.kidscount.org>

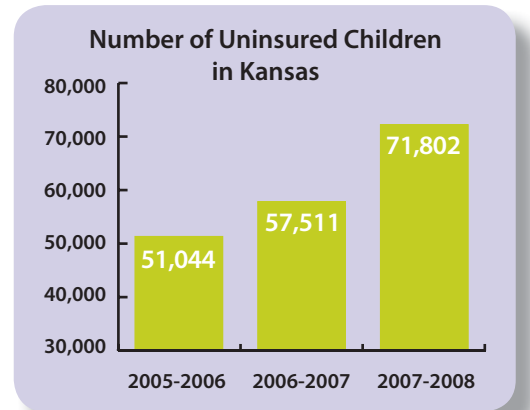
The KIDS COUNT Data Center is the online location for Kansas KIDS COUNT data and National KIDS COUNT data. Through the Data Center, you can access data from previous years and create custom maps, graphs and tables for your Web site or publications.

Demographics	Kansas	Urban	Semi-urban	Densely-settled rural	Rural	Frontier	
Total Population (all ages)	2,802,134	1,460,700	558,213	424,887	271,777	86,557	
Population Under 18	25.00%	26.10%	23.88%	25.34%	22.16%	20.92%	
Under Age 18	White	72.59%	67.56%	80.96%	71.06%	85.97%	81.44%
	Hispanic	14.14%	14.16%	9.67%	22.69%	8.80%	13.60%
	African-American	7.13%	10.29%	5.70%	2.18%	1.05%	0.52%
	Two or more races	3.26%	3.55%	3.75%	2.53%	2.07%	1.73%
	Asian, Native Hawaiian & other Pacific Islander	2.21%	3.27%	1.32%	0.95%	0.27%	0.29%
	American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.96%	0.89%	0.85%	1.03%	1.67%	0.64%
Median Household Income	\$47,341	\$54,970	\$45,796	\$43,561	\$41,393	\$38,667	

## A Challenge for All Counties: Children's Health Coverage

Across the country, the number of children growing up without health coverage has been on the decline. Despite this trend, Kansas has experienced an increase in its rate of uninsured children. Between 2005 and 2008, the number of uninsured kids in Kansas grew from 51,000 to nearly 72,000.

Though Kansas is experiencing a growth in its rate of uninsured children, it is important to note that the overwhelming majority of uninsured Kansas children are income-eligible for Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Program, collectively known as HealthWave. When the Legislature's expansion of HealthWave eligibility levels (from 200% to 250% of poverty) goes into effect Jan. 1, 2010, it is estimated that more than three-fourths of the uninsured children in Kansas will be eligible for coverage through HealthWave.



The best approach to addressing the state's increased rate of uninsured children is two-fold. We need to focus on outreach efforts to ensure that more Kansas families enroll their children in HealthWave. But, we also need to place an emphasis on retaining eligible children who are already enrolled in HealthWave. Similar to other states, Kansas struggles to retain eligible children in the program, which results in children "churning" in and out of HealthWave. By simplifying the enrollment and renewal process, we not only stand to retain more children and improve access to health care in Kansas, but we also stand to ease the burden on the state's clearinghouse and lower administrative costs associated with the enrollment and renewal process.

## Kansas KIDS COUNT: State-level Data

### Poverty

Poverty status of children under 18.

Current Rate 2008 | Trend 2004-2008

The difference between the state-level poverty rates depicted in the pie graph and the county-level poverty rates indicated above is due to the data year. To compare the county's poverty rate with that of its peer counties and the state, use the Poverty (County-Level) row in the Economic Success Indicators section on page four. If only referencing state poverty rates, use the more recent state-level data available in the pie graph.

### Home Ownership

Home ownership status of families with children under 18.

Current Rate 2007 | Trend 0.90%, 2004-2007

### Parents' Employment

Employment status of parents with children under 18.

Current Rate 2007 | Trend 0.1%, 2003-2007

### Uninsured Children

Health insurance status of children under 19.

