



ARKANSAS'S CHILDREN 2010

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Arkansas's Children At a Glance*

State Population¹.....2,855,390
 Population, Children
 Under 18².....702,924
 State Poverty Rate³.....15.3%
 Poverty Rate,
 Children Under 18⁴.....20.8%
 Poverty Rate,
 Children Ages 5–17⁵.....18.4%
 Poverty Rate,
 Children Under 5⁶.....28.8%

**All statistics are for 2008.*

- In 2007, Arkansas had 40,184 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 27,846 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2007, 9,847 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Arkansas, a rate of 14.1 per 1,000 children, representing a 7.3% increase from 2006. Of these children, 5,439 were neglected, 1,135 were physically abused, and 1,961 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2007, 20 children in Arkansas died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2007, 3,616 children in Arkansas lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 3,434 children in 2006. In 2007, 1,418 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 562 were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Arkansas children in out-of-home care in 2007, 57.0% were white, 29.3% black, 5.2% Hispanic, 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 8.3% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 3,788 children exiting out-of-home care in Arkansas in 2007, 36.6% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2007, 399 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Arkansas, a 1.0% increase from 395 in 2006.¹³
- Of the 3,616 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 780 or 21.6% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2008, approximately 40,636 Arkansas grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 3,616 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 10.9% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Arkansas children in kinship care in 2007, 53.2% were white, 36.4% were black, 3.8% were Hispanic, 0.0% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 6.6% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Arkansas increased from 18,965 in March 2008 to 18,976 in March 2009, an increase of 0.1%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 8,384, a 0.4% decrease from March 2008.¹⁸
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Arkansas was at 34.6% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2007, Arkansas spent \$107,323,437 in TANF funds, including 15.2% on basic assistance, 0.0% on child care, 0.0% on transportation, and 85% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2008, Arkansas spent \$49,082,990 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 89,731 participants.²¹
- In 2008, Arkansas collected and distributed \$197,538,510 in child support funds, an increase of 11.4% from 2007.²²
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Arkansas was \$594 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$11.42 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Arkansas had a monthly average of 5,800 children served by subsidized child care; 5,600 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 10,300 in 2005.²⁴
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Arkansas, a family of three could make no more than \$28,345, which is equivalent to 65% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2009, Arkansas had 3,001 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 10,778 Arkansas children, a 0.4% decrease from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 423,200 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Arkansas—56.1% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2007, 7,100 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Arkansas on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2007, of the 7,100 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 255 received Targeted Case Management services, and 4 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2008, Arkansas had 37,832 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 2.2% decrease from 2007, when 69,349 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2008, Arkansas had 65,000 uninsured children, representing 9.2% of its child population.³²
- In 2006, 3,749 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Arkansas a rank of 41 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2006, 350 infants under age 1 died in Arkansas, giving it a rank of 46 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 Arkansas was 30 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 114. This reflects a total rate of 62 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2007, 4,083 adults and adolescents, as well as 36 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Arkansas.³⁶
- In 2007, an estimated 24,000 children ages 12–17, and 139,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Arkansas.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 331 children aged out of out-of-home care in Arkansas.³⁸
- In 2008, 15,000 Arkansas teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2008, 20,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2007, 53,000 people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2007, approximately 11,000 children ages 12–17 in Arkansas needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2007, approximately 16,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2006, 27 Arkansas children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 3.35 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 15 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Arkansas, a 15.4% increase from 13 in 2005.⁴⁵
- In 2008, 13,209 children younger than 18 were arrested in Arkansas, a 49.9% increase from 8,809 arrests in 2007. Of the

arrests in 2008, 468 were for violent crimes and 162 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶

- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 813 children in juvenile correction facilities in Arkansas.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR ARKANSAS'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Arkansas spent \$102,311,219 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 61% was from federal funds, 39% from state funds, and 0.0% from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$62,617,464 in federal funds received for child welfare, 66% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 13% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 3% was from Medicaid, 3% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 8% was from TANF, and 6% came from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 3,616 children in out-of-home care in Arkansas in 2007, only 1,942, or 53.7%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰

ARKANSAS'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 Arkansas was \$23,768; the median income for a family of four in Arkansas was \$47,838.⁵⁴
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