

Report: Child poverty increasing in United States

By Saki Knafo, Huffington Post

The “Kids Count” report, one of the most widely cited surveys of how children are faring in the United States, hasn’t offered much good news in recent years, and this year’s edition offered few surprises.

Drawing mostly on U.S. Census data, the report noted that the percentage of children living in poverty increased by nearly a third between 2000 and 2010, and that it rose 16 percent between 2005 and 2010. The rate of children whose parents lack secure employment rose by 22 percent in the period roughly coinciding with the first two years of the global recession, beginning in 2008, the report said.

The annual report is published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, one of the largest private charitable organizations in the U.S. devoted to improving the lives of children.

As of 2010, according to the report, 1 out of 11 teens was neither in school nor working, and 4 out of 10 children were living in households where the cost of housing was high. The latest number of kids living in high-poverty neighborhoods had increased by 22 percent, compared with 2005.

By other measures, things didn’t look quite so bad. The number of high school students graduating on time has increased, as have reading and math scores across the country – though not by much. There were more children attending preschool in 2010 than in 2005, and there’s been a significant improvement in the number of children who have health insurance, a change that the foundation attributes to expansions of Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Improvement Program. (The

Children's Health Insurance Reauthorization Act of 2009, signed by President Barack Obama, added an additional 4 million children and pregnant women to the program's rolls.)

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