

# T E N N E S S E E ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 0 9

## Tennessee's Children At a Glance\*

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	6,156,719
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	1,471,486
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	14.8%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	20.2%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 <sup>5</sup> .....	19.3%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	21.9%

\*All statistics are for 2007.

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2006, Tennessee had 91,620 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 61,886 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2006, 19,182 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Tennessee, a rate of 13.3 per 1,000 children, representing a 4.4% increase from 2005. Of these children, 10,187 were neglected, 6,549 were physically abused, and 3,914 were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2006, 22 children in Tennessee died as a result of abuse or neglect.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2006, 8,618 children in Tennessee lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 9,017 children in 2005. In 2006, 26.4% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 29.4% were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of Tennessee children in out-of-home care in 2006, 59.8% were white, 31.6% black, 4.0% Hispanic, and 4.7% children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

## ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 6,841 children exiting out-of-home care in Tennessee in 2006, 52% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2006, 994 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Tennessee, an 11% decrease from 1,114 in 2005.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 8,618 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 1,822 or 21.1% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 71,802 Tennessee grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 8,618 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 12.3% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all Tennessee children in kinship care in 2006, 56.2% were white, 34.8% were black, 2.9% were Hispanic, and 6.1% were other races.<sup>17</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Tennessee decreased from 159,495 in March 2007 to 131,024 in March 2008, a decrease of 17.9%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 51,867, a 15.8% decrease from March 2007.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Tennessee was at 27.4% of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>19</sup>



- In 2006, Tennessee spent \$266,409,235 in TANF funds, including 38.9% on basic assistance, 4.96% on child care, 1.9% on transportation, and 54.2% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2007, Tennessee spent \$86,918,047 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 160,058 participants.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2007, Tennessee collected and distributed \$482,043,978 in child support funds, a 9.0% increase from 2006.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Tennessee was \$644 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$12.38 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>23</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, Tennessee had a monthly average of 42,500 children served by subsidized child care; 43,200 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 47,600 in 2004.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Tennessee, a family of three could make no more than \$28,668, which is equivalent to 60% of the state's median income.<sup>25</sup>
- As of early 2008, Tennessee had Frozen Intake children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2007, Head Start served 16,397 Tennessee children, a 0.3% increase from 2001.<sup>27</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 713,200 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Tennessee—44.2% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2005, 18,122 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Tennessee on the basis of being in foster care.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2005, of the 18,122 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, none received Targeted Case Management services, but 251 received Rehabilitative Services.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2007, Tennessee had 1,713 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2007, Tennessee had 135,000 uninsured children, representing 9.1% of its child population.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2005, 7,748 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Tennessee a rank of 38 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>33</sup>
- In 2005, 724 infants under age 1 died in Tennessee, giving it a rank of 39 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best and 50 the worst).<sup>34</sup>
- In 2005, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Tennessee was 28 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 96. This reflects a total rate of 55 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>35</sup>
- Cumulative through 2006, 12,457 adults and adolescents, as well as 59 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Tennessee.<sup>36</sup>



- In 2006, an estimated 39,000 children ages 12–17, and 390,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Tennessee.<sup>37</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 718 children aged out of out-of-home care in Tennessee.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2007, 24,000 Tennessee teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2007, 9% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2006, 18% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2006, approximately 22,000 children ages 12–17 in Tennessee needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2006, approximately 22,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>43</sup>
- In 2005, 50 Tennessee children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.99 per 100,000 children.<sup>44</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, 38 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Tennessee, a 90% increase from 20 in 2004.<sup>45</sup>
- In 2007, 35,880 children younger than 18 were arrested in Tennessee, a 1.9% increase from 35,228 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 1,747 were for violent crimes and 760 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>46</sup>
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,419 children in juvenile correction facilities in Tennessee.<sup>47</sup>

## FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR TENNESSEE'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Tennessee spent \$522,904,871 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 45% was from federal funds, and 55% from state funds.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2006, of the \$236,389,877 in federal funds received for child welfare, 25% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 8% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 49% from Medicaid, 15% from the Social Services Block Grant, and 3% from other federal sources.<sup>49</sup>
- Out of 8,618 children in out-of-home care in Tennessee in 2006, only 3,336, or 38.7%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>50</sup>



## TENNESSEE'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.<sup>51</sup>
- 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.<sup>52</sup>
- 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.<sup>53</sup>
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Tennessee was \$23,880; the median income for a family of four in Tennessee was \$55,401.<sup>54</sup>

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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