



ALASKA'S CHILDREN 2010

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Alaska's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	686,293
Population, Children Under 18 ²	180,759
State Poverty Rate ³	8.2%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	9.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 ⁵	7.8%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	14.1%

*All statistics are for 2008.

- In 2007, Alaska had 9,775 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 4,906 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2007, 3,138 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Alaska, a rate of 17.2 per 1,000 children, representing a 9.9% decrease from 2006. Of these children, 1,704 were neglected, 216 were physically abused, and 85 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2007, 4 children in Alaska died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2007, 2,191 children in Alaska lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,017 children in 2006. In 2007, 807 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 290 were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Alaska children in out-of-home care in 2007, 26.2% were white, 5.5% black, 4.3% Hispanic, 53.9% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 10.5% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 762 children exiting out-of-home care in Alaska in 2007, 48.8% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2007, 238 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Alaska, a 12.3% increase from 212 in 2006.¹³
- Of the 2,191 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 777 or 35.5% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2008, approximately 6,112 Alaska grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 2,191 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 29.4% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Alaska children in kinship care in 2007, 26.7% were white, 4.3% were black, 3.1% were Hispanic, 55.5% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 10.4% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Alaska increased from 8,466 in March 2008 to 8,743 in March 2009, an increase of 3.3%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 3,152, a 1.6% decrease from March 2008.¹⁸
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Alaska was at 61.8% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2007, Alaska spent \$77,608,283 in TANF funds, including 48.1% on basic assistance, 9.8% on child care, <1% on transportation, and 41% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2008, Alaska spent \$15,892,266 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 25,251 participants.²¹
- In 2008, Alaska collected and distributed \$100,306,773 in child support funds, an increase of 10.4% from 2007.²²
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Alaska was \$1,013 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$19.47 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Alaska had a monthly average of 3,800 children served by subsidized child care; 4,900 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 4,700 in 2005.²⁴
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Alaska, a family of three could make no more than \$46,243, which is equivalent to 77% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2009, Alaska had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 1,583 Alaska children, a 0.2% decrease from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 75,000 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Alaska—60.8% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2007, 3,047 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Alaska on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2007, of the 3,047 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 226 received Targeted Case Management services, and 309 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2008, Alaska had 8,743 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 12.2% increase from 2007, when 7,793 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2008, Alaska had 26,000 uninsured children, representing 14.4% of its child population.³²
- In 2006, 654 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Alaska a rank of 1 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2006, 76 infants under age 1 died in Alaska, giving it a rank of 26 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2006, the birthrate for teens 15–17 in Alaska was 19 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 93. This reflects a total rate of 44 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2007, 682 adults and adolescents, as well as 7 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Alaska.³⁶
- In 2007, an estimated 5,000 children ages 12–17, and 29,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Alaska.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 64 children aged out of out-of-home care in Alaska.³⁸
- In 2008, 4,000 Alaska teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2008, 5,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2007, 14,000 people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2007, approximately 3,000 children ages 12–17 in Alaska needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2007, approximately 3,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2006, 20 Alaska children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 9.4 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 5 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Alaska, a 25% increase from 4 in 2005.⁴⁵
- In 2008, 3,951 children younger than 18 were arrested in Alaska, a 5.0% decrease from 4,161 arrests in 2007. Of the

arrests in 2008, 212 were for violent crimes and 33 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶

- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 363 children in juvenile correction facilities in Alaska.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR ALASKA'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Alaska spent \$107,202,991 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 43% was from federal funds, 57% from state funds, and 0.0% from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$46,037,391 in federal funds received for child welfare, 52% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 4% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 18% was from Medicaid, 20% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 0% was from TANF, and 7% came from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 2,191 children in out-of-home care in Alaska in 2007, only 633, or 28.9%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰

ALASKA'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 Alaska was \$36,969; the median income for a family of four in Alaska was \$71,395.⁵⁴
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