

USVI KIDS COUNT is a yearly project of the **Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI)**. Funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, **KIDS COUNT** tracks 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.

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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U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK 2008

Our Children Now! MOVING FORWARD BY 10%



Executive Summary

USVI Kids Count 2008 Data Book is available online at www.cfvi.net

The STATUS of CHILDREN in the US VIRGIN ISLANDS

The **USVI KIDS COUNT Data Book 2008** provides an updated look at how children and families in the US Virgin Islands are doing.

Tracking trends over the past ten years, this ninth 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 2008** uses latest figures available, ie. 2006 data

Population

Changes '97-'06:

- In 2006 VI child population age 0-18 fell to 28,786 (portion of total VI population: 25%).
....(in 1997: 36,179 children, or 32.1% of total; in 1990: 35,427 children, or 34.8% of total).

Children in Families

Challenges '97-'06:

- 47% of all VI families with children are now single-mother families; (US rate: 18%).
- 1,657 children (40.5% of VI children) now live in single-mother families
....(in 1997: 11,041 children, or 30.5% of total children).

Economic Security

Positives '97-'06:

- VI family median income rose to \$38,914 in 2006 (in 1997: \$30,530).

- VI '06 family median income level was the highest measured during the last ten years.

Challenges '06:

- More than 26% of all VI families with children are living in poverty.

Children/Families in Poverty

Positives '97-'06:

- The VI child poverty rate dropped to 29.5% in '06, its lowest rate in the past decade.

Challenges '06:

- 8,491 VI children are growing up in poverty, approximately one out of every three.
- The VI child poverty rate (29.5%) is 55% higher than the national rate of 19%.
- In St. Croix, child poverty measures 33%; in St. Thomas-St. John it measures 26%.
- 70.6% of families with children living in poverty are single-mother families.

Teen Births

Challenges '97-'06:

- After a decade of falling rates, teen births rose to 53 births/1000 females age 15-19.

Teen Deaths

Challenges '97-'06

- 117 teen deaths/100,000 VI teens, age 15-19, is a 43% rate increase in the last decade
....(in 1997: 82 teen deaths/100,000).
- VI teen death rate is 177% higher than the national rate (US rate: 66 deaths/100,000*).

Juvenile Violent Crime

Challenges '97-'06

- 499 arrests per 100,000 youth age 10-17 in 2006 is a 56% rate increase since 1997.

Early School Risk Assessments

Challenges '06

- Only 29% of children entering public kindergarten evidenced **visual discrimination skills** at expected age-level (ie. ability to recognize shapes and objects already learned)
- Only 39% of children entering public kindergarten evidenced **receptive language skills** at expected age level (ie. ability to understand what others are communicating).

2006-2007 Territorial Report Card

Challenges '06

- The highest standardized testing “proficiency” level (ie. academic performance at or above grade level expectations) achieved by VI public school students in '06-'07 was only 46%, representing the territory's 5th and 11th grade **math** scores.
- The highest standardized testing “proficiency” level achieved in '06-'07 for **reading** was only 33%, representing the territory's 5th grade reading scores.
- Only 31% of the territory's 11th graders achieved “proficiency” levels for reading.

Secondary Public School: Dropouts

Positives '97-'06

- The rate of youth age 16-19 who are high school dropouts in '06-'07 is estimated by KIDS COUNT to be 13.8% in 2006 (in 1997: 22%).

Challenges '06

- 57% of VI youth age 18-19 did not have a high-school diploma.
- 34% of VI youth age 18-24 did not have a high school diploma.

“Detached” Teens: Not Attending School and not Working

Challenges '97-'06

- 23% of VI youth age 16-19 are not attending school and not employed (in 1997: 5.4%).
- The VI “detached youth” rate is almost 300% higher than the nation's (US rate: 8%).

*National rate is for 2005.