



# Children in the States

## FLORIDA

September 2015

### Child Population

**4,053,584 children lived in Florida in 2014; 56 percent were children of color.**

- 44 percent were White
- 29 percent were Hispanic
- 20 percent were Black
- 3 percent were Asian
- 4 percent were two or more races
- <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

### Child Poverty

**Nearly 1 in 4 (23.8 percent) of Florida's children were poor in 2014, a total of 968,465 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Florida ranked 37<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- More than 1 in 10 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. More than 1 in 4 children under age 6 were poor; more than 2 in 5 of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

- Nearly 2 in 5 Black children, nearly 3 in 10 Hispanic children, and more than 1 in 4 American Indian/Alaska Native children were poor in 2014, compared to more than 1 in 7 White children.

### Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- Nearly 70,000 Florida public school students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year.
- In 2014, more than 2 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in Florida and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- Nearly 27 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 28 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Florida ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 13<sup>th</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- More than 33 percent of Florida children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- Nearly 85 percent of Florida children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Florida 26<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

### Child Health

**Although the majority of Florida'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, 84.7 percent of eligible children participated in Medicaid or KidCare, Florida's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 2,119,324 Florida children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medicaid, and 473,415 in KidCare.
- More than 445,000 Florida children ages 0-17 (11.1 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 5<sup>th</sup> highest rate of uninsured children among states.

<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.

- In 2012, 270,000 children ages 0-18 were eligible for Medicaid or KidCare 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 \$8,376 – 32.2 percent more than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Florida.
- Florida had 37,867 children on a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 49 percent of Florida's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 41 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Florida's state-funded preschool program met 3 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 61 percent of Florida's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 59 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 80 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 80 percent could not compute.
  - 64 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 64 percent could not compute.
- 75 percent of Florida public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Florida 43<sup>rd</sup> among states. 66 percent of Black students and 78 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 77 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 19 percent of Florida public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Florida 48<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 31 percent and 19 percent, respectively.

### **Children Facing Special Risks**

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

- In Florida, 48,457 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 12 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 18,076 Florida children in foster care.

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

- 3,744 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 56 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 5 percent were Hispanic, and 38 percent were White.
- 144 Florida children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Florida spent 1.9 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

#### **Florida ranked 19<sup>th</sup> out of 41 states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 138 children and teens were killed by guns in Florida in 2013 – a rate of 3.1 out of 100,000 children and teens.

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