

Since 1990, WV KIDS COUNT's vision has been to **Make West Virginia a Great Place to Be a Kid.** Despite our progress, we are a perennial bottom-15 finisher in the national KIDS COUNT child well-being rankings. But KIDS COUNT is determined to achieve our vision and will take the lead in a bold "Race" to move West Virginia from 43rd in the nation to one of the **Top 20 best places to be a kid by 2025.**



Race 20Great

Let's make WV a **TOP 20** Place to be a Kid!

We will realize our vision with a **Race to Great Policy Campaign** that will engage legislative, policy and community leaders, as well as grassroots advocates, **in championing 4 key policy changes:**

1 Establish a WV Earned Income Tax Credit
With more than 30 years of proven results at the federal level and in 32 states, a WV Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) would supplement wages and lift thousands of children out of poverty each year

2 Provide high-quality preschool for all 3-year-olds
in childcare settings and Headstart programs as recommended by the WV Early Childhood Planning Task Force

3 Increase the tobacco tax
to significantly reduce our highest-in-the-nation pregnancy smoking rates and our very high rate of low-birthweight babies

4 Implement WV's comprehensive health & sex ed curriculum to significantly reduce our teen birth rate, which is nearly twice the national rate



continued —>



KIDS COUNT has an **ideal opportunity** to take on a **leadership role** in a **“Race to Great” Policy Campaign**

Our mission to provide trusted data and powerful alliances has given us the stature necessary to:

- Identify the key policies that can finally make West Virginia a great place to be a kid; and
- Align WV’s top child advocacy organizations & legislative policy champions around those policies.

Race To Great - How to Make West Virginia A Great Place to be a Kid in Five Years With Four Key Policy Changes

will be launched in 2016 to build support among advocates, policymakers, opinion leaders, government administrators, editorial boards and the general public around four key policies we can implement by 2020 to improve our child well-being ranking to the top 20 by 2025.

The campaign will also:

- Identify a legislative champion for each policy;
- Mobilize grassroots and “grass tops” support to implement each policy by 2020;
- Build consensus around the best ways to close the race and poverty gap in each indicator.

Following The 2016 Race to Great Campaign, KIDS COUNT will :

- Coordinate implementation of a grassroots/grass tops policy advocacy strategy;
- Monitor legislative progress;
- Mobilize support of the four policies; and
- Communicate any policy victories to our supporters.

After the 2017 legislative session, we will meet with The Race to Great policy “anchors,” or lead advocacy organizations, to develop a strategy for any remaining policy issues and repeat the process as needed through 2020. Our ultimate goal is for West Virginia to be in the top 20 of the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s National Child Well-Being Rankings by 2025.



For more information, contact Laura Gandee at 304-345-2101 or laura@wvkidscount.org