



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE on August 31, 2011

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### **Iowa Kid Counts documents changing face of Iowa**

Iowa's most rapid population changes are taking place among the state's youngest residents and in communities of color. That's the message of an Iowa Kids Count report released today by the Child and Family Policy Center.

"Most people know that Iowa is a slow-growing state overall, but the picture gets much more complex when you start breaking out the numbers by geography, race and age," said Anne Discher, CFPC researcher and author of "And Children Lead the Way: Diversity and Population Change in Iowa."

The report analyzed and mapped 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census data for Iowa, each of its 99 counties and five major Iowa cities and their surrounding areas. Among the findings:

- Iowa's overall modest population growth disguises great variation by geography and age. Overall, Iowa's population grew more slowly than the U.S. average, and its child population actually decreased. But Iowa's large counties experienced child population growth closer to – and in some cases, well above – the national average, while most small counties saw a substantial loss in child population.
- All parts of Iowa are becoming more diverse, and Iowa's child population is more diverse than the population overall. In fact, that the state grew at all from 2000 to 2010 is due to growth in communities of color. Iowa actually has slightly fewer white residents than it did in 2000, and significantly fewer white children. Iowa's communities of color – in particular African-American and Latino – grew fast during the decade, and their child populations grew fastest of all.
- Iowa's relatively slow growth is due to the racial mix of its residents. The white population in Iowa grew only a little more slowly than the U.S. average, and Iowa's communities of color grew considerably faster than average. But Iowa has a much larger share of the slow-growing white population, and a smaller share of the fast-growing minority population. In fact, Iowa remains significantly less diverse than the nation as a whole.
- In Iowa's metropolitan areas, "white flight" to the suburbs, combined with fast growth of communities of color in central cities, continues to drive racial isolation. Central cities grew much more slowly than surrounding areas, and became significantly more diverse as they lost

white residents and gained residents of color. Fast-growing suburbs remain much less diverse than the cities they surround.

The report reflects the importance of cultural understanding and competency in our education and human-service systems to support the state's future workforce, said Discher. "Given how fast communities of color are growing in Iowa, we all have a lot riding on how well we meet their needs."

The Child and Family Policy Center is a Des Moines-based nonprofit organization that links research and policy on issues vital to children and families and advocates for outcome-based policies to improve child well-being.

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