

WEST VIRGINIA'S CHILDREN 2009

West Virginia's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	1,812,035
Population, Children Under 18 ²	387,381
State Poverty Rate ³	14.8%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	24.0%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	22.9%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	27.7%

*All statistics are for 2007.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2006, West Virginia had 49,785 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 23,210 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2006, 8,345 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in West Virginia, a rate of 21.4 per 1,000 children, representing a 12.3% decrease from 2005. Of these children, 4,635 were neglected, 2,047 were physically abused, and 382 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2006, 15 children in West Virginia died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2006, 4,226 children in West Virginia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 4,331 children in 2005. In 2006, 30.2% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 25.1% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of West Virginia children in out-of-home care in 2006, 82.7% were white, 6.5% black, 1.5% Hispanic, 0.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 9.2% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 2,581 children exiting out-of-home care in West Virginia in 2006, 56% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2006, 419 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in West Virginia, a 14% increase from 368 in 2005.¹³
- Of the 4,226 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 1,153 or 27.3% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2007, approximately 20,321 West Virginia grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 4,226 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 5.9% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all West Virginia children in kinship care in 2006, 82.0% were white, 5.5% were black, 0.4% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 12.1% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in West Virginia decreased from 23,271 in March 2007 to 18,702 in March 2008, a decrease of 19.6%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 8,569, a 12.3% decrease from March 2007.¹⁸



- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in West Virginia was at 42.5% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2006, West Virginia spent \$115,049,674 in TANF funds, including 32.4% on basic assistance, 3.93% on child care, 14.5% on transportation, and 49.2% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2007, West Virginia spent \$21,646,472 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 49,588 participants.²¹
- In 2007, West Virginia collected and distributed \$179,519,305 in child support funds, a 2.7% increase from 2006.²²
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in West Virginia was \$564 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$10.85 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, West Virginia had a monthly average of 9,300 children served by subsidized child care; 10,000 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 10,000 in 2004.²⁴
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in West Virginia, a family of three could make no more than \$25,764, which is equivalent to 59% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2008, West Virginia had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 7,682 West Virginia children, a 1.2% increase from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 187,700 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in West Virginia—49.2% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2005, 7,006 children were enrolled in Medicaid in West Virginia on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2005, of the 7,006 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 214 received Targeted Case Management services, and 2,998 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2007, West Virginia had 24,939 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 0.4% increase from 2006, when 24,835 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2007, West Virginia had 18,000 uninsured children, representing 4.6% of its child population.³²
- In 2005, 1,990 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving West Virginia a rank of 14 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2005, 169 infants under age 1 died in West Virginia, giving it a rank of 14 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 West Virginia was 21 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 77. This reflects a total rate of 43 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵



- Cumulative through 2006, 1,500 adults and adolescents, as well as 11 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in West Virginia.³⁶
- In 2006, an estimated 11,000 children ages 12–17, and 112,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in West Virginia.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 208 children aged out of out-of-home care in West Virginia.³⁸
- In 2007, 7,000 West Virginia teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2007, 10% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2006, 19% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2006, approximately 6,000 children ages 12–17 in West Virginia needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2006, approximately 7,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2005, 20 West Virginia children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 4.35 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, eight children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in West Virginia, a 300% increase from two in 2004.⁴⁵
- In 2007, 2,347 children younger than 18 were arrested in West Virginia, a 63.2% increase from 1,438 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 59 were for violent crimes and 22 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 579 children in juvenile correction facilities in West Virginia.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR WEST VIRGINIA'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, West Virginia spent \$185,461,810 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 47% was from federal funds, and 53% from state funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$87,513,632 in federal funds received for child welfare, 34% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 10% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 36% from the Social Services Block Grant, 17% from TANF, and 2% from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 4,226 children in out-of-home care in West Virginia in 2006, only 3,215, or 76.1%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰



WEST VIRGINIA'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 West Virginia was \$23,784; the median income for a family of four in West Virginia was \$46,169.⁵⁴

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