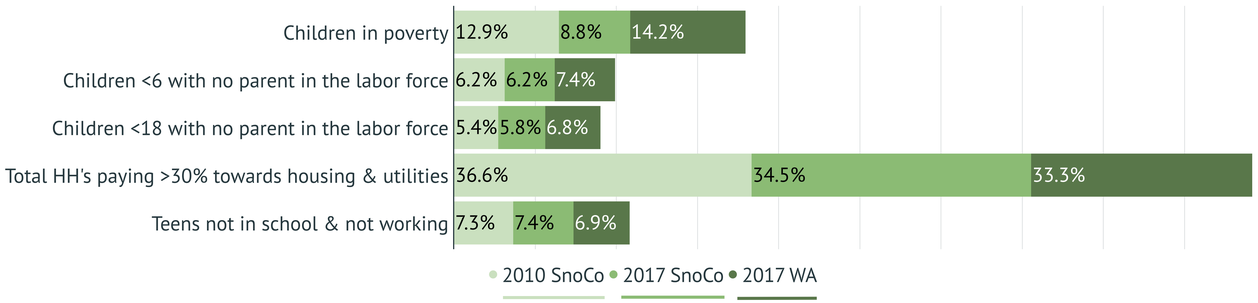
Snohomish County Human Services Planning & Evaluation

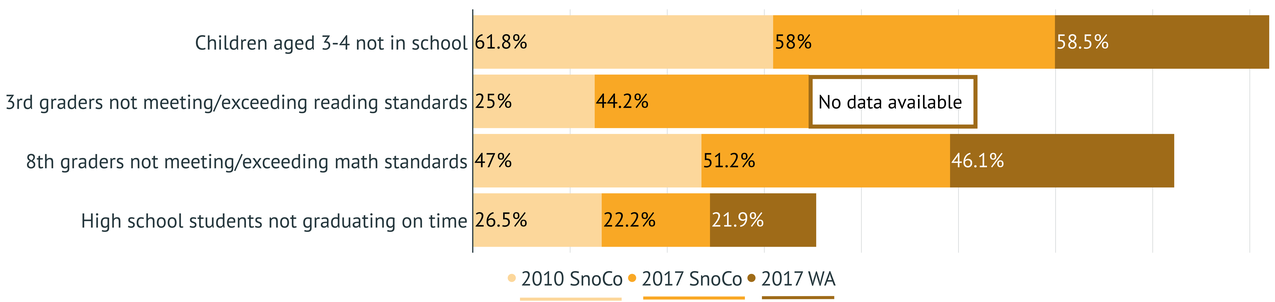
Snohomish County Children's Commission

The following results illustrate how Snohomish County compares to WA State:

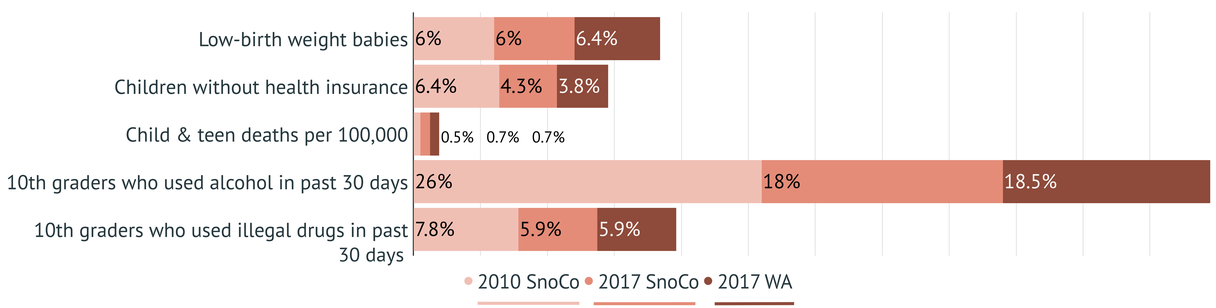
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING



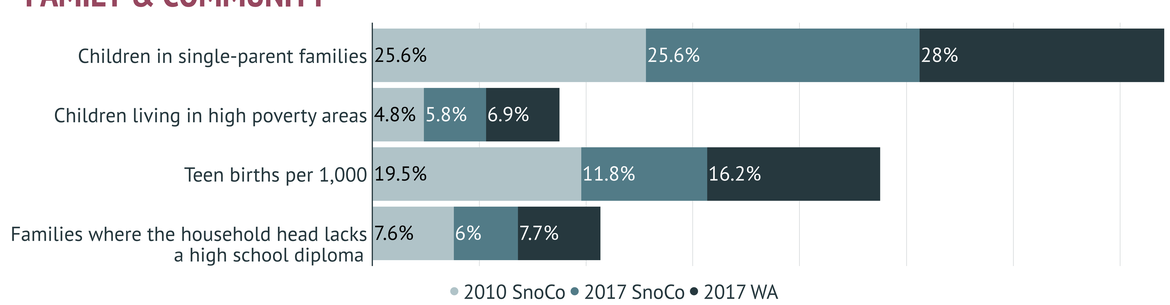
EDUCATION



HEALTH



FAMILY & COMMUNITY



KIDS COUNT in Snohomish County

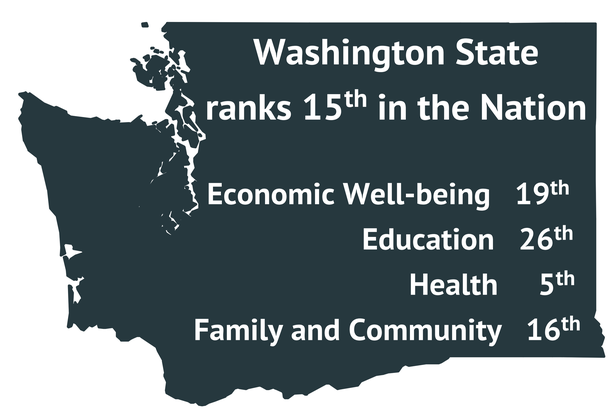
The Snohomish County Children's Commission (SCCC) advises the County Executive, the County Council, and the Human Services Department on issues of health, safety, and social services for infants, young children, and youth in our community. The issues impacting children and families are vast, complex, and interconnected.

In the past two years, the SCCC has deepened our understanding of the needs and trends of Snohomish County and our role and responsibility to the children and families in our community. As a result, the SCCC adopted an equity and inclusion lens for its work, prioritizing the issues causing or exacerbating harm both actual and potential to the most vulnerable children and families.

The SCCC has chosen to utilize the KIDS COUNT framework to identify community strengths and needs, and offer service and policy recommendations for positive and equitable outcomes for all children. Since 1990, the Annie E. Casey Foundation's annual KIDS COUNT Data Book ranks states on a 10-measure index of child well-being using over 100 indicators of national, state, and local child and family well-being data from sources including the Healthy Youth Survey, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), American Community Survey, and the Department of Health.

In 2012, the Data Book developed a new index that reflects advances in state and local data collection and more accurately measures how children are doing across the US. The KIDS COUNT Data Book now includes child-level indicators across the following four domains: Economic Well-Being, Education, Health, and Family and Community.

The SCCC will issue an annual report utilizing the KIDS COUNT framework. This report will include data specific to Snohomish County to outline the strengths and achievements, and the needs and recommendations for our community. This initial report provides an overview of KIDS COUNT and preliminary data for Snohomish County. The SCCC thanks the Human Services Planning and Evaluation Division for their collaboration in collecting County-level data.



In future annual reports, the SCCC will delve into the disparities between demographics in our diverse community. Our commitment to equity and inclusion will drive our research and allow us to provide accurate and targeted policy recommendations for addressing both immediate needs and creating systemic changes.

Social environments influence the health of children and their ability to thrive. Children and families are more likely to overcome barriers when they are connected to quality community services.

The following indicators of well-being for children and their families in Snohomish County show our community has strengths and areas for improvement:

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

8.8%
Children in poverty

Growing up in poverty can negatively affect healthy child development by increasing the likelihood that a child will be exposed to factors that can impair brain development and lead to poor cognitive, health, and academic outcomes. The risks to overall health and academic outcomes increases among those children who experience persistent and deep poverty.

34.5%
Cost-burdened families who are paying more than 30% on housing and utilities

Low income families are more likely to experience housing affordability problems (spending more than 30 percent of pretax income on housing, whether they rent or own). Paying too much for housing limits the resources families have for other necessities like food, healthcare, transportation, and child care.

