



# Children's Action Alliance

*A Voice for Arizona's Children since 1988*

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## **National "Race for Results" Report Finds Barriers to Educational Success Loom Large for Children of Color, Children in Immigrant Families**

(Phoenix, AZ) – The nation’s vitality and prosperity depend on the success of every child in this country, but the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s 2017 *Race for Results* report finds that children of color and those growing up with parents who are immigrants face persistent obstacles to opportunity.

The report measures children’s progress on 12 key milestones for family security, health, and education. The data shows small improvements in Arizona and across the nation for children of all racial and ethnic groups since the last *Race for Results* report, issued in 2014. But for children who are Latino, American Indian, or African American, the pathway to opportunity and success is often blocked by poverty and by policies that leave them out.

“The data in this report challenge us to strengthen our policies and systems for children of color if we’re going to achieve our shared goals for health, education, and security for all children,” said Dana Wolfe Naimark, President and CEO of Children’s Action Alliance.

Indicator Data	AZ African American Children	AZ American Indian Children	AZ Asian and Pacific Islander Children	AZ Hispanic and Latino Children	AZ White Children	All U.S. Children
Overall Index <sup>1</sup>	403	286	780	381	701	N/A
Children Ages 3 to 5 Enrolled In Nursery School, Preschool or Kindergarten (2013-2015)	46%	54%	66%	46%	56%	60%
4th Graders Who Scored At or Above Proficient in Reading (2015)	27%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	18%	44%	35%
8th Graders Who Scored At or Above Proficient in Math (2015)	19%	15%	62%	23%	51%	32%
High School Students Graduating on Time (ACGR) (2014-2015)	73%	67%	87%	73%	83%	83%
Young Adults Ages 25 to 29 Who Have Completed an Associate's Degree or Higher (2013-2015)	26%	16%	66%	17%	44%	41%

<sup>1</sup> The report’s index uses a composite score of 12 milestones on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 1,000 (highest) to make comparisons.

<sup>2</sup> Sample size too small

As our national debates about immigration continue to intensify, the report gives particular emphasis to the progress and obstacles for children in immigrant families. In Arizona, 445,000 children have at least one parent who is an immigrant; 90% of these children are US citizens. Nearly nine in ten children with immigrant parents in Arizona are children of color and many face additional language and cultural barriers that can block their pathways to success.

In Arizona, the median income for immigrant families with children is 33% below that of US-born families and nearly two out of three children in immigrant families live in low-income families. These economic barriers, alone, put them at high risk for challenges in health and education.

“Children’s Action Alliance has united with hundreds of leaders in government, business and education around specific educational goals for all children in The [Arizona Education Progress Meter](#), led by Expect More Arizona and the Center for the Future of Arizona,” said Naimark. “*Race for Results* shows that our economy and policies are leaving children of color far behind in every educational benchmark, from early childhood through educational attainment after high school.”

As leaders and organizational partners throughout the state begin to create action steps to reach the Progress Meter goals, we should reconsider policies that have added obstacles for children of color:

- The inconsistencies, uncertainty, and targeting of immigration enforcement policies at the federal level, the state level, and through former Maricopa County [Sheriff Joe Arpaio](#) have all contributed to instability and [toxic stress](#) for children in immigrant families. Children lose needed support when fear leads their families to disconnect from public and community services and the disruption of families being separated can have [long-lasting impacts](#).
- Proposition 203, passed by voters in 2000, prohibits bilingual education programs in Arizona schools. Arizona is one of the last two states with a prohibition on bilingual education, with a [negative impact](#) on educational attainment.
- Families [lose access](#) to key supports due to the “English Only” Proposition passed by Arizona voters that prohibits state and local governments from doing business in other languages.
- A range of policies in public school districts and charter schools exclude children of color from educational opportunities. In district schools neighboring tribal communities, for example, American Indian students are up to [ten times more likely](#) than their white peers to be suspended.
- Because the state legislature neglects funding for school facilities, school districts must turn to local taxpayers to approve and pay for bonds. The average property value is lower in school districts with high Latino enrollment. As a result, taxpayers in districts with many Latino students must [pay higher tax rates](#) or go without needed school construction, maintenance and repair.

“Governor Ducey and many leaders throughout our state have made a commitment that all children in Arizona should have the chance for success, no matter what their family background or zip code is,” said Naimark. “But this report shows that opportunities remain

unequal. We must take action to strengthen our systems and policies so that children of color have the health, education, and security they need to flourish.”

*The 2017 Race for Results report will be available October 24 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at [www.aecf.org/raceforresults/](http://www.aecf.org/raceforresults/). Additional information is available at [www.aecf.org/](http://www.aecf.org/). The website also contains the most recent national, state and local data on numerous indicators of child well-being. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about Race for Results can use the Data Center at [datacenter.kidscount.org](http://datacenter.kidscount.org).*

*Children’s Action Alliance is an independent voice for Arizona children at the state capitol and in the community. CAA works to improve children’s health, education, and security through information and action. Visit us online at [www.azchildren.org](http://www.azchildren.org).*

*The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation’s children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). KIDS COUNT is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.*