

Overview

Quality of life is a subjective concept that is difficult to measure. The connection between economic performance and quality of life is indisputable. With strong growth in the economy in 2006, Utah remained among the top states in terms of quality of life. Utah's transportation infrastructure is diverse and growing. Utah's violent crime rate declined from the previous year and remained among the lowest in the United States. Poverty rates for 2005 decreased slightly from 2004 and educational attainment continued to be among the highest in the nation in 2005. Utah ranked sixth in the nation in the indicators of child well being and sixth highest in overall health status. The combination of these and other measurable data reveal that Utah's social structure continues to be among the best in the nation.

Utah Quality of Life Information

Utah's Kids Count. The Annie E. Casey Foundation ranked Utah sixth among the states in child well-being in its *2005 Kids Count Data Book*. This Foundation tracks indicators of child well-being and determines a state's National Composite Rank by the sum of the state's standing on each of ten measures arranged in order from best (1) to worst (51). The Foundation's indicators are: percent low-birth weight babies; infant mortality rate; child death rate; rate of teen deaths by accident, homicide, and suicide; teen birth rate; percent of teens who are high school dropouts; percent of teens not attending school and not working; percent of children living with parents who do not have full-time, year-round employment; percent of children in poverty; and percent of families with children headed by a single parent.

Transportation Choices. The availability of multiple transportation alternatives is an often overlooked measure of an area's quality of life. The 2005 American Community Survey showed that 76.5% of working Utahns drove alone as their means of transportation to work, 12.8% carpooled, and 2.3% used public transportation. The mean travel time to work was 20.5 minutes. Between 2004 and 2005, the Utah Transit Authority reported a 13.5% increase in the number of passengers using the TRAX light rail system and a 27.2% increase in the number of people using vanpools. There was a 0.6% decrease in the number of passengers using bus service while Paratransit service saw a 4.0% decrease. Overall, UTA total regular service increased by 4.7%.

Current Data on Social Well Being

Crime. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports for 2005 reported the rate of violent crime--murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault--for Utah of 227.2 per 100,000 people. This was a 3.7% decrease from the 2004 violent crime rate and

was sixth lowest in the nation. Compared with a national rate of 469.2 violent crimes per 100,000 people in 2005, Utah continued to have a significantly lower rate of violent crime than the U.S. average.

Education. In 2005, the Current Population Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau reported that 92.5% of Utahns had at least a high school degree, ranking Utah second highest state in the nation. The national rate was 85.2%. Utah also ranked 16th in higher education attainment, with 29.8% of persons 25 years and over having obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. The national rate was 27.7%.

Home Ownership. Utah's home ownership rate in 2005 was 73.9%, 11th highest in the nation. The rate for the nation was 68.9%. The states with the highest home ownership were West Virginia with a rate of 81.3%, Mississippi at 78.8%, Alabama at 76.6%, Minnesota at 76.5%, and Michigan at 77.1%. The lowest rates of home ownership occurred in the District of Columbia with a rate of 45.8%, New York at 55.9%, California at 59.7%, Hawaii at 59.8%, and Rhode Island at 63.1%.

Vital Statistics and Health. Utah's unique age structure affects its ranking among other states on many vital statistics. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau show that, in 2005, 30.1% of Utah's population was less than 18 years old, highest in the nation. In addition, the median age in Utah of 28.5 was lowest in the nation. Utah also has the second-lowest percentage of the population age 65 and over (8.7%), behind Alaska at 6.6%.

Births. Final data for 2004 from the National Center for Health Statistics revealed that Utah's birth rate was 21.2 births per 1,000 people, highest in the nation and substantially higher than the national average of 14.0. In 2004, Texas and Arizona ranked second and third in the nation with birth rates of 17.0 and 16.3 respectively.

