



# Children in the States

# CONNECTICUT

September 2015

## Child Population

**775,430 children lived in Connecticut in 2014; 42 percent were children of color.**

- 58 percent were White
- 22 percent were Hispanic
- 11 percent were Black
- 5 percent were Asian
- 4 percent were two or more races
- <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

## Child Poverty

**More than 1 in 7 (14.9 percent) of Connecticut's children were poor in 2014, a total of 113,712 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Connecticut ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 14 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. 1 in 6 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

**Children of color in Connecticut are disproportionately poor.**

- More than 3 in 10 Black children and more than 1 in 3 Hispanic children were poor in 2014, compared to 1 in 18 White children.

## Child Hunger and Homelessness

**Child poverty in Connecticut leads to unacceptable child homelessness and hunger.**

- More than 2,800 Connecticut public school students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year.
- In 2014, nearly 3 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in Connecticut and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- 19 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 30 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Connecticut ranked 8<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 22<sup>nd</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 20 percent of Connecticut children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- 73 percent of Connecticut children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Connecticut 4<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

## Child Health

**Although the majority of Connecticut's children have access to health coverage, that does not guarantee enrollment in coverage or access to care, which can jeopardize their education and their future.**

- In FY2013, 92.6 percent of eligible children participated in Connecticut Medical Assistance Program or HUSKY Program, Connecticut's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of

<sup>1</sup> A family of four was poor if it was living on less than \$23,834 a year, \$1,986 a month, \$458 a week and \$65 a day, and extremely poor if living on less than \$11,917 a year, \$993 a month, \$229 a week and \$33 a day.

<sup>2</sup> The state ranked 1<sup>st</sup> is the best for children for that outcome and the state ranked 50<sup>th</sup> is the worst for children.

325,414 Connecticut children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Connecticut Medical Assistance Program, and 18,999 in HUSKY Program.

- Nearly 34,000 Connecticut children ages 0-17 (4.3 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 9<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of uninsured children among states.
- In 2012, 19,000 children ages 0-18 were eligible for Connecticut Medical Assistance Program or HUSKY Program 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 2013, the average annual cost of center-based child care for an infant was \$13,241 – 29.7 percent more than the average in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Connecticut.
- Connecticut did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 63 percent of Connecticut's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 56 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Connecticut's state-funded preschool program met 6 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

### **Connecticut's schools fail to educate all children, closing off a crucial pathway out of poverty.**

- In 2013, 57 percent of Connecticut's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 55 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 85 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 86 percent could not compute.
  - 80 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 81 percent could not compute.
- 86 percent of Connecticut public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Connecticut 12<sup>th</sup> among states. 73 percent of Black students and 74 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 90 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 7 percent of Connecticut public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Connecticut 8<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 17 percent and 13 percent, respectively.

## **Children Facing Special Risks**

### **Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.**

- In Connecticut, 7,287 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 9.3 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 4,486 Connecticut children in foster care.

### **Too many Connecticut children are involved in the juvenile justice system.**

- 11,918 children were arrested in Connecticut in 2012 – a rate of 3,116 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 252 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 46 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 30 percent were Hispanic, and 20 percent were White.
- 88 Connecticut children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Connecticut spent 2.2 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### **Connecticut ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 41 states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 10 children and teens were killed by guns in Connecticut in 2013 – a rate of 1.1\* out of 100,000 children and teens.

For sources please visit [www.childrensdefense.org/cits](http://www.childrensdefense.org/cits)

\*Rate is unreliable because it is based on fewer than 20 deaths.