7.4%
Teens aged 16-19 not in school and not working

Teens ages 16-19 who are not in school and not part of the workforce are at high risk of experiencing negative outcomes as they transition into adulthood. Limited skills and work history, combined with limited financial resources to invest in the development of these skills, can restrict access to good jobs as well as future higher wages and employment opportunities.

5.8%
Children under 18 with no parent in the labor force

Secure employment contributes to the financial stability and well-being of families, but many parents lack employment security. Education and related job skills are necessary to secure a family-supporting job and without these, many parents are forced to piece together part-time or low-paying jobs to make ends meet. Without access to benefits and tax credits, a single parent with 2 children would need to earn $9.55/hr. ($2.30 more than the current federal minimum wage) – working full time just to reach the poverty level.

HEALTH

4.3%
Children without health insurance

Children without health insurance coverage are less likely than insured children to have a regular health care provider and to receive care when they need it, putting them at greater risk for hospitalization. Having health insurance can protect families from financial devastation when a child experiences a serious or chronic illness and can help children remain healthy, active, and in school.

0.7%
Child & teen deaths per 100,000

The child and teen death rate (deaths per 100,000 children ages 1 to 19) reflects a broad array of factors: physical and mental health, access to health care, community factors such as violence and environmental toxins, use of safety practices, and the level of adult supervision. Accidents, primarily those involving motor vehicles, are the leading cause of death for children and youth ages 1-14 with accidents, homicides, and suicides accounting for 74% of deaths to teens ages 15-19.

6%
Low birth-weight babies

Babies born with a low birth-weight (less than 5.5lbs) have a high probability of experiencing developmental issues, short- and long-term disabilities, and are at greater risk of dying within the first year of life. Smoking, poor nutrition, poverty, stress, infections and violence can increase the risk of a baby being born with a low birth weight.

18%
10th graders who used alcohol in the past 30 days

Alcohol and substance abuse can negatively impact a teenager's physical and mental health, academic performance, and engagement with family, friends, school, and community. Teens who abuse alcohol and drugs are more likely to engage in risky sexual behavior, drive under the influence, abuse multiple substances, and commit crimes.

EDUCATION

58%
Children aged 3-4 not in school

Lifelong developmental potential is at stake in a child's early years. High quality preschool programs can lead to higher levels of academic achievement, career advancement, and earnings over a lifetime.

22.2%
High school students not graduating on time

Graduating from high school on time leads to long-term career opportunities young people, including students who are more likely to pursue post-secondary education and training, make healthier decisions, and engage in less risky behaviors. They are also more employable and have higher incomes than students who fail to graduate.

44.2%
3rd graders not meeting/exceeding reading standards

Children who reach fourth grade without being able to read proficiently are more likely to become frustrated and drop out of school. Low reading proficiency also reduces earning potential and chances for career success as adults.

51.2%
8th graders not meeting/exceeding math standards

Students who take advanced math and science courses are more likely to graduate from high school, attend and complete college, and earn higher incomes. Even for young people who do not attend college, basic math skills help with everyday tasks and improve employability. Increasing employability helps to lift people out of poverty.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY

5.8%
Number children living in high poverty areas

Concentrated poverty puts whole neighborhoods, and the people living in them, at risk. High-poverty neighborhoods are much more likely than others to have worse health outcomes, high rates of crime and violence, physical and mental health issues, unemployment, and higher levels of financial insecurity.

25.6%
Children in single-parent families

Children growing up in single-parent families typically have access to fewer resources, both economic and emotional, with 35% of single-parent homes earning an income below the federal poverty line. Children in a single-parent family also have poorer health and educational outcomes, are more likely to drop out of school, to experience a teen pregnancy, and get divorced in adulthood.

11.8%
Teen births per 1,000

Teenage childbearing can have long-term negative effects for both the mother and newborn. Teens are at higher risk of bearing low-birth weight and preterm babies and are far more likely to be born into families with limited educational and economic resources, which function as barriers to future success.

6%
Families where the household head lacks a high school diploma

Children who grow up with parents that do not have a high school diploma are at a greater risk of being born in the low birth weight category, have health problems, enter school not ready to learn, and have poor educational outcomes. Higher parental education rates tend to equate to greater economic stability and security, which enhances child development.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2018). 2018 KIDS COUNT Data Book. Baltimore, MD: Patrick T. McCarthy. Retrieved from www.aecf.org.

Census Bureau, OSPI, Washington State Health Department, Centers for Disease Control, Healthy Youth Survey