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Press Release

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Zero
Population
Growth

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CHILDREN'S STRESS INDEX RATES COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE **U.S. Population Pressures Erode Children's Well-Being**

Washington, D.C. -- The well-being of American children is jeopardized by continued U.S. population growth and overconsumption, according to an extensive new study released today by the nonprofit organization Zero Population Growth (ZPG).

The study, the *Children's Stress Index*, ranks a total of 828 U.S. cities, counties and metropolitan areas using 70 population-related social, economic and environmental indicators that affect the lives of children. These indicators are grouped into 10 major categories: population change and crowding; family economics; community economics; maternal and child health; education; crime; air quality; water resources; toxic releases and sewage; and energy and transportation. Each location received a score from 1 (worst) to 10 (best) for each category; these scores were then combined to give each area a final score on a scale of 1 to 100.

The best- and worst-rated locations are as follows:

	<u>Metro Area</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>County</u>
BEST:	Burlington, VT	Overland Park, KS	Chittenden County, VT
	Fargo-Moorhead, ND-MN	Ann Arbor, MI	Eaton County, MI
	Madison, WI	Lincoln, NE	Clay County, MN
WORST:	Houston, TX	Newark, NJ	Harris County, TX
	Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	Gary, IN	Los Angeles County, CA
	Miami-Hialeah, FL	Cleveland, OH	Dade County, FL

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"The results of the *Index* reflect the reality of the U.S. population problem and its impact on children," comments ZPG executive director Susan Weber. "The *Index* findings show that, in general, the larger the area's population, the greater the stress on its youngest residents. Bigger isn't always better; in fact, it's almost always worse for children."

For instance, the average population of the 25 worst-rated metropolitan areas exceeds 1.8 million -- more than six times the average population of the 25 best-rated areas. Common factors contributing to their poor scores include large population gains and overcrowded living conditions; high rates of unemployment, poverty, and crime; stressed educational and public health infrastructures; and often alarming levels of environmental degradation.

Weber explains that population pressures are often ignored in this country, even though they are intricately linked with the economy, education, health care, a clean environment and children's well-being. By the time a child born today reaches age 60, the nation's population, currently at 257 million, is projected to increase by more than 50 percent -- the equivalent of adding 103 cities the size of New Orleans.

"But our growing numbers are just part of the population equation," adds Weber. "Americans' consumption levels play a large role, too. We produce more waste and consume more natural resources than any other nation. This at a time when communities nationwide are frantically searching for new areas to dispose of their waste, for new sources of water, for new methods to control air pollution and traffic congestion, and for new ways to balance development with environmental quality."

Areas Ranked by Environmental, Geographic and Population Size Factors

Most of the *Index*'s best-rated metro areas -- 17 of the top 25 -- are in the Midwest and New England. The highest-scoring areas tend to be relatively small, with stable populations and low densities. They also share strong ratings for community and family economics; low rates of infant and child mortality; above-average educational and public health infrastructures; and low levels of pollution.

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The worst-rated areas are most often found in the southern and western regions of the United States. In fact, 23 of the *Index*'s 25 lowest-scoring metro areas are located in the Sun Belt, primarily in the states of California, Texas and Florida.

The *Index* also lists the 50 best and worst metro areas on the environment, using the average of each area's scores for the four environmental categories: air quality, water resources, toxic releases and sewage, and energy and transportation. On these environmental measures, the top three metro areas are Jacksonville, NC; Burlington, VT; and Tuscaloosa, AL. The bottom three metro areas are Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA; Houston, TX; and Newark, NJ.

Weber explains that four of the *Index*'s 10 groups of indicators rate environmental conditions because "a healthy environment is key for healthy kids." She notes that children spend more time outdoors, breathe more air per pound of body weight, and have fewer detoxifying enzymes than adults. And the *Index* shows high levels of environmental stress across the nation, particularly in heavily populated areas: the average population of the 50 worst-rated metro areas for environmental stress is nearly seven times bigger than the average of the 50 best.

Although the ZPG report found a strong correlation between the size of the community and "children's stress," there were some exceptions. For instance, the San Francisco Bay area made the list of the 25 best-rated metro areas. And the Galveston-Texas City metropolitan area -- relatively small with a population of just over 200,000 -- rated among the 25 worst.

Weber urges the Clinton/Gore administration to consider the broad-ranging impacts of population growth. "We need to protect our children and their future by planning for people now. At this point our government is ill-prepared to do so. Not only do we not have a national population policy, we also do not have the capacity to anticipate and avert serious problems generated by population pressures on land, water, air and natural resources, as well as on public health and the economy."

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Concern for America's children goes beyond the realm of compassion or economic and political competitiveness, comments Weber: "It incorporates a vision of a quality future, with an understanding of the broad range of consequences associated with continued population growth. Safe, healthy communities are getting harder and harder to find. Addressing overpopulation -- both our numbers and our consumption -- may be critical to ensuring a high quality of life for present and succeeding generations."

