



# Children in the States

## VIRGINIA

September 2015

### Child Population

**1,869,115 children lived in Virginia in 2014; 45 percent were children of color.**

- 55 percent were White
- 13 percent were Hispanic
- 20 percent were Black
- 6 percent were Asian
- 5 percent were two or more races
- <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

### Child Poverty

**Nearly 1 in 6 (15.8 percent) of Virginia's children were poor in 2014, a total of 291,260 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Virginia ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- More than 1 in 14 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. More than 1 in 6 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

- Nearly 1 in 3 Black children, more than 1 in 5 Hispanic children, and nearly 1 in 6 American Indian/Native Alaskan children were poor in 2014, compared to nearly 1 in 10 White children.

### Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- More than 18,000 Virginia public school students were homeless in 2012-2013.
- In 2014, nearly 3 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in Virginia and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- Nearly 17 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 30 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Virginia ranked 5<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 23<sup>rd</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 22 percent of Virginia children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- Nearly 84 percent of Virginia children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Virginia 22<sup>nd</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

### Child Health

**Although the majority of Virginia'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, 88.8 percent of eligible children participated in Medicaid or FAMIS, Virginia's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 648,173 Virginia children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medicaid, and 196,911 in FAMIS.
- More than 101,000 Virginia children ages 0-17 (5.4 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 16<sup>th</sup> lowest 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, 67,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Medicaid or FAMIS 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 \$10,028 – 3.3 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Virginia.
- Virginia had 7,786 children on a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 46 percent of Virginia's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 34 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enroll
- Virginia's state-funded preschool program met 6 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 57 percent of Virginia's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 53 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 77 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 78 percent could not compute.
  - 75 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 68 percent could not compute.
- 84 percent of Virginia public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Virginia 16<sup>th</sup> among states. 71 percent of Black students and 92 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 85 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 Virginia public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Virginia 29<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 21 percent and 8 percent, respectively.

### **Children Facing Special Risks**

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

- In Virginia, 5,863 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 3.1 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 4,315 Virginia children in foster care.

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

- 29,225 children were arrested in Virginia in 2012 – a rate of 3,525 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 1,686 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 62 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 6 percent were Hispanic, and 29 percent were White.
- 9 Virginia children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Virginia spent 2.8 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

#### **Virginia ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of 41 ranked states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 42 children and teens were killed by guns in Virginia in 2013 – a rate of 2.0 out of 100,000 children and teens.

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