



Children in the States

GEORGIA

September 2015

Child Population

2,493,282 children lived in Georgia in 2014; 54 percent were children of color.

- 46 percent were White
- 14 percent were Hispanic
- 34 percent were Black
- 4 percent were Asian
- 3 percent were two or more races
- <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

Child Poverty

More than 1 in 4 (26.3 percent) of Georgia's children were poor in 2014, a total of 645,855 children.¹

- Georgia ranked 44th in child poverty among states.²
- More than 1 in 9 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. Nearly 3 in 10 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

Children of color in Georgia are disproportionately poor.

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

Child Hunger and Homelessness

Child poverty in Georgia leads to unacceptable child homelessness and hunger.

- Nearly 37,000 Georgia 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 Georgia and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- More than 28 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. 35 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Georgia ranked 47th of 50 states in child food security and 42nd in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 35 percent of Georgia children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- Nearly 85 percent of Georgia children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Georgia 25th of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

Child Health

Although the majority of Georgia'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 2013, 85.2 percent of eligible children participated in Medicaid or PeachCare for Kids, Georgia's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 1,162,529 Georgia children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medicaid, and 269,906 in PeachCare for Kids.
- More than 238,000 Georgia children ages 0-17 (9.6 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 8th highest rate of uninsured children among states.

¹ 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.

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

- In 2012, 167,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Medicaid or PeachCare for Kids 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 \$7,025 – 10.2 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Georgia.
- Georgia did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 48 percent of Georgia's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 38 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Georgia's state-funded preschool program met 8 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 66 percent of Georgia's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 61 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.
 - 76 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 67 percent could not compute.
- 70 percent of Georgia public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Georgia 47th among states. 62 percent of Black students and 64 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 76 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 13 percent of Georgia public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Georgia 37th among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 21 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

Children Facing Special Risks

Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.

- In Georgia, 19,062 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 7.7 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 7,617 Georgia children in foster care.

Too many Georgia children are involved in the juvenile justice system.

- 42,477 children were arrested in Georgia in 2012 – a rate of 3,812 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 1,788 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 73 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 6 percent were Hispanic, and 19 percent were White.
- 92 Georgia children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Georgia spent 1.9 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

Georgia ranked 22nd out of 41 states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.

- A total of 91 children and teens were killed by guns in Georgia in 2013 – a rate of 3.3 out of 100,000 children and teens.

For sources please visit www.childrensdefense.org/cits