



## MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Your public health team, connecting with our communities to achieve healthier outcomes

Submitted by: Leslie Kinnee, Public Information Officer  
615 N. State St., Stanton, MI 48888-9702  
989-831-3669,  
[kinnee@mmdhd.org](mailto:kinnee@mmdhd.org)

[www.mmdhd.org](http://www.mmdhd.org)



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### **Kids Count data released**

Ithaca- Improving the health and well-being of children and their families requires an understanding of the circumstances and environment in which they live. Each year, the Michigan League for Public Policy compiles the Kids Count in Michigan Data Book to help facilitate this understanding.

The data book combines information from many different sources to produce a profile of each Michigan county with indicators related to family income and employment, child care and family support, the health of babies and children, child abuse and neglect, the health and well-being of youth, and education.

In the report, which was released today, Gratiot County found itself ranked near the middle of the pack, number 44 out of 82 Michigan counties (a ranking of #1 is most favorable).

First, the good news. The county has seen decreases in the number of teen births, and in the number of children with elevated levels of lead in their blood.

Areas of concern:

- The number of mothers who smoked during pregnancy (30.2%) went up, and is higher than the State average of 20.2%.
- The high school graduation rate (71%) has gotten worse and is lower than the State average of 78.8%.
- The number of mothers receiving less than adequate prenatal care (40.2%) improved, but is much higher than the State average of 29.4%.
- The number of children ages 0-17 in investigated families went up slightly.
- The number of children ages 0-17 who were confirmed victims of abuse and/or neglect rose.

One of the factors influencing these statistics is poverty. Poverty increased during this time period, causing many Michigan counties and residents to struggle with various aspects of daily life, and may explain why they ranked poorly in certain indicators.

According to the report, 25.4% of Gratiot County kids live in poverty (\$23,600 or less a year for a two-parent family of four), as compared to the State average of 24.7%.

This report gives public health and policy makers a clearer picture of what the needs are in their communities, and where they should focus their efforts to improve the lives of children and their families.

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## 2- Kids Count

Kids Count is part of a broad national effort to measure the well-being of children at the state and local levels, and use that information to shape efforts to improve the lives of children. For more information, visit [www.mlpp.org/kids-count](http://www.mlpp.org/kids-count).

*Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.*

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