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## **Low reading scores show majority of Kansas children not prepared for future success**

TOPEKA — In a new KIDS COUNT data snapshot, the Annie E. Casey Foundation finds that a majority of children in Kansas are not reading proficiently by the time they reach fourth grade — a key predictor of a student’s future educational and economic success.

“Early Reading Proficiency in the United States” finds that 62 percent of Kansas children are not reading at grade level at the start of fourth grade. Even more troubling is the gap between students from higher-income families and those from lower-income families — 78 percent of lower-income children are not meeting this important benchmark compared to only 46 percent among their higher-income peers.

“When a child isn’t reading proficiently, that has negative implications for academic achievement and job readiness, as well as the economic security of future generations of Kansans,” said Shannon Cotsoradis, president and CEO of Kansa Action for Children.

Two earlier reports from the Casey Foundation — [Early Warning: Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters](#) and [Early Warning Confirmed](#) — found that children who read proficiently by the end of third grade are more likely to graduate from high school, are less likely to fall into poverty and are more likely to find a job that can adequately support their families.

“Early Reading Proficiency in the United States” recommends that more must be done to increase reading proficiency for low-income children so that they can attain economic security as adults: use results-driven solutions to transform low-performing schools into high-quality learning environments; make sure that communities are supported to ensure children come to school ready, attend school every day and maintain and expand their learning during the summer months; and develop a system of early care and education that coordinates what children experience from birth through age 8.

This latest data snapshot compares reading data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress released in November 2013 with data taken from the assessment in 2003 when a majority of states began participating.

*The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation’s children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org).*



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