



ATTN: Editor
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CONTACT: Gretchen Ellis
Director
TELEPHONE: (434) 872-4548

PRESS RELEASE:

Commission on Children and Families' (CCF) *Stepping Stones* Report Released to the Public

Trends identified in critical areas of child and family well-being

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA— The Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families (CCF) has issued the ninth edition of *Stepping Stones*, the annual Charlottesville and Albemarle statistical report on the well-being of local children and families.

Stepping Stones was created in 1999 as a tool to chart the health of children and their families in the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Now, nine years later, *Stepping Stones* includes sufficient longitudinal data to identify positive and negative trends on a growing percentage of the 60 indicators chosen to measure child and family well-being. Some of these trends are highlighted below.

Stepping Stones is intended to stimulate community dialogue and action regarding regional trends in the Charlottesville/ Albemarle community. **For more information on CCF and *Stepping Stones* please call Gretchen Ellis, CCF Director at 872-4548 or visit our website to view a PDF of the full document: www.ccfinfo.org.**

Academic Achievement:

- ▼ The percentage of students identified for Special Education has significantly decreased in Albemarle County.
- ▲ The percentage of graduates planning to attend a 2 or 4 year college shows a possible increasing trend over the last 7 years in the City of Charlottesville.
- ▲ The percentage of Grade 3 students who pass English, math, history, and science Standards of Learning tests has significantly increased in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville since 1998.
- ▲ The percentage of Grade 5 students who pass English, math, and science Standards of Learning tests has significantly increased in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville since 1998.
- ▲ The percentage of Grade 8 students who pass English and math Standards of Learning tests has significantly increased in Albemarle County since 1998.

Community Characteristics:

- ▲ The number of passenger rides per person on public buses has significantly increased in Charlottesville/Albemarle since 1998.
- ▲ The percentage of adults registered to vote has significantly increased in Albemarle County since 1998, with a slight decrease in the last 2 years.
- ▲ The percentage of public school students with Limited English Proficiency has significantly increased in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville since 1998.

Community Involvement:

- ▼ Enrollment in fine arts classes has significantly decreased in the City of Charlottesville since 1998.

Conduct in Community:

- ▲ Alcohol arrests for youth under the age of 20 have significantly increased in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville since 1998, with a slight decrease in the City of Charlottesville in the last 2 years.
- ▼ Teen pregnancies have significantly decreased in Albemarle County since 1998.
- ▼ Births to teens have significantly decreased in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville since 1998.
- ▼ Petitions for Children In Need of Services/Supervision have significantly decreased in Albemarle County since 1998.
- ▼ There is an emerging decreasing trend over the last 6 years, with an increase in the last year, in Petitions for Children In Need of Services/Supervision in the City of Charlottesville.
- ▼ Delinquency judgments of youth ages 10-17 have significantly decreased in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville since 1998.
- ▲ There is a possible increasing trend over the last 7 years in arrests for violent crimes for youth ages 12-17 in Albemarle County.
- ▲▼ CSA cases for youth ages 10-19 have significantly increased in the City of Charlottesville from 1998-2001, but has been slowly decreasing over the last 6 years.

Discipline in School:

- ▲ There is a possible increasing trend over the last 7 years in the incidents of possession of drugs/alcohol in public schools in the City of Charlottesville.
- ▲ Student suspensions have significantly increased in the City of Charlottesville since 1998.
- ▼ There is a possible decreasing trend over the last 5 years in student suspensions in Albemarle County.
- ▼ Reports of physical violence in schools have significantly decreased in Albemarle County since 2001.

▼ Incidents of weapon possession in public schools have significantly decreased in Albemarle County since 2000.

Early Childhood Education:

▼ Children identified for reading intervention services have significantly decreased in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville since 1999.

Family Characteristics:

▼ Divorces have significantly decreased in the City of Charlottesville since 1998.

▼ There is a possible decreasing trend over the last 5 years in children in Foster Care in the City of Charlottesville.

Family and Community Safety:

▼ Domestic assault arrests have significantly decreased in the City of Charlottesville since 1998.

Financial Assistance Program Participation:

▲ There is a possible increasing trend in the percentage of students receiving free/reduced meals in the City of Charlottesville since 2000.

▼ Children receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families has significantly decreased in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville since 1998.

Financial Status:

▲ While there has been an increase in the average per capita income in the Charlottesville Metropolitan Area since 1998, after adjusting for inflation, the increase is less pronounced, but still significant.

▲ There is a possible increasing trend over the last 5 years in children living in poverty in the City of Charlottesville.

Infant and Early Childhood Health:

▶ There are no significant trends noted.

School Characteristics:

▼ The percentage of children entering and withdrawing from school in one school year (community mobility) has significantly decreased in Albemarle County since 1998.

▲ Instructional personnel positions per student have significantly increased in Albemarle County since 1996.

▼ There is a possible decreasing trend over the last 5 years in instructional personnel positions per student in the City of Charlottesville.

School Participation:

- ▶ There are no significant trends noted.

CCF is a 28-member planning board that advises the Charlottesville City Council and the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors on improving outcomes for children and their families. www.ccfinfo.org

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