Deaths. Preliminary data from the National Center for Health Statistics showed the overall death rate in Utah was 5.6 per 1,000 people in 2004, the second lowest in the nation. The age adjusted death rate in Utah was 7.6 per 1,000 people, 19th lowest in the nation. The infant mortality rate (deaths to infants less than one-year-old per 1,000 live births) was 5.0 in Utah in 2003, down from 5.6 in 2002. American Cancer Society 2006 data revealed the number of Utah deaths caused by cancer per 100,000 people was 108.1, the lowest in the nation. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported Utah's HIV/AIDS rate per 100,000 people in 2005 at 2.6, the ninth lowest in the nation. Actual deaths by AIDS in 2003 numbered 13 for the entire Utah population.

Health Insurance Coverage. Approximately 14.5% of the Utah population lacked health insurance coverage in 2005 (three-year average), ranking Utah 21st among the states. The U.S. average was 15.7%.

Poverty. Utah's poverty rate (three-year average) was 9.4%, the ninth lowest in the nation, and below the national average of 12.6%. The states with the lowest poverty rates were New Hampshire with a rate of 5.6%, Minnesota at 7.5%, New Jersey 7.8%, Vermont at 8.0%, and Delaware at 8.5%.

Public Assistance. There were an estimated 22,758 monthly recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families in 2005, a rate of 9.2 people per 1,000, ranking Utah 15th lowest among the states in the total number of TANF recipients. Approximately 133,263 people in Utah received monthly benefits from the Federal Food Stamp Program, a rate of 54.0 people per 1,000. The Federal Food Stamp Program dispersed \$20.5 million worth of benefits in Utah in 2004. Utah ranked 7th lowest in the number of food stamp recipients, and 32nd in the amount of benefits from the Federal Food Stamp Program.

