



2011 Alabama Kids Count Data Brief: “What Would it Take?”

Improving the Well-being
of Alabama’s Children

Tuscaloosa County

Low Weight Births

(Percentage of all live births recorded as low birth weight, under 5.5 pounds or 2,500 grams, in 2009.)

Where does Tuscaloosa County rank now?	What would it take to reach the state's average and/or equal #1 ranking?	What can we do to reach our potential?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County ranks 43rd statewide in low weight births. ➤ 11.3% of all live births in Tuscaloosa County were identified as low weight births. ➤ The total number of low weight births for Tuscaloosa County was 280. 	<p>The state's average of low weight births is 10.4%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At 11.3%, Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of low weight births by 23 to reach the state's average of 10.4%. <p>At 5.1%, Blount County ranks #1 in low weight births. To equal this rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of low weight births by 154 to reach 5.1%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Launch local public awareness campaigns to educate women on the importance of preconception and prenatal care and other important factors that contribute to babies being born healthy. ➤ Join your local Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Community Action Team, an initiative of the Alabama Department of Public Health, State Perinatal Program, and support local efforts to reduce cases of infant mortality and low weight births. ➤ Support programs to increase access to preconception and prenatal care for women. ➤ Incorporate the Smart Start Parenting Kit into health advocacy efforts. The Smart Start Parenting Kit, a set of resources for pregnant mothers and parents of newborns designed to provide comprehensive information on the needs of young children, is a project of the Alabama Partnership for Children. ➤ Increase health coverage for low-income women in order to provide them with both prenatal and postnatal care.

Births to Unmarried Teens

(The number of live births to unmarried females aged 10 through 19 expressed as a percentage of live births to women of all ages in 2009.)

Where does Tuscaloosa County rank now?	What would it take to reach the state's average and/or equal #1 ranking?	What can we do to reach our potential?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County ranks 32nd statewide in births to unmarried teens. ➤ 11% of all live births in Tuscaloosa County were to unmarried teens aged 10 to 19. ➤ The total number of births to unmarried teens for Tuscaloosa County was 272. 	<p>The state's average of births to unmarried teens is 10.6%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At 11%, Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of births to unmarried teens by 9 to reach the state's average of 10.6%. <p>At 3.7%, Shelby County ranks #1 in births to unmarried teens. To equal this rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of births to unmarried teens by 181 to reach 3.7%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement age appropriate evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs and initiatives specifically geared toward preventing subsequent births to young mothers. ➤ Provide youth with medically-accurate and age-appropriate information regarding contraception and access to reproductive health care services. ➤ Support quality after-school programs for teens to prevent risky behaviors most likely to occur during peak after school hours.

First Grade Retention

(The number of students enrolled in the first grade during the specified school year who were not promoted to the second grade expressed as a percentage of the total number of students enrolled in the first grade in 2010. *Data are reported for public schools only.*)

Where does Tuscaloosa County rank now?	What would it take to reach the state's average and/or equal #1 ranking?	What can we do to reach our potential?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County ranks 48th statewide for the first grade retention indicator. ➤ 5.3% of first graders in Tuscaloosa County were retained. ➤ The total number of first graders retained for Tuscaloosa County was 118. 	<p>The state's average of first graders retained is 3.8%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At 5.3%, Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of first graders being retained by 33 to reach the state's average of 3.8%. <p>At 0%, Bullock, Greene, Lowndes, Perry and Sumter Counties rank #1 in first grade retention. To equal this rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of first graders retained by 118 to reach 0%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support protection and expansion of state funding for quality early learning experiences through developmentally appropriate and quality child care programs, Head Start, HIPPIY, First Class and other high-quality pre-k programs. ➤ Encourage local school leadership to utilize Title I dollars to help implement quality early learning programs in local school systems. ➤ Promote early literacy projects such as Reach Out and Read and incorporate additional means for putting books into the hands of young children. ➤ Support local schools in creating positive learning environments and work to address behavior problems through research-based programs such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). ➤ Implement a comprehensive <i>School Transition Plan</i> to ensure children enter school prepared to succeed. Review sample materials at www.smartstartalabama.org.

Graduation Rate

(Estimated percentage of public high school students who graduate on time with one of five diplomas (advanced, regular, career tech advanced, career tech regular or advanced academic and advanced career tech) in 2010.)

