

Key Data Findings

Child Population

Child Population: 2007

There are about 74 million children in the United States; almost 21 million of them are under the age of 5. California, Texas and New York have the largest number of children; North Dakota, Vermont, Wyoming and the District of Columbia have the fewest.

Where Children Live

Largest Number of Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all children in the United States live in only nine states: California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Georgia and Michigan.

Largest Number of White, non-Hispanic Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of the White, non-Hispanic children in the United States live in 11 states: California, Texas, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Georgia and Indiana.

Largest Number of Black, non-Hispanic Children: Top 10 States in 2007

Half of the Black, non-Hispanic children in the United States live in eight states: Georgia, Florida, Texas, New York, California, Illinois, North Carolina and Maryland.

Largest Number of Hispanic Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all Hispanic children in the United States live in three states: California, Texas and Florida.

Largest Number of Asian/Pacific Islander Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all Asian/Pacific Islander children live in four states: California, New York, Texas and New Jersey.

Largest Number of American Indian and Alaska Native Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all American Indian and Alaska Native children in the United States live in six states: Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, California, Alaska and North Carolina.

Child Poverty and Income

Child Poverty 2006–2007

More than 1 in 6—13.3 million—children in the United States are poor. There is great variation among the states, ranging from a low of 1 in 12 in New Hampshire to a high of almost 3 in 10 in Mississippi. The federal poverty line for a family of four in 2008 is \$21,200.

Extreme Poverty Among Children: 2007

Almost 1 in 13 children in the United States—5.8 million—lives in extreme poverty. A family of four is extremely poor in 2008 if their household income is below \$10,600, or half of the official poverty line. Young children are more likely than school-age children to live in extreme poverty.

Largest Number of Poor Children: Top 10 States 2007

More than half of all poor children in the United States live in eight states: California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, Georgia and Michigan.

Poor Children in America: A Portrait

There are more poor White, non-Hispanic children than Black children. However, Hispanic and Black children are about three times as likely to live in poverty than White, non-Hispanic children. Children who live in inner

cities, rural areas, in the South or in female-headed families are more likely to be poor. Children under age 6 are more likely to be poor than school-age children. Poverty and race are the primary factors underpinning the pipeline to prison. In fact, Black juveniles are about four times as likely as their White peers to end up being incarcerated.

Child Poverty: 1959–2007

The number of poor children was at its lowest in 1973. Since 2000, both the number and the rate have risen. There are now 13.3 million poor children in the United States, an increase of 500,000 between 2006 and 2007. These numbers are expected to increase as families face the full impact of the recession.

Child Poverty Rate: 1959–2007

The child poverty rate dropped substantially in the 1960s, then rose significantly in the early 1980s. Great strides were made in decreasing child poverty in the late 1990s, owing in part to the strong economy. However, the child poverty rate is higher in 2007 than at the beginning of the decade. Child poverty is closely tied to the overall health of the economy, rising in periods of recession.

AFDC/TANF Benefit Levels and Participation

Cash assistance to poor families has not kept pace with inflation. The maximum benefit for a three-person family in Mississippi is only 13 percent of the poverty line. (The poverty line was \$16,090 for a family of three in 2005.) Even in the most generous states—Alaska, California, New York, Vermont and Wisconsin—maximum benefits are just above 50 percent of the poverty line.

Child Support Enforcement: 2004

Three out of four child support cases have a court order, but only half actually collect payments due. States vary in collecting child support for children: Only six states collect payments on more than 70 percent of cases; 21 states and the District of Columbia collect payments in fewer than half the cases.

Child Poverty and Race

Child Poverty, by Race/Ethnicity: 2007

Child poverty rates vary substantially by state and race/ethnicity. More than 20 percent of White children are poor in Kentucky, New Mexico, Texas and West Virginia. A White child is almost four times as likely to be poor in New Mexico as Maryland. In 12 states, more than 40 percent of Black children are poor. A Black child in Mississippi is more than twice as likely to be poor as one in New Jersey. Asian/Pacific Islander children are the least likely of any racial or ethnic group to live in poverty, but an Asian/Pacific Islander child in Wisconsin is almost three times as likely to be poor as one in Virginia.

Child Poverty, by Race/Ethnicity: 2007 (continued)

More than half of all Native American children in South Dakota are poor, where they are more than three times as likely to be poor as a Native American child in New York. More than 40 percent of Hispanic children in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island are poor. An Hispanic child in these states is more than three times as likely to be poor as one in Hawaii.