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(Children's Stress Index Rankings Attached)

Copies of ZPG's *Children's Stress Index* are available for \$7.50 each (plus \$1.50 postage and handling) from ZPG, 1400 16th St. NW, Suite 320, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 332-2200.

The *Children's Stress Index* is the fourth in a series of "stress tests" from ZPG. In 1985 and 1988, the *Urban Stress Test* rated American cities on 11 population-related indicators. And in 1991, the *Environmental Stress Index* rated American cities on five environmental indicators.

Zero Population Growth (ZPG) is the nation's largest grassroots organization concerned with the environmental, social and economic impacts of overpopulation, both in the United States and worldwide. ZPG advocates voluntary population stabilization through education and empowerment of women, improved public health, and greater access to safe and effective contraceptives and family planning programs.

TOP and BOTTOM *CHILDREN'S STRESS INDEX* SCORES (100 = best)

The *Children's Stress Index*, published by Zero Population Growth (ZPG), ranks a total of 828 cities, counties and metropolitan areas using 70 indicators that affect the lives of children, and that are related to population factors. These indicators are grouped into 10 major categories: population change and crowding; family economics; community economics; maternal and child health; education; crime; air quality; water resources; toxic releases and sewage; and energy and transportation. Each location received a score from 10 (best) to 1 (worst) for each category; these scores were then combined to give each area a final score on a scale of 1 to 100.

Rank	BEST 25 METRO AREAS	Total Pop.	Score	Rank	WORST 25 METRO AREAS	Total Pop.	Score
1	Burlington, VT	131,000	74.1	239	Houston, TX	3,302,000	32.0
2	Fargo-Moorhead, ND-MN	153,000	67.2	238	Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	8,863,000	32.1
3	Madison, WI	367,000	65.0	237	Miami-Hialeah, FL	1,937,000	33.2
4	Lincoln, NE	214,000	64.8	236	El Paso, TX	592,000	33.3
5	Stamford, CT	203,000	63.5	235	Fresno, CA	667,000	34.9
6	Champaign-Urbana, IL	173,000	62.4	234	Baton Rouge, LA	528,000	34.9
7	Sioux Falls, SD	124,000	62.0	233	Stockton, CA	481,000	35.1
8	Salem-Gloucester, MA	264,000	61.9	232	Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	2,589,000	35.2
9	Boulder-Longmont, CO	225,000	61.7	231	Visalia-Porterville, CA	312,000	36.1
10	Ann Arbor, MI	283,000	61.5	230	Jacksonville, FL	907,000	36.4
11	Poughkeepsie, NY	259,000	61.2	229	Bakersfield, CA	543,000	36.4
12	New London-Norwich, CT-RI	267,000	61.2	228	Lakeland-Winterhaven, FL	405,000	36.6
13	Fort Collins, CO	186,000	61.0	227	New Orleans, LA	1,239,000	36.8
14	Jacksonville, NC	150,000	60.9	226	McAllen-Edinburg, TX	384,000	37.0
15	Springfield, IL	190,000	60.8	225	New York, NY	8,547,000	37.3
16	Portsmouth-Dover, NH-ME	224,000	60.7	224	Galveston-Texas City, TX	217,000	37.5
17	St. Cloud, MN	191,000	60.6	223	Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL	2,068,000	37.7
18	Topeka, KS	161,000	60.3	222	Dallas, TX	2,553,000	37.7
19	Danbury, CT	188,000	60.2	221	Fort Pierce, FL	251,000	38.1
20	Lansing-East Lansing, MI	433,000	60.2	220	Gary-Hammond, IN	605,000	38.3
21	Huntsville, AL	239,000	60.2	219	Ocala, FL	195,000	38.9
22	Santa Rosa-Petaluma, CA	388,000	60.1	218	San Antonio, TX	1,302,000	39.0
23	Cedar Rapids, IA	169,000	59.8	217	Mobile, AL	477,000	39.1
24	Roanoke, VA	224,000	59.6	216	Chicago, IL	6,070,000	39.2
25	San Francisco, CA	1,604,000	59.3	215	Brownsville-Harlingen, TX	260,000	39.3