Where does Tuscaloosa County rank now?	What would it take to reach the state's average and/or equal #1 ranking?	What can we do to reach our potential?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Counties are not ranked on the Graduation Rate indicator due to the differences in the number of school systems per county. Approaches to improving this measure vary from school system to school system. ➤ 62.6 % of students in Tuscaloosa County graduated high school. ➤ The total number of graduates for Tuscaloosa County was 1,287. 	<p>The state's average high school graduation rate is 65.8%:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At 62.6%, Tuscaloosa County must increase the number of high school graduates by 66 to reach the state's average of 65.8%. <p>At 79.7%, Shelby County has the highest percentage graduation rate. To equal this rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County must increase the number of high school graduates by 352 to reach 79.7%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support universal access to, and greater use of, proven approaches to increase chances of higher educational attainment such as high-quality child care, Head Start, HIPPIY, Alabama First Class and other high-quality pre-k programs. ➤ Implement programs that provide children with an opportunity to continue learning during summer months. ➤ Model after successful Alabama initiatives such as <i>Yes We Can!</i> and the <i>Helping Families Initiative</i>. ➤ Support programs which stress the importance of regular school attendance beginning in kindergarten. ➤ Support local schools in creating positive learning environments and work to address behavior problems through research-based programs such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Child Poverty

(Children under 18 living below the federal poverty threshold expressed as a percentage of all children under 18 in 2009. The poverty threshold, for a family of four, was \$21,834 in 2009.)

Where does Tuscaloosa County rank now?	What would it take to reach the state's average and/or equal #1 ranking?	What can we do to reach our potential?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County ranks 11th statewide in number of children living in poverty. ➤ 22.6% of children in Tuscaloosa County live in poverty. ➤ The number of children living in poverty in Tuscaloosa County was 9,256. 	<p>The state's average for children living in poverty is 24.6%:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At 22.6%, Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of children living in poverty by 819 to reach the state's average of 24.6%. <p>At 9.9%, Shelby County ranks number one in children living in poverty. To equal this rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County needs to reduce the number of children living in poverty by 5,202 to reach 9.9%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocate for state and local policies that put an end to predatory lending practices that exacerbate poverty. ➤ Support universal access to, and greater use of, proven approaches to increase chances of higher educational attainment such as high-quality child care, Head Start, HIPPPY, First Class and other high-quality pre-k programs. ➤ Support programs that assist families with access to child care, health insurance, housing assistance, financial literacy and additional critical work supports. ➤ Create and/or sustain job training programs, adult basic education and adult literacy programs.

Children in Single Parent Families

(Percent of own children under 18 years of age residing with only one parent. Since data reported are for "own children," they *do not* include children who live in households with a single grandparent, aunt, uncle, or another person who is not the parent. Data is 2010 census.)

Where does Tuscaloosa County rank now?	What would it take to reach the state's average and/or equal #1 ranking?	What can we do to reach our potential?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County ranks 39th statewide for children in single parent families. ➤ 35.9% of children in Tuscaloosa County live in single parent families. ➤ The total number of children living in single parent families for Tuscaloosa County was 12,900. 	<p>The state's average of children living in single parent families is 34%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At 35.9%, Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of children living in single parent families by 679 to reach the state's average of 34%. <p>At 17.2%, Shelby County ranks #1 in children living in single parent families. To equal this rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuscaloosa County must reduce the number of children living in single parent families by 6,734 to reach 17.2%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase public awareness of the importance of stable relationships, healthy environments and marriages for the well-being of children, families and communities. ➤ Support programs that assist families with access to child care, health insurance, housing assistance, financial literacy and additional critical work supports. ➤ Support quality afterschool and mentoring programs. ➤ Apply for Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage dollars from the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, to support/create healthy marriage programs in your community.

Methodology/Notes

- ❖ Ranks for this report are based on “**single year**” data unlike the Alabama Kids Count Data Book which uses a “three-year” average to determine indicator rankings. Counties are ranked from 1 to 67 on each indicator with “1” being the best and “67” being the worst.
- ❖ Solutions listed are only a few examples of options communities can employ to address indicators.
- ❖ **Number needed to reach state average:** Multiply the state’s average percentage by the county’s target population. Subtract the resulting value from the actual number of occurrences in that county to determine the number needed to equal the state average.
- ❖ **Number needed to equal the rate of #1:** Multiply the percentage of the #1 ranked county by the county’s target population. Subtract the resulting value from the actual number of occurrences for a county to determine the number needed to equal the rate of the #1 county.

*Statistical research and analysis completed by W. Spence Dabbs, Birmingham Southern College Hess Fellow
Data provided by Don Bogie, PhD. Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Auburn University Montgomery*



F O R A L A B A M A ' S C H I L D R E N

1-800-444-KIDS (5437) 334-213-2410

Email: vfac@alavoices.org Website: www.alavoices.org

P.O. Box 4576, Montgomery, AL 36103 - 4576