

How does UNITED STATES compare on child well-being?

On many measures, and compared to other OECD countries, the United States could do more to promote child well-being. Children in the United States enjoy some of the highest average levels of **disposable income** in the OECD, but high income inequality also means that **child relative income poverty rates** are very high – around 20% of children in the U.S. live in relative income poverty, compared to just over 13%, on average across OECD countries.

Infant health outcomes are poor. The **infant mortality rates** is higher in the U.S. than in most other OECD countries (5.8 deaths per 1000 live births, compared to an OECD average of 3.9), as

to a slightly lesser extent is the rate of **low-weight births** (8.1%, versus an OECD average of 6.5%). However, teenagers in the U.S. are comparatively likely to get regular exercise – 62% of 15-year-olds **regularly engage in intense exercise** outside of school, compared to 52% on average and as few as 36-37% in countries like France and Korea.

Teenagers in the United States are comparatively less likely to live in homes with educational resources like a **desk and quiet place to study** or **books to help with their school work**, and a relatively high number also report **feeling anxious about school tests** even when

well-prepared. Average performance on the OECD's **PISA tests** is moderate. However, teenagers in the U.S. are aspirational – more 15-year-olds say they expect to **complete a university degree** in the U.S. than in any other OECD country (76%).

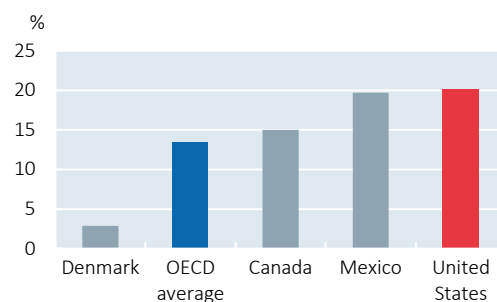
Overall, self-reported life satisfaction among U.S. teenagers is close to average. About 36% of 15-year-olds report **high life satisfaction** (34% on average across the OECD), and 12% **low life satisfaction** (equal to the OECD average). As in most other OECD countries, 15-year-old boys report significantly higher life satisfaction than girls.

How the United States compares to other OECD countries on 20 key measures

	● Top third	◆ Middle third	■ Bottom third
Home and family environment	Jobs and income		
	Average disposable household income for children ●		
	Children in relative income poverty ■		
	Children in jobless households ◆		
Parent-child relationships			◆
Adolescents talking to their parents before or after school			◆
Health and safety	Infant health		
	Infant mortality ■		
	Low-weight births ■		
Child and adolescent health			■
Adolescents skipping either breakfast or dinner			■
Adolescents regularly engaging in vigorous exercise ●			●
Education and school life	Educational resources at home		
	Adolescents with a desk and a quiet place to study at home ■		
	Adolescents with books for school work at home ■		
	Educational attitudes and expectations		
	Adolescents who feel anxious about school tests ■		
	Adolescents who expect to complete a university degree ●		
	Quality of school life		
	Adolescents who feel like they belong in school ◆		
Adolescents who report being the victims of bullying ◆			
Educational performance			◆
Reading performance at age 15 (PISA)			◆
Mathematics performance at age 15 (PISA)			■
Activities and life satisfaction	Subjective well-being		
	Adolescents reporting high life satisfaction ◆		
	Adolescents reporting low life satisfaction ◆		
	Other adolescent activities and outcomes		
	Adolescents not in education or employment ■		
Adolescent fertility ■			

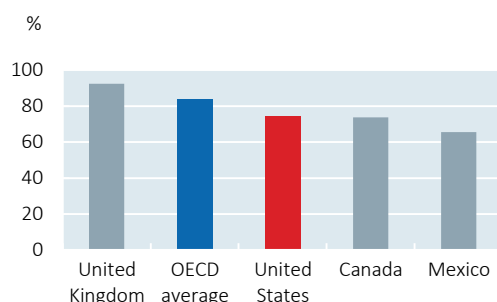
Note: Placement in top/middle/bottom third of OECD countries with available data on each measure. 'Top third' (green circle) always represents good relative performance with respect to child well-being, and 'bottom third' (red square) poor relative performance. For measures where a larger value is generally 'better' (e.g. 'adolescents reporting high life satisfaction'), 'top third' means the country is in the top third when countries are ranked largest to smallest value down. For measures where a smaller value is better (e.g. 'adolescents reporting low life satisfaction'), 'top third' means the country is in the top third when ranked smallest to largest.

Child relative income poverty rates, 2014



Note: Poverty threshold at 50% of the median disposable income
Source: OECD Child Well-Being Portal based on the OECD Income Distribution Database

15-year-olds with books to help with their school work at home, 2015



Source: OECD Child Well-Being Data Portal based on the PISA 2015 Database

The **Child Well-Being Data Portal (CWBDP)** gathers data on child well-being and the settings in which children grow up. It provides information on children's home and family environment, their health and safety, their education and school life, their activities and their life satisfaction, and also links to information on public policies for children. Information covers children from 0 to 17 years of age, although some information is available only for specific ages. Where possible, information is provided for different age groups, from early childhood to adolescence. The data portal also provides a unique source of information on disparities in child well-being by gender, family status, household income level, and parental background.