Current Rate 2008  
Trend 0.77%, 2004-2008

## Health Indicators

### Immunizations

Percent of kindergartners fully immunized of the 4:3:1:3:3 series by age two measured by the Kansas Retrospective Survey. *Current data from 2007; trend represents most recent 4 years.*

58.0% 56.2% 60.3% 56.8% 65.3% 71.9% -4.07%

### Prenatal Care

Percent of live births to mothers who received adequate or adequate-plus prenatal care. *Current data from 2007.*

77.39% 79.04% 77.68% 72.62% 76.25% 70.74% -1.06%

### Low Birth Weight Babies

Percent of live births weighing under 5.5 lbs. *Current data from 2007.*

7.11% 7.11% 7.33% 6.63% 7.37% 7.42% -0.07%

### Teen Violent Deaths

Number per 100,000 15-19-year-olds who died due to suicide, homicide, or motor vehicle accident. *Current data from 2007; rate per 100,000.*

47.1 41.7 45.0 54.5 70.8 33.4 -0.675

### Youth Tobacco Use

Percent of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who reported using cigarettes or smokeless tobacco in the last 30 days. *Current data from 2008.*

13.02% 11.66% 12.79% 14.70% 16.10% 16.02% -0.76%

### Youth Binge Drinking

Percent of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who reported having 5+ consecutive drinks on at least one occasion in the past two weeks. *Current data from 2008.*

15.23% 14.58% 13.82% 17.67% 16.20% 18.23% -0.48%

### Asthma

Number per 1,000 children under 18 hospitalized for asthma. *Current data from 2007; rate per 1,000.*

1.86 1.86 1.80 2.06 1.62 2.08 0.02

### Mental Health

Number per 1,000 children under age 18 hospitalized for mental health. *Current data from 2007; rate per 1,000.*

2.73 2.89 2.93 2.53 2.13 1.23 -0.09

## Education Indicators

### Early Head Start

Number of Early Head Start slots available per 100 children 0-3 years of age below 100% of poverty. *Current data from 2008.*

7.14 4.72 10.84 10.62 7.88 0.00 0.43

### Head Start

Number of Head Start slots available per 100 children 3-4 years of age below 100% of poverty. *Current data from 2008.*

58.5 42.9 70.9 72.2 88.2 70.9 -0.6

### Pre-Kindergarten

Percent of elementary schools that offer pre-kindergarten or Four-Year-Old At-Risk program. *Current data from 2009.*

43.97% 44.74% 33.77% 42.68% 50.74% 55.56% 0.32%

### All-Day Kindergarten

Percent of elementary schools that offer all-day and every day kindergarten. *Current data from 2009.*

78.57% 82.89% 71.43% 80.49% 75.00% 77.78% 10.23%

### Reading Proficiency

Percent of 5th graders meeting standards, exceeding standards or scoring exemplary on reading assessments. *Current data from 2008.*

84.24% 82.54% 87.83% 82.85% 86.99% 87.59% 3.02%

### AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress)

Percent of public schools that meet the AYP requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. *Current data from 2008.*

90.2% 82.6% 89.0% 93.4% 96.8% 98.3% -0.85%

### High School Graduation

Percent of 9th grade public school students enrolled in the 2004-05 school year who graduated in 2008. *Current data from 2008.*

89.44% 88.33% 89.51% 89.30% 93.32% 92.24% 0.39%

### Child Care Subsidies

Average monthly number of children participating in the Kansas ChildCare Assistance program. *Current data from 2008; not depicted as a rate.*

21,211 13,176 3,877 2,738 1,141 280 1,017

## Economic Success Indicators

### Poverty (County Level)

Percent of children under 18 years of age living below 100% of poverty. *Current data from 2007.*

14.67% 13.51% 14.89% 17.58% 15.47% 17.28% 0.25%

### Free and Reduced Lunch

Percent of public school children participating in the free and reduced price lunch program. *Current data from 2009.*

42.69% 40.28% 41.38% 51.07% 43.72% 43.01% 0.51%

### EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit)

Percent of federal tax returns claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit. *Current data from 2006.*

14.02% 12.82% 15.40% 16.71% 14.02% 13.32% x

### Maternal Education

Percent of live births to mothers without a high school diploma. *Current data from 2007.*

18.15% 17.72% 14.86% 23.81% 17.61% 20.56% -0.01%

\* = Trend rate represents the average unit change per year for the most recent five years data are available unless indicated otherwise.  
 x = Data unavailable. For more information, please visit the Data Notes and Sources at [www.kac.org/kidscount](http://www.kac.org/kidscount).