Largest Number of Poor White Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all poor White children live in nine states: Texas, California, New York, Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois and Arizona.

Largest Number of Poor Black Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all poor Black children live in nine states: Georgia, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, North Carolina and Ohio.

Largest Number of Poor Hispanic Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all poor Hispanic children live in only three states: California, Texas and New York.

Largest Number of Poor Asian and Pacific Islander Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all poor Asian and Pacific Islander children live in four states: California, New York, Texas and Illinois.

Largest Number of Poor American Indian and Alaska Native Children: Top 10 States in 2007

More than half of all poor American Indian and Alaska Native children live in six states: Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, California, South Dakota and North Carolina.

Child Health and Health Coverage

Uninsured Children Younger than 19: 2005–2007

About 1 in 9—nearly 9 million—children are uninsured. This ranges from a low of 1 in 21 in Massachusetts to a high of 1 in 5 in Texas. A child in Texas is more than four times as likely to be uninsured as a child in Massachusetts.

Which Children Are Uninsured?

Black, Hispanic, Asian and American Indian children are more likely to be uninsured than White, non-Hispanic children. One in 5 Hispanic children, 1 in 5 American Indian children, 1 in 8 Black children, 1 in 9 Asian/Pacific Islander children, and 1 in 13 White, non-Hispanic children are uninsured.

Uninsured Children in America: A Portrait (2007)

Among uninsured children: 9 out of 10 have at least one employed parent; 9 out of 10 are United States citizens; and 6 out of 10 live in two-parent families. There are about equal numbers of uninsured White and Hispanic children, numbering 3.4 million uninsured children for each group. There are more uninsured White and Hispanic children than any other racial or ethnic group.

Largest Number of Uninsured Children: Top 10 States

More than half of all uninsured children in the United States live in six states: Texas, California, Florida, New York, Georgia and Illinois.

Children Enrolled in Medicaid and SCHIP

About 28.3 million children are enrolled in Medicaid, and 7.1 million are enrolled in SCHIP. Although children comprise about half of those enrolled in Medicaid, less than one-fourth of Medicaid payments are for children.

Prenatal Care: 2005

In all but one state, Black and Hispanic babies are less likely than White babies to be born to mothers who received early prenatal care.

Low Birthweight Babies: 2005

About 1 in 12 babies born in the United States is low birthweight. Black babies are about twice as likely as White or Hispanic babies to have low birthweight. The United States ranks 22nd in low birthweight rates among industrialized countries.

Infant Deaths: 2005

The infant mortality rate ranges from a low of 4.46 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in Utah to a high of 14.05 in the District of Columbia. Infant mortality rates are more than twice as high for Black infants as for White infants. The United States infant mortality rate ranks 25th among industrialized countries.

Highest Percentages of Low Birthweight Births: Top 10 States

More than 10 percent of babies in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and the District of Columbia are born at low birthweight.

Highest Infant Mortality Rates: Top 10 States (plus the District of Columbia)

Mississippi, Louisiana and the District of Columbia have the highest infant mortality rates.

Selected Maternal and Infant Health Indicators: 2005

Black women are more than three times as likely as White or Hispanic women to die of pregnancy or childbirth complications. More than two-thirds of Black babies are born to unmarried mothers, compared to almost half of Hispanic babies and one-fourth of White babies.

Infant Health: 1940–2005

After four decades of decline, the infant mortality rate increased in 2002 and stalled in 2005. Black infants are more than twice as likely as White infants to die before age 1. For two decades, the incidence of low birthweight has been increasing. The rate in 2005 was 22 percent higher than the rate in 1984.

Immunization of Two-Year-Olds

Among two-year-olds, 1 in 3 is not fully immunized. More than 80 percent of two-year-old children in Connecticut and New Hampshire are fully immunized compared to fewer than half in South Dakota. On two of the recommended vaccines for one-year-old children, the U.S. ranks near the bottom of industrialized countries.

Child Welfare

Child Abuse and Neglect: 2006

More than 900,000 children were abused or neglected in 2006. Almost 2 out of 3 of these children were neglected.

Children in Foster Care: FY 2002–FY 2006

There are about 500,000 children in foster care. States with the highest number of children in foster care are California, Florida, New York and Texas.

Children in Foster Care, by Race: 2005

For every 100 children in foster care, 41 are White, 32 are Black, and 18 are Hispanic. There are relatively few Asian or Pacific Islander children in foster care.

Who's in Foster Care?

Although Black children comprise 15 percent of all children, they are 32 percent of children in foster care. About one-third of children in foster care are under age 6.