Table 61
Crime, Education and Home Ownership

	Violent Crime*		Property Crime**		Educational Attainment Persons 25 Years Old and Over 2005 ²				Home Ownership Rates 2005 ³	
	per 100,000 People 2005 ¹		per 100,000 People 2005 ¹		High School or Higher		Bachelor's Degree or Higher		Home Ownership Rates 2005 ³	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank
U.S.	469.2	(X)	3,429.8	(X)	85.2	(X)	27.7	(X)	68.9	(X)
Alabama	431.7	23	3,892.1	18	80.9	46	19.8	47	76.6	3
Alaska	631.9	8	3,612.5	23	91.7	5	28.6	20	66.0	43
Arizona	513.2	17	4,838.0	2	85.8	33	28.0	21	71.1	27
Arkansas	527.5	14	4,057.9	13	81.4	44	17.5	50	69.2	37
California	526.3	15	3,322.6	27	80.4	47	30.6	11	59.7	49
Colorado	396.5	25	4,039.5	15	89.3	15	35.5	6	71.0	29
Connecticut	274.5	38	2,558.0	41	90.0	10	36.8	2	70.5	32
Delaware	632.1	7	3,111.4	31	86.9	26	25.6	27	75.8	6
District of Columbia	1,459.0	1	4,747.0	4	84.1	38	46.9	1	45.8	51
Florida	708.0	4	4,007.9	16	86.8	29	25.4	29	72.4	20
Georgia	448.9	21	4,172.3	10	85.7	34	27.1	24	67.9	41
Hawaii	255.1	42	4,792.6	3	87.2	22	30.4	13	59.8	48
Idaho	256.8	41	2,697.9	37	89.1	16	25.9	26	74.2	8
Illinois	551.5	12	3,080.3	34	87.2	22	29.6	17	70.9	30
Indiana	323.7	30	3,456.3	25	87.2	22	22.6	43	75.0	7
Iowa	291.3	32	2,833.7	35	89.8	13	24.5	37	73.9	11
Kansas	387.4	26	3,787.0	20	91.4	7	30.4	13	69.5	36
Kentucky	266.8	40	2,530.5	42	78.9	50	18.9	49	71.6	23
Louisiana	594.4	10	3,683.1	21	80.2	48	19.6	48	72.5	19
Maine	112.2	50	2,413.1	44	87.2	22	24.3	38	73.9	11
Maryland	703.0	5	3,544.1	24	86.9	26	36.3	4	71.2	25
Massachusetts	456.9	20	2,363.6	45	87.5	21	36.6	3	63.4	45
Michigan	552.1	11	3,091.1	32	88.6	17	24.6	36	76.4	5
Minnesota	297.0	31	3,084.1	33	92.7	1	34.2	8	76.5	4
Mississippi	278.4	37	3,260.1	28	79.8	49	21.8	45	78.8	2
Missouri	525.4	16	3,927.5	17	85.5	36	25.0	33	72.3	22
Montana	281.5	36	3,142.9	30	92.1	3	25.4	29	70.4	33
Nebraska	287.0	33	3,423.2	26	89.8	13	25.4	29	70.2	34
Nevada	606.8	9	4,241.5	9	86.6	30	23.4	41	63.4	45
New Hampshire	132.0	48	1,796.4	50	91.9	4	32.8	9	74.0	10
New Jersey	354.7	27	2,333.0	46	86.9	26	36.3	4	70.1	35
New Mexico	702.2	6	4,148.3	11	81.2	45	27.4	22	71.4	24
New York	445.8	22	2,108.5	48	85.7	34	30.4	13	55.9	50
North Carolina	468.1	19	4,075.1	12	84.0	39	25.3	32	70.9	30
North Dakota	98.2	51	1,978.2	49	90.0	10	27.2	23	68.5	38
Ohio	351.3	28	3,662.7	22	87.9	20	23.0	42	73.3	15
Oklahoma	508.6	18	4,042.0	14	85.2	37	24.0	40	72.9	17
Oregon	286.8	34	4,399.8	5	88.6	17	29.0	19	68.2	40
Pennsylvania	424.5	24	2,417.2	43	86.3	31	26.0	25	73.3	15
Rhode Island	251.2	43	2,718.9	36	83.9	40	29.2	18	63.1	47
South Carolina	761.1	2	4,339.4	6	83.0	41	24.2	39	73.9	11
South Dakota	175.7	47	1,776.4	51	88.4	19	25.0	33	68.4	39
Tennessee	752.8	3	4,275.5	8	81.8	43	21.5	46	72.4	20
Texas	529.7	13	4,332.0	7	78.2	51	25.5	28	65.9	44
Utah	227.2	46	3,868.9	19	92.5	2	29.8	16	73.9	11
Vermont	119.7	49	2,280.7	47	90.0	10	34.4	7	74.2	8
Virginia	282.8	35	2,638.2	39	86.0	32	30.6	11	71.2	25
Washington	345.8	29	4,893.0	1	91.5	6	30.9	10	67.6	42
West Virginia	272.8	39	2,625.2	40	82.5	42	15.1	51	81.3	1
Wisconsin	241.5	44	2,660.2	38	90.4	9	25.0	33	71.1	27
Wyoming	230.1	45	3,155.3	29	90.9	8	21.9	44	72.8	18

Notes: Rank is high to low. When states share the same rank, the next lower rank is omitted.

* Violent crimes are offenses of murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

** Property crimes are offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, and motor-vehicle thefts.

Sources:

1. Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Crime in the United States, 2005," October 2006.
2. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 Current Population Survey.
3. U.S. Census Bureau. Housing Vacancy Survey Annual Statistics: 2005.

