

EMPath

Economic Mobility Pathways

OUTCOMES WORKGROUP

meeting notes

December 15, 2016

THIS SESSION

Making Sure KIDS COUNT: Data as a Tool for Improving Child Well-Being



Nancy Wagman—
Kids Count director and senior health policy and budget analyst at the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center (MassBudget)

SAVE THE DATES

March 9, 2017

June 1, 2017

The December 2016 Outcomes Workgroup session focused on the Massachusetts Kids Count and MassBudget websites. Through an interactive presentation, Nancy Wagman — Kids Count Project Director and Senior Health Policy and Budget Analyst at the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center (MassBudget) — showed attendees how to easily access the wealth of information that is available to the public through these two websites, such as recent data on child poverty and detailed information on the state budget.



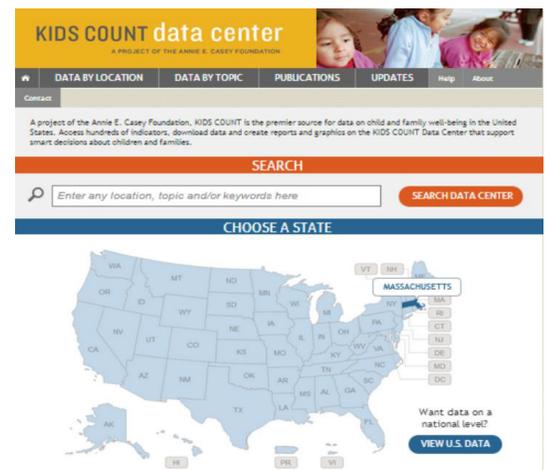
Nancy Wagman

Making Sure KIDS COUNT: Data as a Tool for Improving Child Well-Being

As Nancy Wagman explained at the beginning of her presentation, KIDS COUNT is a national initiative funded by the **Annie E. Casey Foundation**. In Massachusetts, the **Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center (MassBudget)** is responsible for running the **KIDS COUNT** data center. The goal of this center is to provide data to inform conversations about the future of children and the issues that affect them. In a journey through the Massachusetts KIDS COUNT website, workshop attendees learned how to access some of the hundreds of indicators and thousands of data points on economic well-being available through this interactive website, which can also be accessed through smart phones.

Information available through the Data Center includes: basic demographic

information for Massachusetts and other states, information on public assistance recipients such as breakdowns of SNAP benefits by city and town, children without a vehicle at home, and children without health insurance by poverty level. All of the indicator data have useful definitions in the report, as well as the



data sources and descriptions of the analysis conducted. Users have the option of creating custom reports based not only on their state data, but also on their school districts. The information can be downloaded as raw data for use in tables, charts or for further analysis. Users also have the option of using the graphs and maps provided by KIDS COUNT in their reports and presentations. Nancy advised attendees to use the website tabs instead of the search bar when looking up indicators, as this could leave out useful data.

Nancy shared that the detailed information provided in these indicators is commonly used by organizations when applying for grants and writing articles or letters to the editor.

Children'sBudget Data

Besides running the KIDS COUNT data center for Massachusetts, MassBudget also manages the Children'sBudget, a free resource which compiles state budget information for programs that serve children. This resource also provides information on how these programs work and their historical funding, as a way to show the impact that the state budget has on children's lives. Through this website, users can access easy-to-read line item descriptions, information and proposed funding amounts. All amounts are available adjusted for inflation or raw. As with the data provided in KIDS COUNT, users can also download the raw data, tables, charts and graphs to use in reports and presentations.

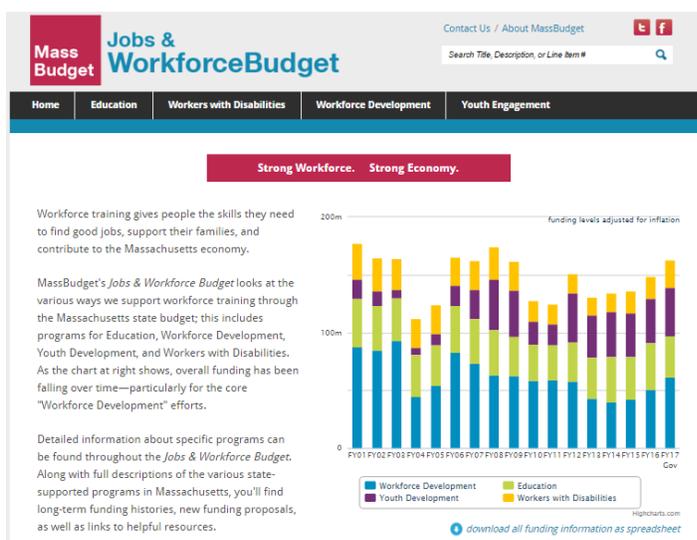
MassBudget Data

Through the Budget Browser, users can access information on all line items in the Massachusetts Budget since Fiscal Year 2001. As Nancy mentioned, the Budget Browser is a useful tool when determining if the state budget is growing at the same pace as the economy.

Jobs & WorkforceBudget

Another resource presented by Nancy was the jobs and workforce budget website, through which users can find budget information pertaining to workforce development programs such as Transitions to Work, Pathways to Self-sufficiency, and Train Vets to Treat Vets, just to name a few.

You may reach Nancy Wagman at nwagman@massbudget.org and at 617.426.1228 x106.



FEATURED RESOURCES

- ◇ [EMPath December 2016 Outcomes Workgroup handout](#)
- ◇ [KIDS COUNT website](#)
- ◇ [Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center website](#)

SAVE THE DATE

Our Next Outcomes Workgroup Meeting is scheduled for:
March 9, 2017 from 9:30AM to 11:30AM