Rank	BEST 25 CITIES	Total Pop.	Score	Rank	WORST 25 CITIES	Total Pop.	Score
1	Overland Park, KS	112,000	69.4	195	Newark, NJ	275,000	27.4
2	Ann Arbor, MI	110,000	68.1	194	Gary, IN	117,000	29.1
3	Lincoln, NE	192,000	66.4	193	Cleveland, OH	506,000	29.4
4	Madison, WI	191,000	66.0	192	Chicago, IL	2,784,000	29.6
5	Stamford, CT	108,000	64.5	191	Detroit, MI	1,028,000	30.5
6	Lakewood, CO	126,000	64.1	190	Los Angeles, CA	3,485,000	31.4
7	Concord, CA	111,000	64.0	189	Miami, FL	359,000	32.5
8	Huntsville, AL	160,000	63.6	188	East Los Angeles, CA	126,000	33.3
9	Honolulu, HI	365,000	63.3	187	Houston, TX	1,631,000	33.3
10	Alexandria, VA	111,000	63.1	186	Fresno, CA	354,000	33.7
11	Eugene, OR	113,000	63.0	185	Pomona, CA	132,000	33.7
12	Berkeley, CA	103,000	62.7	184	Tampa, FL	280,000	34.0
13	Livonia, MI	101,000	61.8	183	Philadelphia, PA	1,586,000	34.2
14	Sterling Heights, MI	118,000	61.2	182	Moreno Valley, CA	119,000	34.4
15	Fremont, CA	173,000	61.2	181	El Paso, TX	515,000	35.0
16	Santa Rosa, CA	113,000	61.0	180	Stockton, CA	211,000	35.2
17	Virginia Beach, VA	393,000	60.0	179	Sacramento, CA	369,000	35.6
18	Sunnyvale, CA	117,000	59.9	178	San Bernardino, CA	164,000	35.9
19	Hampton, VA	134,000	59.8	177	St. Louis, MO	397,000	36.2
20	Cedar Rapids, IA	109,000	59.5	176	Hialeah, FL	188,000	36.3
21	Albany, NY	101,000	59.1	175	Dallas, TX	1,007,000	36.3
22	Huntington Beach, CA	182,000	58.9	174	El Monte, CA	106,000	36.6
23	Aurora, CO	222,000	58.7	173	Fort Worth, TX	448,000	36.7
24	Lexington, KY	225,000	58.5	172	Phoenix, AZ	983,000	36.8
25	Topeka, KS	120,000	58.4	171	New York, NY	7,323,000	36.9

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<u>Rank</u>	<u>BEST 25 COUNTIES</u>	<u>Total Pop.</u>	<u>Score</u>
1	Chittenden County, VT	125,000	74.8
2	Eaton County, MI	93,000	71.0
3	Clay County, MN	50,000	70.8
4	Marin County, CA	230,000	70.4
5	Madison County, NY	69,000	70.2
6	Putnam County, NY	84,000	70.0
7	Ontario County, NY	95,000	69.8
8	Ozaukee County, WI	73,000	69.6
9	Roanoke County, VA	79,000	69.4
10	Clinton County, MI	58,000	69.3
11	Tolland County, CT	107,000	69.1
12	Sarpy County, NE	103,000	68.6
13	Fayette County, GA	62,000	68.5
14	Cass County, ND	103,000	68.1
15	Tioga County, NY	52,000	67.8
16	St. Croix County, WI	50,000	67.5
17	Herkimer County, NY	66,000	67.4
18	Montgomery County, NY	52,000	67.3
19	Douglas County, CO	60,000	66.8
20	Leavenworth County, KS	64,000	66.8
21	Fairfax County, VA	819,000	66.5
22	Cumberland County, PA	195,000	66.3
23	Hamilton County, IN	109,000	66.2
24	Schenectady County, NY	149,000	66.2
25	Stafford County, VA	61,000	66.0

<u>Rank</u>	<u>WORST 25 COUNTIES</u>	<u>Total Pop.</u>	<u>Score</u>
493	Harris County, TX	2,818,000	32.0
492	Los Angeles County, CA	8,863,000	32.1
491	Dade County, FL	1,937,000	33.2
490	El Paso County, TX	592,000	33.3
489	Bronx Borough, NY	1,204,000	33.6
488	Wayne County, MI	2,112,000	34.1
487	Philadelphia County, PA	1,586,000	34.2
486	Fresno County, CA	667,000	34.9
485	San Joaquin County, CA	481,000	35.1
484	Hillsborough County, FL	834,000	35.4
483	Brooklyn Borough, NY	2,301,000	35.5
482	Lake County, IN	476,000	35.8
481	Essex County, NJ	778,000	36.1
480	Tulare County, CA	312,000	36.1
479	Kern County, CA	543,000	36.4
478	Cook County, IL	5,105,000	36.5
477	Polk County, FL	405,000	36.6
476	Dallas County, TX	1,853,000	37.0
475	Hidalgo County, TX	384,000	37.0
474	Duval County, FL	673,000	37.1
473	Riverside County, CA	1,170,000	37.2
472	Galveston County, TX	217,000	37.5
471	San Bernardino County, CA	1,418,000	37.6
470	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA	380,000	38.2
469	St. Lucie County, FL	150,000	38.3

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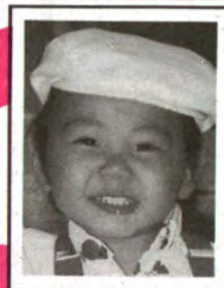
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The ZPG R

Vol. 25, No. 2/3

Inside:
**CHILDREN'S
STRESS
INDEX**
More than 800 communities rated!



