Mercer County

2011 County Rank: 11

2011 Kids Count County Profiles

2010 County Rank: 9

	Year	County	NJ	2010 Rank	2011 Rank
Demographics					
Child Population	2009	83,985	2,045,848	12	**12**
Total Population	2009	366,222	8,707,739	12	**12**
Family Economics					
Percentage of Children in Poverty	2009	15	13	11	**14**
Median Income of Families with Children	2009	$88,173	$83,742	7	**10**
Percentage Unemployed	2010	7.3	8.7	4	**4**
Percentage of HH Spending More Than 30% of Income on Rent	2009	48	50	10	**9**
Percentage of Eligible Children Receiving Free/Reduced Price School Breakfast	2009-10	22	28.7	N/A	**12**
Health and Safety					
Percentage of Women Receiving Early Prenatal Care	2007	77.8	76.8	9	**11**
Percentage of Births to Girls 10-19	2007	8.63	6.59	14	**14**
Infant Mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)	2007	8	5	20	**16**
Child Abuse/Neglect Investigations*	2009	48	44	11	**11**
Children in Out-of-Home Placement*	2010	3.95	3.47	14	**12**
Juvenile Arrests*	2009	43	24	18	**19**
Early Care and Education					
Licensed Center-Based Child Care Supply (slots per 1,000 0-4)	2010	870	640	2	**3**
Percentage of Students Passing 4th Grade Tests	2009-10	74	77	13	**14**
Percentage of Students Passing 8th Grade Tests	2009-10	76	78	12	**13**
Percentage of Students Passing 11th Grade Tests	2009-10	80	82	13	**13**

*Rate per 1,000 children under 18.

To view data sources and for more information, visit www.acnj.org

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Giving Every Child A Chance

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NEWS

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Mercer Slips to 11th in NJ Kids Count Rankings

Mercer County slipped to 11th place in the annual **New Jersey Kids Count** rankings, which measures 15 areas of child well-being, from 9th last year.

The county lost ground with an increase in child poverty from 12 percent in 2008 to 15 percent in 2009. Mercer dropped to 14th on this indicator from 11th last year. The county also saw a drop in median family income from $94,160 in 2008 to $88,173 in 2009, dropping from 10th to 7th place in the Kids Count rankings.

Mercer posted gains in reducing the rate at which children are placed in foster care and saw a slight improvement in lower housing costs for families.

"We have been encouraged by the counties' increased interest in using the information presented in Kids Count to improve child well-being," said Cecilia Zalkind, executive director of Advocates for Children of New Jersey, which publishes the Kids Count reports. "Their commitment to children in these tough economic times is both critical and commendable."

"The rise in child poverty and the drop in family income are concerning," Zalkind said.

Some key Mercer County findings follow.

Housing Costs. Fewer Mercer families spent too much on rent, dropping from 50 percent of all households in 2008 to 48 percent in 2009. The county moved up the Kids Count rankings from 10th to 9th place on this measure.

Foster Care. The rate at which children were placed into foster care dropped from 5 per 1,000 children in 2008 to about 4 in 2010. The county moved up from 14th to 12th place on this indicator.

Juvenile Arrests. Unlike most counties, Mercer saw an increase in its juvenile arrest rate, going from 40 youth per 1,000 in 2008 to 43 in 2009. The county dropped from 18th to 19th in the Kids Count rankings on this measure.

In addition to the county profiles, which measure progress over a 1-year period, ACNJ also released ***New Jersey Kids Count: The State of Our Counties,*** a pocket guide that provides a 5-year comparison of various measures of child well-being, including poverty, health, education and child protection.

"We encourage county leaders to use Kids Count data to understand the state of children in their county and to target resources to meet children's most pressing needs," Zalkind said. "Using data to drive decisions results in better outcomes for children and families."

To view the county profiles and the pocket guide, go to www.acnj.org.

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KIDS COUNT is a national and state-by-state statistical effort to track the state of children in the United States, sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Advocates for Children of New Jersey is a statewide child research and action organization and the New Jersey Kids Count grantee.