



# Children in the States

## KENTUCKY

September 2015

### Child Population

**1,012,614 children lived in Kentucky in 2014; 20 percent were children of color.**

- 80 percent were White
- 6 percent were Hispanic
- 9 percent were Black
- 2 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 4 (26.2 percent) of Kentucky's children were poor in 2014, a total of 259,751 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Kentucky ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 8 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; more than half of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

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

### Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- More than 34,000 Kentucky public school students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year.
- In 2014, nearly 2 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in Kentucky and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- Nearly 22 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 36 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Kentucky ranked 47<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 44<sup>th</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- More than 33 percent of Kentucky children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- Nearly 93 percent of Kentucky children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Kentucky 47<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

### Child Health

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

- In 2013, 90.1 percent of eligible children participated in Kentucky Medicaid or KCHIP, Kentucky's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 485,286 Kentucky children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Kentucky Medicaid, and 84,069 in KCHIP.
- Nearly 60,000 Kentucky children ages 0-17 (5.9 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 24<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, 43,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Kentucky Medicaid or KCHIP 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 a 4-year-old was \$6,194 – 28.7 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college.
- Kentucky did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 42 percent of Kentucky's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 36 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Kentucky's state-funded preschool program met 9 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 64 percent of Kentucky's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 59 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 85 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 81 percent could not compute.
  - 71 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 70 percent could not compute.
- 82 percent of Kentucky public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Kentucky 22<sup>nd</sup> among states. 78 percent of Black students and 89 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 82 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 9 percent of Kentucky public school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Kentucky 22<sup>nd</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 22 percent and 8 percent, respectively.

### **Children Facing Special Risks**

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

- In Kentucky, 20,005 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 19.7 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 7,324 Kentucky children in foster care.

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

- 7,143 children were arrested in Kentucky in 2012 – a rate of 1,569 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 747 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 33 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 4 percent were Hispanic, and 59 percent were White.
- No Kentucky children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Kentucky spent 3.5 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

#### **Kentucky ranked 20<sup>th</sup> out of 41 ranked states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 35 children and teens were killed by guns in Kentucky 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)