Zero
Population
Growth

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May 1993



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(24pp.)

ZPG... For Earth's Sake

Guide to Publications Membership
& Action

ZPG...For Earth's Sake

**Guide To
Publications
Membership
and Action**



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The ZPG Catalog of Population Teaching Materials



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The ZPG Reporter

Vol. 24, No. 5

November 1992

A Change of Congressional Scenery

This January, the United States Congress will see more new faces than any other Congress since 1932. So far this year, seven Senators and 52 Representatives have announced their retirements, 13 House members are seeking other offices, and one Senator and 19 Representatives have been defeated in primary elections. In addition, Representatives Walter Jones (D-NC) and Ted Weiss (D-NY) and Senator Quentin Burdick (D-ND) passed away in early September. This brings the number of new Congressional representatives to a *minimum* of 94.

Several factors account for this election's historic turnover. The 1990 Census has reshuffled the district map, creating 17 open House seats and prompting many redistricted members to resign rather than acquaint themselves with new constituents. In addition, the check-kiting scandal has brought early retirement for many long-term members.

As never before, Representatives themselves are frustrated with a log-



There are no limits to growth.
Environmentalism is a socialist plot.



We have already gone
beyond our limits.

Patriotic Games

Anti-Environment, Anti-Choice Groups Make Their Moves

The unexpected twists and turns encountered along the campaign trail of 1992 have blown open the political process unlike any other election year in recent history. As November approaches, several road blocks are hindering progress toward stopping overpopulation. Population advocates are well served by an understanding of their formidable opponents, namely the anti-choice and anti-environmental "User" groups (deceptively termed the "Wise Use" movement by its participants).

Both these groups are perpetrating effective misinformation campaigns: Users pit jobs

BAN ABORTION

The Devil made you do it.

Save the Earth.
One Earth
5.4 Billion People



Motherhood
by Choice.

*Be fruitful
and multiply.*



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The ZPG Reporter

Vol. 24, No. 3

July 1992



WHEN THE 20TH CENTURY BEGAN, ONLY ONE IN 10 PEOPLE LIVED IN URBAN AREAS.

GATEWAY TO THE FUTURE



IN THE COMING CENTURY, MORE PEOPLE ARE PROJECTED TO DWELL IN CITIES THAN LIVE ON THE ENTIRE PLANET TODAY.

BUILDING A NEW URBAN ORDER

When Dr. Paul Ehrlich described contemporary demographic trends as "the population infrastructures, pollution and conspicuous human suffering. The problems are most acute for more

Says Robert McNamara, a former president of the World Bank: "The rapid population growth that has produced Third World

and resources than their rural counterparts, and suburban dwellers use even more. The needs and demands of these fast-growing

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SPECIAL



REPORT

ABORTION IN AMERICA



Abortion is one of the most divisive issues in America today. Its intimate connection to moral, religious and social convictions makes it a deeply personal issue, while the battle over its legality also forces it into the public arena.

Abortion is a birth control method of last resort for one very simple reason: No method of contraception, aside from abstinence, is 100 percent effective, affordable and available. Regardless of one's personal thoughts on the matter, it is a fact that many women with unwanted pregnancies will turn to abortion, whether legal or illegal.

The decision to abort is always a difficult one that no woman takes lightly. Factors affecting this decision vary infinitely, making it impossible to generalize about when abortion is or is not an appropriate choice. The person best equipped to make this often agonizing choice is the pregnant woman herself.

Legal, safe abortion can alleviate the physical and emotional damage that often accompanies unwanted pregnancies, including those resulting from rape or incest. In many cases, legal abortion saves lives. It also helps ensure that every child is a wanted child whose parents can provide the emotional and financial support necessary to nurture a happy, healthy and productive individual.

Some Facts About Abortion

- Abortion is one of the most frequently performed and safest surgical procedures in America. The risk of death from a penicillin injection is almost twice as great as from legal abortion, and an appendectomy is 100 times riskier than legal abortion.
- In the United States, a woman giving birth is 11 times more likely to die than a woman having a safe, legal abortion.
- The United States has one of the highest unintended pregnancy and abortion rates of all developed nations. Funding cuts for low-income family planning services, fewer contraceptive choices than are available in many developing nations, and an increasing focus on abstinence-based sex education means birth control use is less prevalent and less effective in the United States than in most other industrialized nations. More than 50 percent of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended, and approximately one-half of those—or 1.6 million—are terminated through abortion each year.

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Planning the Ideal Family



the small
family option

A Special Report Prepared by Zero Population Growth