



LOUISIANA'S CHILDREN 2010

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Louisiana's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	4,410,796
Population, Children Under 18 ²	1,107,307
State Poverty Rate ³	18.2%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	23.3%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 ⁵	23.9%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	29.6%

*All statistics are for 2008.

- Louisiana was one of several states without a final tally of 2007 referrals for child abuse and neglect.⁷
- In 2007, 9,468 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Louisiana, a rate of 8.8 per 1,000 children, representing a 24.1% decrease from 2006. Of these children, 6,441 were neglected, 1,540 were physically abused, and 383 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2007, 27 children in Louisiana died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2007, 5,333 children in Louisiana lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 5,213 children in 2006. In 2007, 2,173 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 761 were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Louisiana children in out-of-home care in 2007, 47.3% were white, 48.7% black, 1.4% Hispanic, 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.5% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 3,308 children exiting out-of-home care in Louisiana in 2007, 46.3% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2007, 429 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Louisiana, a 7.9% decrease from 466 in 2006.¹³
- Of the 5,333 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 1,137 or 21.3% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2008, approximately 69,519 Louisiana grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 5,333 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 22.7% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Louisiana children in kinship care in 2007, 53.6% were white, 42.0% were black, 1.2% were Hispanic, 0.0% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.2% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Louisiana decreased from 22,262 in March 2008 to 21,274 in March 2009, a decrease of 4.4%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 9,799, a 4.9% decrease from March 2008.¹⁸
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Louisiana was at 36.6% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2007, Louisiana spent \$201,184,145 in TANF funds, including 20.6% on basic assistance, 0.0% on child care, <1% on transportation, and 79% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2008, Louisiana spent \$87,810,485 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 141,704 participants.²¹
- In 2008, Louisiana collected and distributed \$331,300,847 in child support funds, an increase of 7.0% from 2007.²²
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Louisiana was \$784 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$15.07 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Louisiana had a monthly average of 44,800 children served by subsidized child care; 39,100 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 51,800 in 2005.²⁴
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Louisiana, a family of three could make no more than \$35,244, which is equivalent to 70% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2009, Louisiana had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 21,592 Louisiana children, a 1.7% decrease from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 629,600 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Louisiana—57.7% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2007, 10,981 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Louisiana on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2007, of the 10,981 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 257 received Targeted Case Management services, and 361 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2008, Louisiana had 124,310 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 15.3% increase from 2007, when 107,828 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2008, Louisiana had 127,000 uninsured children, representing 11.3% of its child population.³²
- In 2006, 7,231 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Louisiana a rank of 49 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2006, 629 infants under age 1 died in Louisiana, giving it a rank of 49 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 Louisiana was 28 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 91. This reflects a total rate of 54 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2007, 18,480 adults and adolescents, as well as 132 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Louisiana.³⁶
- In 2007, an estimated 27,000 children ages 12–17, and 202,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Louisiana.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 280 children aged out of out-of-home care in Louisiana.³⁸
- In 2008, 27,000 Louisiana teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2008, 29,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2007, 91,000 people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2007, approximately 15,000 children ages 12–17 in Louisiana 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, 29 Louisiana children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.3 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 56 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Louisiana, a 24.4% increase from 45 in 2005.⁴⁵
- In 2008, 19,068 children younger than 18 were arrested in Louisiana, a 22.0% decrease from 24,445 arrests in 2007. Of the arrests in 2008, 1,666 were for violent crimes and 321 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶

- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,200 children in juvenile correction facilities in Louisiana.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR LOUISIANA'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Louisiana spent \$222,485,703 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 60% was from federal funds, 40% from state funds, and 0.0% from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$132,434,518 in federal funds received for child welfare, 47% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 12% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 0% was from Medicaid, 35% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 0% was from TANF, and 6% came from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 5,333 children in out-of-home care in Louisiana in 2007, only 2,344, or 44.0%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰

LOUISIANA'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 Louisiana was \$23,280; the median income for a family of four in Louisiana was \$51,234.⁵⁴

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