



Contact: Anne Discher at [adischer@commongoodiowa.org](mailto:adischer@commongoodiowa.org) or 612-730-9617

### **Children of color in Iowa face disparate outcomes that jeopardize their well-being**

*The persistent gaps in child well-being across race and ethnicity identified by the 2024 Race for Results report require action from Iowa lawmakers*

**Des Moines, IA** — Children of color in Iowa fare at best modestly better than their peers nationwide — and far more poorly than their white Iowa peers, according to Annie E. Casey Foundation’s 2024 *Race for Results* report. These findings reflect failure in Iowa and nationally to equip all children to succeed. Policy choices and lack of support for families result in particularly dire outcomes for Black, Latino and American Indian or Alaska Native children.

Children of color — representing 1 of every 4 children in the state — face significant barriers to opportunity: fewer opportunities to live and play in safety, access affordable education from preschool to college and skills training and make ends meet. All told, even white children in Iowa fare only slightly above the average for white children nationally, a level best described as top of the middle of the pack.

“For at least a decade, Iowa lawmakers have prioritized tax cuts disproportionately benefiting the wealthiest Iowans over supporting policies and programs that improve the well-being of children,” said Anne Discher, executive director of Common Good Iowa, a member of the KIDS COUNT network. “It is time for a reordering of our priorities. Our kids — all of them — are depending on us for a brighter future.”

The Race for Results index standardizes scores across 12 indicators that represent well-being milestones from cradle to career, converting them into a scale ranging from 0 to 1,000 to make it easy to compare and see differences across states and racial and ethnic groups. Indicators are grouped into four areas: early childhood, education and early work experiences, family resources and neighborhood context.

Here are scores for Iowa and the U.S. average, along with Iowa’s ranking among states for which data was available:

- Black or African American: Iowa: **403** (26th of 46 states); U.S.: 386
- Hispanic or Latino: Iowa: **505** (12th of 50 states); U.S.: 452
- American Indian or Alaskan Native: Iowa: **547** (7th of 31 states); U.S.: 418
- Two or more races: Iowa: **578** (26th of 50 states); U.S.: 612
- Asian and Pacific Islander: Iowa: **704** (30th of 45 states); U.S.: 771
- White: Iowa: **720** (18th of 50 states); U.S.: 697

“This report highlights the importance of disaggregating data by race and ethnicity. Iowans are used to seeing our state near the top of the list on similar studies,” said Discher. “When we break down the numbers, we get a truer, if more alarming, picture of how we are doing as a state in needing the needs of children, especially children of color.”

Nationally, Asian and Pacific Islander children have the highest index score at 771, followed by white children at 697 and children of two or more races at 612. Scores for Latino (452), American Indian or Alaska Native (418) and Black children (386) are considerably lower. Calculations of the index for all 50 states show that experiences vary widely depending on where a child lives, from a high of 877 for Asian and Pacific Islander children in New Jersey to a low of 180 for American Indian or Alaska Native children in South Dakota.

Young people are missing critical developmental milestones as a direct result of choices to fail to invest in policies, programs and services that support children, especially in under-resourced communities and communities of color.

The Casey Foundation introduced the Race for Results index in a 2014 report and updated it in 2017. This third edition of the report carries data from the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic that demonstrate both the urgency of ensuring all children can thrive and the promise of policy prescriptions for achieving that goal. *Race for Results* contends that young people are missing critical developmental milestones as a **direct result of choices to not invest in policies, programs and services that support children**, especially in under-resourced communities and communities of color.

The Casey Foundation makes several recommendations in *Race for Results* toward improving outcomes for all children:

- Congress should expand the federal child tax credit. The temporary, pandemic-era expansion of the CTC lifted [2.1 million children out of poverty](#), with the share of kids in poverty falling to 5.2% in 2021, the lowest rate on record.
- States and Congress should expand the earned income tax credit.
- Lawmakers should consider baby bonds and children’s savings accounts — programs that contribute public funds to dedicated accounts to help families save for their children’s future.
- Policymakers must create targeted programs and policies that can close well-being gaps for young people of color, because universal policies are important but insufficient for continued progress.

The 2024 *Race for Results* report is available at <http://www.aecf.org>.

## **ABOUT COMMON GOOD IOWA**

Common Good Iowa’s team of policy advocates and analysts leverage reliable data, solid analysis and collaborative relationships to craft policy solutions to Iowa’s most pressing problems. Our vision is a state where children and families are healthy and secure, workers

thrive, and clean air and water contribute to a healthy future for all. Learn more at [www.commongoodiowa.org](http://www.commongoodiowa.org).

#### **ABOUT THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation's young people by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). *Race for Results*® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.