Children in Kinship Care: 2000 and 2007

More than 2.5 million grandparents are raising their grandchildren. Almost 80 percent of them have been caring for their grandchildren for a year or longer; 60 percent of them are in the labor force; and about 1 in 5 of them is poor.

Adoptions from Foster Care, Selected Years: FY1995–FY 2006

More than 50,000 children were adopted from foster care in FY 2006, almost twice the number adopted in FY 1995.

Adoptions of Children in Foster Care: 1995–2006

Since 1999, about 50,000 children have been adopted from foster care each year, twice as many as in 1995.

Youth at Risk

Youth at Risk

Nationally, about 1 in 15 teens ages 16 to 19 is a dropout. Fewer than two-thirds of 9th graders in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and Nevada graduate from high school within four years with a regular diploma. There were almost 1.3 million juvenile arrests in 2006, and almost 93,000 juveniles are in residential placements.

Teen Birth Rates

The overall teen birth rate in the United States is 40.5 births per 1,000 females ages 15 to 19. Texas, New Mexico, Mississippi and the District of Columbia have the highest teen birth rates. The United States has a higher teen birth rate than any other industrialized nation.

Youth Unemployment and Joblessness

About 1 in 6 teens ages 16 to 19 is unemployed. However, during the summer when most of them are not in school, fewer than half actually have jobs. This has been the case since 2002. The youth jobless rate has reached the highest rate in more than four decades.

Drug Use and Drug-related Arrests and Incarceration Among Teens

White, Black and Hispanic teens are about equally likely to use drugs, but Black juveniles are twice as likely as their White peers to be arrested for drug offenses and more than five times as likely to be in secure residential placement for drug offenses.

Spending on Prisoners vs. Spending on Students: FY 2003

States spend on average 2.8 times as much per prisoner as per public school pupil. Nine states spend at least four times as much per prisoner as per pupil, but Utah has the worst ratio, spending almost eight times as much on prisoners as students.

Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens: 2003–2005

Between 2004 and 2005, total firearm deaths of children and teens increased by 181, the first annual increase since 1994. Increases were recorded in 27 states. California had the largest number of firearm deaths of children and teens; Maine, Vermont, Hawaii and New Hampshire had the fewest.

Largest Number of Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens: Top 10 States in 2005

Ten states account for 1,669 firearm deaths or 55.5 percent of the total 3,006 deaths.

Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens: A Portrait (2005)

In 2005, 3,006 children and teens were killed by firearms, the equivalent of 120 public school classrooms of 25 students each. More than half of these deaths were of White children and teens. Sixty-nine preschoolers were killed by firearms compared to 53 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. Another 16,000 children and teens suffered non-fatal firearm injuries.

Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens: 1979–2005

Between 1979 and 2005, more than 104,000 children and teens were killed by firearms in the United States. This is the equivalent of 4,177 classrooms of 25 students each.

Education

Reading and Math Achievement of 4th Graders

About two-thirds of public school 4th graders cannot read at grade level; 6 out of 10 cannot do math at grade level. More than 80 percent of Black and Hispanic 4th graders in public school cannot read at grade level, compared with 58 percent of their White peers. Eighty-five percent of Black 4th graders in public school cannot do math at grade level, compared to 78 percent of Hispanic children and about half of White children.

Reading and Math Achievement of 8th Graders

Seven out of 10 public school 8th graders cannot read or do math at grade level. More than 4 out of 5 Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native 8th graders cannot read or do math at grade level, compared to 3 out of 5 of their White peers. Three out of 5 Asian/Pacific Islander 8th graders cannot read at grade level; 1 in 2 cannot do math at grade level.

Public School Education: Various Indicators

Although 3 out of 4 9th graders graduate from high school in four years with a regular diploma, there is great variation among the states, from a low of 5 out of 9 in Nevada to a high of 7 out of 8 in Wisconsin. Expenditures per public school pupil also vary, from \$5,216 in Utah to \$14,117 in New Jersey.

School Discipline: 2006

Black, Hispanic and American Indian students are more likely than Asian or White students to be suspended. Black students are more than three times as likely as White or Asian/Pacific Islander students and more than twice as likely as Hispanic students to be suspended. Policies focused not on achievement but on “zero tolerance” often succeed only in encouraging suspended students to drop out, in effect pushing many into criminal activity and the pipeline to prison.