Table 62
Vital Statistics and Health

	Births per 1,000 People 2004 ¹		Deaths per 1,000 People 2004 ²		Estimated Deaths by Cancer per 100,000 People 2006 ³		AIDS cases per 100,000 People 2005 ⁴		State Health Ranking 2006 ⁵		Persons Without Health Insurance (3 Year Average) (2003-2005) ⁶	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Score	Rank	Percent	Rank
U.S.	14.0	(X)	8.2	(X)	190.6	(X)	13.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	15.7	(X)
Alabama	13.1	34	10.2	3	215.9	11	11.4	17	-14.8	45	14.3	23
Alaska	15.8	5	4.7	51	122.1	50	3.9	38	-0.8	31	17.8	10
Arizona	16.3	3	7.5	40	172.9	43	10.8	20	-4	34	18.1	9
Arkansas	14.0	20	10.0	4	220.9	8	8.7	22	-16.1	46	17.2	13
California	15.2	7	6.7	48	154.9	47	11.3	18	4.7	23	18.8	5
Colorado	14.9	10	6.2	49	145.8	49	7.7	28	8.9	16	16.9	14
Connecticut	12.0	45	8.4	30	199.1	26	19.0	8	17.2	5	11.0	41
Delaware	13.7	25	8.6	23	200.3	24	20.9	7	-0.6	30	12.7	33
District of Columbia	14.3	18	9.8	5	196.2	28	128.4	1	na	na	13.5	32
Florida	12.5	42	9.7	7	224.5	5	27.9	4	-10.6	41	19.6	3
Georgia	15.7	6	7.5	42	163.0	46	25.7	5	-11.7	42	17.5	11
Hawaii	14.5	15	7.2	46	177.2	42	8.5	23	17.9	4	9.5	50
Idaho	16.2	4	7.2	45	166.5	45	1.7	47	6.5	19	16.5	17
Illinois	14.2	19	8.3	31	190.4	35	15.1	10	3.7	25	14.2	24
Indiana	14.0	20	8.7	22	210.5	17	6.5	33	-3.7	33	14.2	24
Iowa	13.0	35	9.1	15	221.8	6	3.2	40	12.5	11	9.8	49
Kansas	14.5	15	8.7	21	194.2	29	3.9	38	7.9	17	10.9	43
Kentucky	13.4	29	9.3	13	229.1	4	6.2	34	-10.1	39	13.6	30
Louisiana	14.5	15	9.4	12	213.1	14	21.2	6	-20.4	50	18.7	6
Maine	10.6	50	9.4	10	241.4	2	1.6	48	13.7	9	10.4	46
Maryland	13.4	29	7.8	37	186.4	38	28.5	3	-2.7	32	14.1	26
Massachusetts	12.2	44	8.5	25	210.0	18	10.8	20	15.3	7	10.7	44
Michigan	12.8	39	8.4	28	192.4	33	8.1	26	2.3	27	11.3	38
Minnesota	13.8	24	7.3	43	184.9	40	4.4	36	21.2	1	8.7	51
Mississippi	14.8	12	9.6	8	208.8	19	13.2	14	-19.9	49	17.3	12
Missouri	13.5	26	9.4	11	216.0	10	6.7	32	-4.1	35	11.9	36
Montana	12.4	43	8.7	20	206.3	20	2.1	46	4.9	22	18.7	6
Nebraska	15.1	8	8.4	29	193.9	30	3.0	41	12.4	12	11.4	37
Nevada	15.1	8	7.7	38	193.8	31	12.3	15	-8.4	38	18.4	8
New Hampshire	11.2	49	7.8	36	199.2	25	2.6	42	18.9	3	10.4	46
New Jersey	13.2	32	8.5	24	203.3	21	14.7	11	11	14	14.5	21
New Mexico	14.9	10	7.5	41	170.6	44	7.1	30	-10.4	40	21.1	2
New York	13.0	35	7.9	34	184.9	39	32.7	2	1.1	29	13.9	28
North Carolina	14.0	20	8.5	26	190.0	36	10.9	19	-4.3	36	16.2	18
North Dakota	12.9	38	8.8	19	201.0	23	1.6	48	15	8	11.2	39
Ohio	13.0	35	9.3	14	215.8	12	6.8	31	3.7	25	12.0	35
Oklahoma	14.6	14	9.8	6	212.0	15	7.9	27	-13.1	44	19.5	4
Oregon	12.7	40	8.4	27	202.7	22	6.0	35	6.5	19	16.7	16
Pennsylvania	11.7	47	10.3	2	239.0	3	12.1	16	1.8	28	11.2	39
Rhode Island	11.8	46	9.0	16	221.2	7	8.3	25	11.4	13	11.0	41
South Carolina	13.5	26	8.9	17	213.6	13	15.7	9	-16.4	48	15.6	19
South Dakota	14.7	13	8.9	18	211.4	16	2.4	44	7.5	18	12.1	34
Tennessee	13.5	26	9.5	9	217.5	9	14.1	12	-16.2	47	13.7	29
Texas	17.0	2	6.8	47	151.1	48	13.6	13	-4.7	37	24.6	1
Utah	21.2	1	5.6	50	108.1	51	2.6	42	16.3	6	14.5	21
Vermont	10.6	50	8.0	33	192.6	32	1.0	51	20.5	2	10.7	44
Virginia	13.9	23	7.6	39	186.6	37	8.5	23	5.7	21	13.6	30
Washington	13.2	32	7.2	44	181.9	41	7.7	28	10.2	15	14.1	26
West Virginia	11.5	48	11.5	1	250.4	1	4.1	37	-12.8	43	16.9	14
Wisconsin	12.7	40	8.3	32	192.4	34	2.2	45	13.3	10	10.3	48
Wyoming	13.4	29	7.8	35	198.3	27	1.2	50	4.7	23	15.2	20

