



# Children in the States

## MISSOURI

September 2015

### Child Population

**1,392,623 children lived in Missouri in 2014; 26 percent were children of color.**

- 74 percent were White
- 6 percent were Hispanic
- 14 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 5 (21.1 percent) of Missouri's children were poor in 2014, a total of 287,081 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Missouri ranked 28<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 10 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. Nearly 1 in 4 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

- More than 2 in 5 Black children and more than 3 in 10 Hispanic children were poor in 2014, compared to nearly 1 in 6 White children.

### Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- Nearly 27,000 Missouri 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 Missouri 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. More than 28 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Missouri ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 17<sup>th</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- More than 29 percent of Missouri children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- More than 89 percent of Missouri children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Missouri 39<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

### Child Health

**Although the majority of Missouri'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, 85.5 percent of eligible children participated in MO HealthNet or HealthNet for Kids, Missouri's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 559,265 Missouri children ages 0-18 were enrolled in MO HealthNet, and 92,918 in HealthNet for Kids.
- Nearly 98,000 Missouri children ages 0-17 (7 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 17<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, 88,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for MO HealthNet or HealthNet 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 \$8,736 – 7.9 percent more than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Missouri.
- Missouri did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 44 percent of Missouri'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.
- Missouri's state-funded preschool program met 7 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 65 percent of Missouri's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 61 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 87 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 87 percent could not compute.
  - 70 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 71 percent could not compute.
- 86 percent of Missouri public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Missouri 12<sup>th</sup> among states. 73 percent of Black students and 92 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 87 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 10 percent of Missouri public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Missouri 29<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 27 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

## **Children Facing Special Risks**

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

- In Missouri, 1,827 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 1.3 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 10,691 Missouri children in foster care.

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

- 32,300 children were arrested in Missouri in 2012 – a rate of 5,104 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 1,122 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 35 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 4 percent were Hispanic, and 57 percent were White.
- 13 Missouri children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Missouri spent 1.9 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### **Missouri ranked 28<sup>th</sup> out of 41 ranked states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 58 children and teens were killed by guns in Missouri in 2013 – a rate of 3.7 out of 100,000 children and teens.

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