Children and Youths in Federal Education and Disability Programs

More than 17.4 million children receive compensatory education under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. More than 6.6 million students ages 3 to 21 receive educational services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. About 1.1 million children receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Enrollment in Classes for Students with Mental Retardation: 2006

Black and American Indian students are more likely than those in other racial groups to be enrolled in classes for students with mental retardation. Black children are more than twice as likely as White or Hispanic children to be in these classes, and more than three times as likely as Asian/Pacific Islander children to be in these classes.

Enrollment in Classes for Students with Emotional Disturbance: 2006

Black and American Indian children are more likely than those in other racial groups to be enrolled in classes for students with emotional disturbance. Black children are more than three times as likely as Hispanic children to be in these classes, and more than seven times as likely as Asian/Pacific Islander children to be in these classes.

Enrollment in Classes for Students with Learning Disabilities: 2006

About 1 in 20 public school students is in a class for students with learning disabilities. Black and American Indian children are the most likely to be in these classes.

Early Childhood Care and Development

Children Enrolled in Head Start

Only about 3 percent of eligible infants and young children are enrolled in the Early Head Start program. About 900,000 children are enrolled in Head Start programs, about 800,000 in state programs, and another 100,000 in migrant and Indian tribal programs and in the territories. Only about one-half to two-thirds of children eligible for Head Start are enrolled.

Prekindergarten Enrollment: 2006

Twenty states have no state-funded prekindergarten programs for 3-year-olds; eight states have no programs for 4-year-olds. Yet research has shown that early childhood programs significantly increase a child’s chances of avoiding the prison pipeline, instead helping give him a head start and put him in the “pipeline to success.”

Working Parents: 2007

About 2 out of 3 mothers of preschool-age children and 3 out of 4 mothers of school-age children are in the labor force. Six in 10 preschool-age children and 7 in 10 school-age children have all parents in the labor force.

Cost of Child Care vs. Cost of College

In 33 states and the District of Columbia, the annual cost of center-based child care for a preschooler is more than the annual tuition at a 4-year public university.

Child Care Assistance

Income eligibility for the one million families who receive child care assistance ranges from just above the poverty line in Missouri to 275 percent of the poverty line in Maine. The Urban Institute has calculated that 2.7 million people would be lifted out of poverty if child care assistance were provided to all families with children whose incomes are below 200 percent of the federal poverty line (FPL). In 2008, 200 percent of the FPL was \$35,200 for a family of three.

Teacher and Child Care Worker Earnings: 2006

Median wages for child care workers range from \$13,970 in Louisiana to more than \$21,000 in Massachusetts, New York and the District of Columbia. For elementary school teachers, those in South Dakota are paid the least. With a median salary of \$32,950, they make less than half the salary of elementary teachers in New York, whose median salary is the highest in the nation at \$66,300. The average wage of child care workers is less than that of Head Start, preschool, kindergarten or elementary school teachers in every state.

Child Care Center Regulations

Fifteen states allow child-care ratios higher than the recommended maximum for infants; 31 states exceed the maximum for toddlers; and 35 states exceed the maximum for preschoolers. Seventeen states have no maximum requirements for group size for at least one of the age groups.

Child Nutrition

Number of Children Receiving Food Stamps: Selected Years FY 1989–FY 2007

During FY 2007, an average of 12.7 million children each month received Food Stamps. Nationally, 87 percent of eligible children receive Food Stamps.

Children Receiving Food Stamps: 1989–2007

Starting in 1989, the number of children receiving Food Stamps rose for several years, then fell for several years, but has been rising since 2000. These numbers are expected to continue to rise with the onset of the recession.

Nutrition Assistance for Women, Infants and Children

An average of 8.1 million women, infants and young children participated in the WIC program each month in FY 2007. Preliminary data for August 2008 show more than 8.9 million participants; this number is expected to rise as the recession continues.

Child Nutrition Programs

More than half the children participating in the School Lunch Program—more than 17 million children—received free or reduced-price meals in FY 2007. The 8 million children in the School Breakfast Program who received free or reduced-price meals—4 out of 5 participants—are the most needy children. Yet the Summer Food Service Program, an entitlement targeted at these children, served fewer than 2 million children in FY 2007, indicating that needy children are not receiving this important assistance during the summer months.

Housing

Fair Market Rent vs. Minimum Wage: 2008

Despite the increase in the minimum wage in July 2008 to \$6.55 per hour, the monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the lowest-cost metro area in each state ranges from 39 percent of the minimum wage (based on full-time employment) in Illinois to over 100 percent in the District of Columbia and Hawaii. This means minimum-wage earners would have to spend every cent they earned on rent and still not be able to afford an apartment in these jurisdictions.