**CHILD WELL-BEING LEARNING MODULE**

Adapted from Kids Count in the Classroom[[1]](#endnote-1)

In this Project, you will be examining data from the Vital Signs report produced annually by the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators (BNIA) alliance here at the University of Baltimore to assess the trends in children’s physical, social and economic health in Baltimore City. You will then answer the four questions in the Assignment section.

**Introduction**

To begin we will look at the following indicators in Vital Signs:

* Percent of Households Earning Less than $25,000 (Demographics)
* Violent Crime Rate per 1,000 Residents (Safety)
* Percentage of Students Suspended or Expelled During School Year (Education)
* Percentage of Students Receiving Free or Reduced Meals (Education)
* Percentage of 5th grade students passing MSA Math (Education)
* Percentage of 5th grade student passing MSA Reading (Education)
* Percentage of Students Passing H.S.A. English (Education)
* High School Dropout/Withdrawal Rate (Education)
* Teen Birth Rate (Health)
* Percent of Births with a Satisfactory Birth Weight (Health)
* Percent of Births Where the Mother Received Early Prenatal Care (First Trimester) (Health)
* Rate of Dirty Streets and Alleys Reports per 1,000 Residents (Environment)

**Step 1**

Visit the [Indicator Definitions & Rankings](http://bniajfi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/VS12-Indicator-Definitions-and-Rankings.pdf) page online. For each indicator consider the following questions:

* What does this indicator measure?
* What is the source of the data and how does this affect the measurement?
* What are the strengths and limitations of this indicator?

Then select four indicators that you will compare in the following step.

**Step 2**

Open the Child\_WellBeing Excel workbook, and go to the worksheet titled “TrendTool”. Find the drop down list for the Community Statistical Areas (CSA), located in the top of the worksheet, and select a CSA. Next, select the four indicators that you chose in Step 1, using the drop-down lists on the left of the table.

**Assignment**

Answer the following questions for three different CSAs, using the same indicators.

1. How does each indicator trends compare to the Baltimore average? How do they compare with each other? Do they trend in the same direction? Does there seem to be a correlation between certain indicators? Are there years or data points that stand out?
2. Where are the greatest differences and similarities? What could explain these similarities or differences? Underlying issues? Policies? Historical issues?
3. How should this data inform policy makers interested in improving children’s well-being in the city?
4. What limitations does this analysis present? What additional information would you need to make this analysis more relevant?

**REFERENCES**

1. Social Science Data Analysis Network. “Kids Count in the Classroom-Status of Children.” Developed by Elizabeth Osborn. Accessed August 1, 2014 from <http://www.ssdan.net/content/course-modules-and-exercises>. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)