

NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN 2009

Nebraska's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	1,774,571
Population, Children Under 18 ²	446,145
State Poverty Rate ³	9.9%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	13.1%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	11.4%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	17.5%

*All statistics are for 2007.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2006, Nebraska had 24,616 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 13,109 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2006, 6,160 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Nebraska, a rate of 13.8 per 1,000 children, representing a 7.1% decrease from 2005. Of these children, 5,239 were neglected, 799 were physically abused, and 607 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2006, 15 children in Nebraska died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2006, 6,187 children in Nebraska lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 6,231 children in 2005. In 2006, 28.9% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 26.5% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Nebraska children in out-of-home care in 2006, 61.7% were white, 15.9% black, 9.8% Hispanic, 8.3% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.3% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 3,658 children exiting out-of-home care in Nebraska in 2006, 68% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2006, 534 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Nebraska, a 52% increase from 352 in 2005.¹³
- Of the 6,187 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 983 or 15.9% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2007, approximately 8,969 Nebraska grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 6,187 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 19.0% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Nebraska children in kinship care in 2006, 61.1% were white, 17.0% were black, 9.5% were Hispanic, 7.7% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.7% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Nebraska increased from 14,849 in March 2007 to 16,232 in March 2008, an increase of 9.3%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 6,846, a 3.9% increase from March 2007.¹⁸



- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Nebraska was at 39.8% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2006, Nebraska spent \$92,389,231 in TANF funds, including 68.5% on basic assistance, and 31.5% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2007, Nebraska spent \$18,177,984 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 42,087 participants.²¹
- In 2007, Nebraska collected and distributed \$173,130,103 in child support funds, a 4.9% increase from 2006.²²
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Nebraska was \$630 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$12.11 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, Nebraska had a monthly average of 13,100 children served by subsidized child care; 13,400 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 13,400 in 2004.²⁴
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Nebraska, a family of three could make no more than \$20,604, which is equivalent to 38% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2008, Nebraska had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 5,080 Nebraska children, a 2.0% increase from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 156,200 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Nebraska—59.8% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2005, 12,531 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Nebraska on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2005, of the 12,531 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, one received Targeted Case Management services, and two received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2007, Nebraska had 24,491 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 5.6% increase from 2006, when 23,194 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2007, Nebraska had 45,000 uninsured children, representing 10% of its child population.³²
- In 2005, 1,818 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Nebraska a rank of 13 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2005, 147 infants under age 1 died in Nebraska, giving it a rank of 13 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2005, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Nebraska was 19 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 56. This reflects a total rate of 34 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2006, 1,479 adults and adolescents, as well as 11 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Nebraska.³⁶



- In 2006, an estimated 13,000 children ages 12–17, and 140,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Nebraska.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 405 children aged out of out-of-home care in Nebraska.³⁸
- In 2007, 4,000 Nebraska teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2007, 5% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2006, 10% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2006, approximately 5,000 children ages 12–17 in Nebraska needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2006, approximately 10,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2005, 25 Nebraska children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 4.76 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, three children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Nebraska, the same as in 2004.⁴⁵
- In 2007, 13,708 children younger than 18 were arrested in Nebraska, an 8.4% decrease from 14,967 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 235 were for violent crimes and 186 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 735 children in juvenile correction facilities in Nebraska.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Nebraska spent \$184,015,695 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 50% was from federal funds, and 50% from state funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$92,586,462 in federal funds received for child welfare, 33% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 4% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 57% from Medicaid, and 5% from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 6,187 children in out-of-home care in Nebraska in 2006, only 995, or 16.1%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰



NEBRASKA'S CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

- A 2003 General Accounting Office (GAO) report documented that staff shortages, high caseloads, high worker turnover and low salaries impinge on delivering services to achieve safety, permanence, and well being for children.⁵¹
- The federal Child and Family Service Reviews have clearly demonstrated that the more time a caseworker spends with a child and family, the better the outcomes for those children and families.⁵²
- According to the 2003 GAO report, the average caseload for child welfare/foster care caseworkers is 24–31 children; these high caseloads contribute to high worker turnover and insufficient services being provided to children and families. CWLA recommends that foster care caseworkers have caseloads of 12–15 children.⁵³
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Nebraska was \$29,111; the median income for a family of four in Nebraska was \$63,625.⁵⁴

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