



Children In the States

THE UNITED STATES

May 6, 2014

Child Population

73,728,088 children lived in the United States in 2012; 47.2 percent were children of color.

- 52.8 percent were White
- 23.9 percent were Hispanic
- 13.9 percent were Black
- 4.6 percent were Asian
- 3.9 percent were two or more races
- 0.9 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- 0.2 percent were Pacific Islander

Child Poverty

More than 1 in 5 (21.8 percent) of the United States' children were poor in 2012, a total of 16,073,000 children.¹

- Nearly 1 in 10 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. Nearly 1 in 4 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of these poor children were extremely poor.

Children of color in the United States are disproportionately poor.

- Nearly 2 in 5 Black children, 1 in 3 Hispanic children, and more than 1 in 3 American Indian/Native Alaskan children were poor in 2012, compared to nearly 1 in 7 White children.

Child Hunger and Homelessness

Child poverty in the United States leads to unacceptable child homelessness and hunger.

- More than 1,162,000 United States public school students were homeless in 2011-2012, 73 percent more than before the recession.
- In 2014, nearly 3 full-time minimum-wage jobs are necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in the United States and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- More than 1 in 5 children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2012.
- More than 1 in 4 United States children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2011.
- Only 10.9 percent of United States children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year participated in the Summer Food Service Program.

Child Health

Although the majority of the United States's children have access to health coverage, that does not guarantee enrollment in coverage, jeopardizing their education and their future.

- In 2011, 87.2 percent of eligible children participated in Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2012, a total of 36,305,242 United States children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medicaid, and 8,148,397 in CHIP.
- More than 5,260,000 United States children ages 0-17 (7.2 percent) were uninsured in 2012.

¹ A family of four was poor if it was living on less than \$23,492 a year, \$1,958 a month, \$452 a week and \$64 a day, and extremely poor if living on less than \$11,746 a year, \$979 a month, \$226 a week and \$32 a day.

- In 2011, 4,001,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Medicaid or CHIP but not enrolled.

Early Childhood and Education

Lack of early childhood investments deprives children of critical supports in the early years and reduces school readiness.

- In 2011, the average annual cost of center-based child care for a 4-year-old was \$7,705 – 100 percent of the cost of in-state college tuition.
- Less than half of the United States' 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool in 2009-2011.

the United States's schools fail to educate all children, closing off a crucial pathway out of poverty.

- In 2013, 66 percent of the United States' fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 59 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
 - 83 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 82 percent could not compute.
 - 81 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 74 percent could not compute.
- More than 4 in 5 United States public high school students graduated on time in 2010. 68 percent of Black students and 76 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 85 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2009-2010 school year 7.4 percent of United States public school students received at least one out-of-school suspension. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 17.3 percent and 7.3 percent, respectively.

Children Facing Special Risks

Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.

- In the United States, 341,391 children were abused or neglected in 2012 – 9.2 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2012 there were 399,546 United States children in foster care.

Too many the United States children are involved in the juvenile justice system.

- 1,642,600 children were arrested in the United States in 2010– a rate of 4,889 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 61,423 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 40 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 23 percent were Hispanic, and 32 percent were White. 1,790 United States children were in adult jails in 2011.
- The United States spent 17.3 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in 2009-2010.

A total of 2,694 children and teens were killed by guns in the United States in 2010—a rate of 3.2 out of 100,000 children and teens.

For sources please visit www.childrensdefense.org/cits