



Children in the States

MAINE

September 2015

Child Population

258,977 children lived in Maine in 2014; 11 percent were children of color.

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

Child Poverty

Nearly 1 in 5 (19.1 percent) of Maine's children were poor in 2014, a total of 48,007 children.¹

- Maine ranked 24th in child poverty among states.²
- 1 in 11 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. 1 in 4 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

Children of color in Maine are disproportionately poor.

- Nearly 1 in 2 Black children, more than 1 in 6 Hispanic children, and more than 3 in 5 American Indian/Native Alaskan children were poor in 2014, compared to more than 1 in 6 White children.

Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- More than 2,000 Maine 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 Maine and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- Nearly 23 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 3 in 10 children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Maine ranked 31st of 50 states in child food security and 21st in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 33 percent of Maine children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- More than 78 percent of Maine children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Maine 7th of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

Child Health

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

- In 2013, 94 percent of eligible children participated in MaineCare, Maine's combined Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 175,128 Maine children ages 0-18 were enrolled in MaineCare due to Medicaid funding, and an additional 29,712 thanks to CHIP funding.
- More than 15,000 Maine children ages 0-17 (5.9 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 24th 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, 7,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for MaineCare 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 \$9,360– 30 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college.
- Maine did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 42 percent of Maine’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.
- Maine’s state-funded preschool program only met 5 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 63 percent of Maine’s fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 53 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
 - 89 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 75 percent could not compute.
- 87 percent of Maine public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Maine 9th among states. 83 percent of Black students and 97 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 86 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 Maine public school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Maine 8th among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 12 percent and 7 percent, respectively.

Children Facing Special Risks

Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.

- In Maine, 3,820 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 14.6 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 1,821 Maine children in foster care.

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

- 5,492 children were arrested in Maine in 2012– a rate of 4,365 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 165 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 11 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 4 percent were Hispanic, and 82 percent were White.
- No Maine children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Maine spent 3.2 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

Fewer than 10 children and teens were killed by guns in Maine in 2013.

For sources please visit www.childrensdefense.org/cits