Assessing the well-being of U.S. children

The success of the nation depends in large part on how well families and society care for children so that they become healthy and productive adults.

WHAT DID WE EXAMINE?
We collected and analyzed federal data in three categories:

- Physical and mental health
- Student homelessness
- Access to insurance

WHAT DID WE FIND?
In recent years, the well-being of U.S. children has:

- Improved in others
- Remained constant in some areas
- Worsened in some areas

Below are some of our specific findings.

**Family, physical, and social environment**

**Trend**
Slight rise in suicide rates from families headed by single mothers.

**Student homelessness**

**Trend**
Increase in number of students who identify as homeless.

**Access to insurance**

**Trend**
No major change in the percentage of households with children who lack health insurance.

**Alcohol, smoking, and drug use**

**Trend**
Rise in major depressive episodes among youth age 12-17.

**Depression and suicide**

**Trend**
Rise in rate of depression and suicide.

**Physical and mental health**

**Trend**
Decrease in rate of theft and violent crimes at school per 1,000 students.

**Student homelessness**

**Trend**
Decrease in rate of homelessness.

**Access to insurance**

**Trend**
Decrease in rate of food insecurity.

**School crime and safety**

**Trend**
Decrease in rate of theft and violent crimes at school per 1,000 students.

**Early care and education**

**Trend**
Decrease in rate of theft and violent crimes at school per 1,000 students.

**By the numbers**

**U.S. children**

- Percentage of children uninsured
- Percentage of children without insurance
- Percentage of children lacking health insurance

**Highlights of GAO-18-41SP**

- Assessing the well-being of U.S. children
- Physical and mental health
- Student homelessness
- Access to insurance

**For more information, including our recommendation,**
see GAO-18-41SP at GAO.GOV.

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