

EXCITING NEWS ABOUT EVERYDAY MIRACLES!

From "Getting By" to "Getting Ahead"

MINNESOTA KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK 2008



Children's Defense Fund



Produced by Children's
Defense Fund Minnesota



**EVERYDAY
MIRACLES** is
proud to be
featured as
one of the *"Stars of
the State"* in the 2008
**MINNESOTA KIDS
COUNT DATA BOOK!**



KIDS COUNT Online

NATIONAL KIDS COUNT

www.kidscount.org

NATIONAL KIDS COUNT DATA CENTER

www.kidscount.org/datacenter

MINNESOTA KIDS COUNT

www.cdf-mn.org/kidscount

CLIKS: COMMUNITY-LEVEL INFORMATION ON KIDS

www.kidscount.org/cliks

ABOUT CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND



Children's Defense Fund

Children's Defense Fund (CDF) was founded in 1973 by Marian Wright Edelman to provide a strong and effective voice for the children of America, since they cannot vote, hire lobbyists, or speak out for themselves. The mission of the CDF is to Leave No Child Behind and to ensure every child a Healthy Start a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. CDF educates the nation about the needs of children and encourages preventive investment before they get sick or into trouble, drop out of school, or suffer family breakdown. Using research and data, we work to shape federal, state and local policies that best serve our children's needs in a cost-effective manner.

CDF is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan research and advocacy organization supported by foundations, corporate grants, and individual donations. As an independent voice for children, CDF does not accept government funds.

Children's Defense Fund Minnesota began its work in 1985.

WHAT IS KIDS COUNT?



KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the U.S. By providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks of child well-being, KIDS COUNT seeks to enrich local, state, and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children.

As the Minnesota KIDS COUNT grantee, Children's Defense Fund Minnesota releases periodic reports and an annual data book regarding the well-being of children and families in Minnesota. Please visit our website at www.cdf-mn.org/kidscount to locate the electronic copy of this data book, details about how to order additional printed copies, a link to online data (available through the CLIKS website), and previous Minnesota KIDS COUNT publications.

Healthy Development

We desire good health for all children so that they can focus on learning and laughing and the other hallmarks of childhood, and to set them on a path to become healthy adults. Children's health conditions and uncertain access to health care may disrupt many other areas of children's lives, as well as jeopardize parents' finances and ability to remain in the workforce. Taking steps to secure good health begins even before a child is born, as organizations such as Everyday Miracles (described at right) recognize.

This section includes county-level data on children born at low birth weight, average monthly enrollment of children in Medical Assistance, and average monthly enrollment of children in MinnesotaCare. Additional county-level data indicators about Healthy Development available online include: total births, children born to mothers who smoked during pregnancy, and children whose mothers received late or inadequate prenatal care.



Stars of the State: Organizations Making a Difference

Everyday Miracles

ANOKA & GREATER TWIN CITIES AREA

Who they are

By creating a supportive environment for women in poverty who are pregnant, Everyday Miracles seeks to provide a healthy start for babies who may be at risk. The Anoka-based nonprofit achieves its mission primarily through the work of nearly 30 doulas, women experienced in childbirth who provide support to women before, during, and just after childbirth. Each expectant mother is paired with a doula who offers prenatal education, breastfeeding information, birthing classes, labor support, and postpartum visits. Many of the doulas are native to other countries or multi-lingual, which helps Everyday Miracles connect with women from diverse backgrounds using appropriate cultural practices. Unlike other metro area doula services, Everyday Miracles' doula program is not restricted by women's county of residence, hospital choice, or stage of pregnancy.



Charlotte cherishes her newborn Damari, whose healthy birth was supported by Everyday Miracles programming and doula services.

How they make a difference

Recognizing that mothers with lower incomes are less likely to attend prenatal classes, Everyday Miracles holds its own classes at local community centers. The program builds community among its families by offering weekly meals, sharing a community garden, and holding a "Blessing Way" ceremony. Like a baby shower, the event seeks to encourage the pregnant mother with wishes and gifts from other women who care about her. The program's maternity clothing closet and baby equipment "swap" provides necessary items free of charge for the families. Through its numerous services, Everyday Miracles aims to reduce preterm and low-birth

weight births, encourage breastfeeding, decrease medical interventions during birth and labor, and empower families to parent successfully. For families in high-risk social situations, Everyday Miracles partners with public health nurses and other community agencies to provide home visiting services.

Supporting Minnesota families

Since it began in 2003, Everyday Miracles has helped welcome more than 700 babies into the world. The program has experienced rapid growth with almost half of its total participants being served in 2007, a testament to the sensitive and supportive services it offers to pregnant women. As its website says, the organization strives to "nurture the mother so she can nurture her child," preparing mothers to give their children the best possible start in life.

Note: At press time, Everyday Miracles was in search of a new location to house its services.

Learn more at www.everyday-miracles.org