Note: Rank is high to low. When states share the same rank, the next lower rank is omitted.

Sources:

1. National Center for Health Statistics, "National Vital Statistics Reports," Vol 55, No 1.
2. National Center for Health Statistics, "National Vital Statistics Reports," Vol 54, No 19. Not age adjusted. Data is preliminary. Rates for California, Illinois, and New Jersey are from 2003.
3. American Cancer Society, "Cancer Facts and Figures 2006," Rates calculated by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget using Census Bureau 2005 population estimates. Not age-adjusted.
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report," Vol 17. U.S. total includes Puerto Rico, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, and U.S. Pacific Islands as well as persons whose state of residence is unknown.
5. United Health Foundation, "America's Health: United Health Foundation State Health Rankings 2006."

Table 63
Poverty and Public Assistance

	All Ages in Poverty 3-year Average 2003-2005 ¹		Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (Monthly Average) 2005 ²			Federal Food Stamp Program				
	Percent	Rank	Rate per			2005 ³			2004 ⁴	
			Recipients	1,000 people	Rank	Persons	1,000 people	Rank	Benefits	Rank
Thousands of Dollars										
U.S.	12.6	(X)	4,555,755	15.4	(X)	25,674,369	86.6	(X)	\$4,060,040	(X)
Alabama	16.2	6	48,223	10.6	33	558,596	122.6	10	31,653	25
Alaska	9.6	40	12,048	18.2	12	55,567	83.7	26	8,456	46
Arizona	14.4	12	99,294	16.7	16	550,291	92.7	18	40,674	19
Arkansas	15.6	7	18,759	6.8	46	373,764	134.5	6	26,143	28
California	13.2	16	1,087,877	30.1	3	1,992,024	55.1	43	409,631	1
Colorado	10.4	34	38,313	8.2	41	245,926	52.7	45	28,842	27
Connecticut	9.2	45	40,109	11.4	31	204,146	58.2	41	20,404	33
Delaware	8.5	47	12,530	14.9	23	61,586	73.0	30	8,659	44
District of Columbia	18.3	1	41,980	76.3	1	88,799	161.3	2	12,612	38
Florida	11.8	24	107,210	6.0	48	1,381,804	77.7	28	82,862	9
Georgia	13.1	17	90,123	9.9	34	921,427	101.6	17	58,769	11
Hawaii	8.8	46	20,307	15.9	19	93,548	73.4	29	10,026	43
Idaho	10.0	38	3,311	2.3	50	93,441	65.4	37	8,554	45
Illinois	12.1	21	96,336	7.5	45	1,158,271	90.7	21	91,371	7
Indiana	11.4	29	124,777	19.9	9	556,285	88.7	22	45,101	17
Iowa	10.4	34	42,884	14.5	24	206,696	69.7	34	20,858	31
Kansas	11.6	26	46,026	16.8	15	177,782	64.8	38	15,350	36
Kentucky	15.6	7	75,005	18.0	13	570,277	136.6	5	31,418	26
Louisiana	17.4	4	37,491	8.3	40	807,896	178.6	1	47,265	15
Maine	11.9	23	25,509	19.3	10	152,910	115.7	14	11,696	40
Maryland	9.4	43	54,412	9.7	35	288,943	51.6	46	34,849	22
Massachusetts	9.9	39	103,906	16.2	18	368,122	57.5	42	35,887	21
