



ALABAMA'S CHILDREN 2010

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Alabama's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	4,661,900
Population, Children Under 18 ²	1,121,210
State Poverty Rate ³	14.3%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	23.7%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 ⁵	22.8%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	26.5%

*All statistics are for 2008.

- In 2007, Alabama had 30,462 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 18,710 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2007, 9,247 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Alabama, a rate of 8.2 per 1,000 children, representing a 1.4% decrease from 2006. Of these children, 3,257 were neglected, 3,148 were physically abused, and 2,100 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2007, 23 children in Alabama died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2007, 7,263 children in Alabama lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 7,157 children in 2006. In 2007, 2,199 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 1,853 were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Alabama children in out-of-home care in 2007, 49.7% were white, 44.9% black, 3.1% Hispanic, 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 0.2% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 3,641 children exiting out-of-home care in Alabama in 2007, 43.8% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2007, 349 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Alabama, a 9.8% increase from 387 in 2006.¹³
- Of the 7,263 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 25.1%—or 1,820—were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2008, approximately 60,086 Alabama grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 7,263 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 11.9% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Alabama children in kinship care in 2007, 58.0% were white, 36.8% were black, 2.2% were Hispanic, 0.4% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.5% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Alabama increased from 40,186 in March 2008 to 41,658 in March 2009, an increase of 3.7%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 17,915, a 2.5% increase from March 2008.¹⁸
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Alabama was at 30.3% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2007, Alabama spent \$155,788,568 in TANF funds, including 29.4% on basic assistance, <1% on child care, 2.5% on transportation, and 68% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2008, Alabama spent \$82,129,896 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 134,842 participants.²¹
- In 2008, Alabama collected and distributed \$280,243,467 in child support funds, an increase of 8.5% from 2007.²²
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Alabama was \$627 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$12.05 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Alabama had a monthly average of 31,700 children served by subsidized child care; 28,000 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 27,100 in 2005.²⁴
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Alabama, a family of three could make no more than \$22,320, which is equivalent to 44% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2009, Alabama had 9,682 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 16,374 Alabama children, a 0.2% decrease from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 447,800 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Alabama—46.0% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2007, 8,771 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Alabama on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2007, of the 8,771 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 4664 received Targeted Case Management services, and 201 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2008, Alabama had 71,251 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 5.2% increase from 2007, when 67,715 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2008, Alabama had 41,000 uninsured children, representing 3.7% of its child population.³²
- In 2006, 6,624 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams in Alabama, giving the state a rank of 48 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2006, 571 infants under age 1 died in Alabama, giving the state a rank of 48 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (1 being the best and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2006, the birthrate for teens 15–17 in Alabama was 28 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 94. This reflects a total rate of 54 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2007, 9,015 adults and adolescents, as well as 76 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Alabama.³⁶
- In 2007, an estimated 27,000 children ages 12–17, and 186,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Alabama.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 198 children aged out of out-of-home care in Alabama.³⁸
- In 2008, 21,000 Alabama teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2008, 26,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2007, 82,000 people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2007, approximately 14,000 children ages 12–17 in Alabama needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2007, approximately 18,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2006, 41 Alabama children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 3.14 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 26 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Alabama, a 16.1% decrease from 31 in 2005.⁴⁵
- In 2008, 12,832 children younger than 18 were arrested in Alabama, a 3.4% increase from 12,407 arrests in 2007. Of the

arrests in 2008, 719 were for violent crimes and 190 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶

- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,752 children in juvenile correction facilities in Alabama.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR ALABAMA'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Alabama spent \$299,254,165 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 55% was from federal funds, 44% from state funds, and 0.8% from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$165,085,484 in federal funds received for child welfare, 18% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 9% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 39% was from Medicaid, 19% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 12% was from TANF, and 4% came from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 7,263 children in out-of-home care in Alabama in 2007, only 1,977, or 27.2%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰

ALABAMA'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 that child and family.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 Alabama was \$26,411; the median income for a family of four in Alabama was \$54,594.⁵⁴
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