

VOICES FOR HEALTHY KIDS FAIR START INDEX



American Heart Association.



What is the Fair Start Index?

At Voices for Healthy Kids, we want all children to have a fair start to grow up healthy and lead full lives. Using county level data from a variety of trusted sources, we developed the Fair Start Index to identify locations where policy change has the greatest potential to reduce, and someday, eliminate inequities in childhood opportunity and ensure every child has a chance to live a full life. The Voices for Healthy Kids Fair Start Index is used to prioritize grant making resources, partnerships, and organizational collaborations. The data is also shared with our grantees and collaborators to shape local campaign strategies, strategically direct policy interventions, incorporate findings into communications materials, and more.



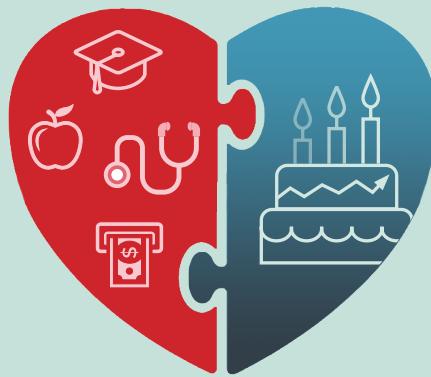
How does the Fair Start Index work?

An index brings together many different data points to get an overall summary measure. To develop the Voices for Healthy Kids Fair Start Index we worked with the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, and other community data and equity experts.

Each location has unique strengths and challenges and we know that data can only explain part of the story. The Fair Start Index is the beginning of a conversation. We share data reports about locations using the mySidewalk platform and invite partners and applicants to discuss what additional context or data could be added to provide a more complete understanding of the area.

Opportunity

Do children living here have good education, nutrition, health and economic opportunities?



Life Longevity

Do children living here live a long life?

Opportunity and **Life Longevity** each make up half of the Fair Start Index.

The Fair Start Index helps hold Voices for Healthy Kids accountable to our equity mission by prioritizing locations where investments and resources may have the greatest equity impact.

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Opportunity

Research shows that opportunities have a profound effect on childhood wellbeing and life trajectories. Each area of opportunity in the Fair Start Index is comprised of two measures:

AREA OF OPPORTUNITY

Education Opportunity

MEASURES

Preschool Enrollment: Percentage of children ages 3-4 enrolled in a public or private preschool.

High School Completion: Percentage of the population age 25 and over that received at least a high school diploma or equivalent.

AREA OF OPPORTUNITY

Nutrition Opportunity

MEASURES

Food Environment Index: Includes measures of healthy food access and food insecurity.

Adult Obesity: Percentage of the adult population (age 20 and older) that reports a body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to 30.

AREA OF OPPORTUNITY

Health Opportunity

MEASURES

Low Birthweight: Percentage of live births over a seven-year period where the infant weighed less than 2,500 grams.

Uninsured Children: Percentage of people under age 19 that has no health insurance of any kind.

AREA OF OPPORTUNITY

Economic Opportunity

MEASURES

Children in Poverty: Percentage of people under age 18 living in poverty.

Severe Housing Problems or Cost Burden: Percentage of households with severe housing problems (overcrowded, lacking plumbing or kitchen facilities) or housing cost burden (spending 50% or more of household income on housing).

Life Longevity

There are many factors in a community that can shape the likelihood that a child will grow-up healthy and lead a long life. Some of these factors are related to the physical environment (clean air and water, access to healthy foods, walkability, etc.) and some are related to the social environment (unfair and unequal advantages for some groups in education, housing, criminal justice, and other societal systems due to structural racism).

The Life Longevity Ranking identifies where children are, and are not, able live a long life. It is based on a Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL), a measure of early death to compare locations. In a truly equitable society, children in all communities would have the same chance to live a long life. Locations with a low Life Longevity Ranking indicate places where children live shorter lives.