Michigan	12.2	20	214,547	21.2	7	1,047,594	103.5	16	93,584	6
Minnesota	7.5	50	72,968	14.2	25	259,937	50.6	47	48,813	13
Mississippi	18.3	1	34,695	11.9	29	391,485	134.0	7	32,513	23
Missouri	11.5	28	96,611	16.7	17	766,425	132.1	8	31,728	24
Montana	14.4	12	12,224	13.1	26	80,870	86.4	24	10,416	42
Nebraska	9.6	40	26,430	15.0	21	117,415	66.8	35	16,431	34
Nevada	10.8	32	15,601	6.5	47	121,707	50.4	48	12,074	39
New Hampshire	5.6	51	14,150	10.8	32	52,310	39.9	51	5,395	49
New Jersey	7.8	49	109,202	12.5	27	392,416	45.0	50	88,129	8
New Mexico	17.5	3	45,314	23.5	5	240,637	124.8	9	23,532	29
New York	14.6	11	323,134	16.8	14	1,754,861	91.1	20	235,853	2
North Carolina	14.4	12	67,644	7.8	44	799,747	92.1	19	64,578	10
North Dakota	10.2	36	7,373	11.6	30	42,204	66.3	36	8,254	47
Ohio	11.6	26	179,422	15.7	20	1,007,172	87.9	23	158,029	4
Oklahoma	13.1	17	27,876	7.9	42	424,402	119.6	12	42,765	18
Oregon	12.1	21	44,707	12.3	28	429,358	117.9	13	53,852	12
Pennsylvania	11.0	31	253,352	20.4	8	1,042,809	83.9	25	138,740	5
Rhode Island	11.7	25	27,101	25.2	4	76,085	70.7	33	7,601	48
South Carolina	14.2	15	36,069	8.5	38	521,125	122.5	11	22,283	30
South Dakota	12.7	19	6,065	7.8	43	56,095	72.3	32	10,448	41
Tennessee	15.0	10	186,025	31.2	2	849,703	142.5	4	37,439	20
Texas	16.5	5	201,365	8.8	37	2,441,975	106.8	15	159,363	3
Utah	9.4	43	22,758	9.2	36	133,263	54.0	44	20,572	32
Vermont	8.0	48	11,466	18.4	11	45,218	72.6	31	13,737	37
Virginia	9.5	42	28,241	3.7	49	488,481	64.6	39	3,422	51
Washington	11.4	29	136,882	21.8	6	508,472	80.9	27	46,069	16
West Virginia	15.6	7	27,218	15.0	22	262,442	144.4	3	15,459	35
Wisconsin	10.8	32	46,609	8.4	39	345,748	62.5	40	47,350	14
Wyoming	10.1	37	548	1.1	51	25,482	50.0	49	5,280	50

Note: Rank is high to low. When states share the same rank, the next lower rank is omitted.

Sources:

1. U.S. Census Bureau, "Poverty In the United States: 2005," Current Population Survey, August 2006.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, "Total Number of Recipients for Fiscal Year 2005," June 2005. Welfare reform replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) as of July 1, 1997. National total includes 53,728 recipients in U.S. territories (41,543 in Puerto Rico). Rates calculated by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget using Census Bureau 2005 population estimates.
3. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, "Food Stamp Program: Average Monthly Participation," August 2006. Rates calculated by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget using Census Bureau 2005 population estimates.
4. U.S. Department of Commerce, "Federal Aid to States for Fiscal Year 2004," January 2006.

