

# WHAT'S NEW WITH KIDS?

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June 2008

## Site of the Month

### CENSUS SURVEY QUESTIONS

KIDS COUNT grantees, of which we are one, often rely on census data to report how well their states are doing on child well-being. For example, in our *Nevada KIDS COUNT Data Book* we report the percent of children in poverty using the U.S. Census Bureau, Small Areas Estimates Branch (SAIPE) data. The Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) in their national *2007 Data Book* reported data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) for five of its ten major child well-being indicators: (1) percent of children in poverty; (2) percent of teens who are high school dropouts; (3) percent of teens not attending school and not working; (4) percent of children living in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment; and (5) percent of children in single-parent families. Communities use these data for various reasons, such as planning. Income data, for example, can be used to fund programs for poor children.

Prior to conducting the ACS, which is conducted every year, and the more familiar decennial Census, which is conducted every ten years, the questions must be submitted to Congress for approval. The most recent questions were submitted to Congress and released in a “notebook” to the public during March 2008. The notebook includes the questions and the questions’ date of origin, the justification for the questions, benefits of the survey data to communities, new questions for the surveys, and questions that will be dropped. What I found appealing was the questions’ date of origin. Did you know that the gender question has been asked since 1790?

If you are interested in questions that will be included on the census surveys, the notebook, titled *Questions Planned for the 2010 Census and American Community Survey*, is available at: <http://www.census.gov/2010census/2010ACSnotebook.pdf>.

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