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Connecticut Tops Well-Being Survey: 5 Most Interesting Findings

Nov 10, 2010 – 11:18 AM

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Steven Hoffer
Contributor

(Nov. 10) -- To achieve optimum "well being," settle down in Connecticut or Massachusetts.

The "Constitution State" and the "Bay State" top the charts when it comes to the good life in the United States, according to the [American Human Development Project](#). The study, released today by Brooklyn-based nonprofit Social Science Research Council, draws on official government data measuring factors that researchers believe are the "three basic building blocks of a good life": health, education and income.

Researchers also accounted for the [various risks](#) associated with each of these factors, such as low birth weight, poor preschool enrollment rates and elderly poverty.

Despite topping the index of metropolitan regions, the [Washington, D.C., area](#) is home to one of the nation's widest socioeconomic rifts between the city's affluent white and Asian-American population and its African-American communities. For instance, the capital region offers the longest life expectancy for white residents in any state, 83.1 years. But it also has the shortest life expectancy for African-Americans in any state, at 71 years.

The D.C. case study highlights a common disparity in wealth and well-being in individual cities across America, one of the overriding themes found in the research.

The Washington region is followed by greater Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Miami, Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston on the well-being index.

Below are five of the most interesting findings from the study.

1. With an 87.3-year life expectancy, Asian-Americans have the longest average lifespan of any ethnic or racial group in the U.S. today.
2. Washington, D.C., Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland and New Jersey scored highest on the [education index](#) with over one in three adults earning a bachelor's degree. One in five adults holds a bachelor's degree in Alabama, Nevada, Louisiana, West Virginia and Arkansas, the bottom five states on the education index.

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3. While the Northeast boasts a high concentration of top education rankings, Wyoming, Alaska, Minnesota, Montana and New Hampshire are the five states with the highest high school graduation rates, all topping 90 percent.

4. Money is not the sole determinant of well-being. Residents in Oregon and Texas earn approximately \$27,300, yet Oregonians top Lone Star state residents by nearly three quarters of a year in life expectancy and over 10 percent in high school graduation rates. Utah is 39th in national earnings, yet the state holds the nation's 10th highest life expectancy.

5. On average, whites and Asian-Americans earn more money than African-Americans, Latinos and Native Americans in every state.

Read more about the American Human Development Project [here](#).

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