

The South Carolina Maritime Heritage Foundation is committed to working with community, city, state and federal programs, plus the department of education and schools throughout the state to improve the well being and future success of students.

The following information was gathered from the Kids Count Data Book 2004, published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. www.kidscount.org

South Carolina Facts:

- There are 61,000 persons age 16-24 who are not enrolled in school, are not working, and have no degree beyond high school
- The percentage of teens not attending school and not working from 1996 to 2001, worsened by 22%, while the national average improved 11%
- The state ranks 49th nationwide in high school dropouts
- More than 40% of South Carolina's class of 2001 (nearly 23,000 students) dropped out of public high school before receiving a diploma
- There are 1,315 children in foster care age 15-19
- There are 15,487 mothers under the age of 20 (yr. 2002)
- There are 1,398 juveniles detained, incarcerated, or placed in residential facilities (yr. 2001)

South Carolina ranks 46th in the well-being of children, the state's second worst rating during the past decade. The indicators where South Carolina rates the worst nationally include: Teen births (42nd), Teen violent deaths (42nd), and Idle teens (41st).

Reducing the problems portrayed in the 2004 Kids Count Data Book requires improvement in the daily lives of children and their families, assisted with support from relatives, neighbors, the community, and many private and public organizations.... Only when families thrive and children grow up and develop into productive workers, form their own strong families, and become contributing members of their communities will South Carolina escape the bottom of the heap on national rankings, including per capita income and child poverty. **Are we truly committed in South Carolina to raising a generation of healthy, successful children who can compete on a fully equal basis with the rest of the nation and the world?**

Based on recent experience, there are too few of these state and community efforts in South Carolina to support our families and children. Without far greater support, our families and children will not make sufficient progress to be reflected in future rankings that will become a source of pride rather than shame.