



# MISSISSIPPI'S CHILDREN 2010

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

### Mississippi's Children At a Glance\*

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	2,938,618
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	765,290
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	18.1%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	23.5%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 <sup>5</sup> .....	21.5%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	33.2%

\*All statistics are for 2008.

- In 2007, Mississippi had 26,964 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 17,871 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2007, 7,002 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Mississippi, a rate of 9.1 per 1,000 children, representing a 11.6% increase from 2006. Of these children, 3,896 were neglected, 1,149 were physically abused, and 765 were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2007, 19 children in Mississippi died as a result of abuse or neglect.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2007, 3,328 children in Mississippi lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 3,203 children in 2006. In 2007, 1,182 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 565 were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of Mississippi children in out-of-home care in 2007, 44.1% were white, 51.2% black, 1.9% Hispanic, <.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.8% children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

## ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 2,043 children exiting out-of-home care in Mississippi in 2007, 47.1% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2007, 295 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Mississippi, a 19.0% increase from 248 in 2006.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 3,328 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 898 or 27.0% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2008, approximately 51,406 Mississippi grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 3,328 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 32.4% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all Mississippi children in kinship care in 2007, 50.7% were white, 45.3% were black, 1.1% were Hispanic, 0.0% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.9% were other races.<sup>17</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Mississippi increased from 21,896 in March 2008 to 22,241 in March 2009, an increase of 1.6%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 10,860, a 0.5% increase from March 2008.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Mississippi was at 26.4% of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2007, Mississippi spent \$82,731,829 in TANF funds, including 24.7% on basic assistance, 3.8% on child care, 0.0% on transportation, and 75% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2008, Mississippi spent \$62,783,464 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 109,015 participants.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2008, Mississippi collected and distributed \$245,318,189 in child support funds, an increase of 12.3% from 2007.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Mississippi was \$656 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$12.62 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>23</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Mississippi had a monthly average of 30,600 children served by subsidized child care; 39,100 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 33,300 in 2005.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Mississippi, a family of three could make no more than \$34,999, which is equivalent to 79% of the state's median income.<sup>25</sup>
- As of early 2009, Mississippi had 6,667 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2007, Head Start served 26,657 Mississippi children, a 0.1% increase from 2001.<sup>27</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 398,700 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Mississippi—50.6% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2007, 5,544 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Mississippi on the basis of being in foster care.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2007, of the 5,544 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 661 received Targeted Case Management services, and 0 received Rehabilitative Services.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2008, Mississippi had 64,978 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 8.1% increase from 2007, when 60,122 children were enrolled.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2008, Mississippi had 105,000 uninsured children, representing 13.3% of its child population.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2006, 5,698 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Mississippi a rank of 50 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>33</sup>
- In 2006, 488 infants under age 1 died in Mississippi, giving it a rank of 50 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>34</sup>
- In 2006, the birthrate for teens 15–17 in Mississippi was 40 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 113. This reflects a total rate of 68 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>35</sup>
- Cumulative through 2007, 6,976 adults and adolescents, as well as 56 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Mississippi.<sup>36</sup>
- In 2007, an estimated 16,000 children ages 12–17, and 108,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Mississippi.<sup>37</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 93 children aged out of out-of-home care in Mississippi.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2008, 14,000 Mississippi teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2008, 17,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2007, 64,000 people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 10,000 children ages 12–17 in Mississippi needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 10,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>43</sup>
- In 2006, 24 Mississippi children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.69 per 100,000 children.<sup>44</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 17 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Mississippi, a 70% increase from 10 in 2005.<sup>45</sup>
- In 2008, 10,347 children younger than 18 were arrested in Mississippi, a 22.4% increase from 8,454 arrests in 2007. Of the arrests in 2008, 218 were for violent crimes and 187 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>46</sup>

- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 444 children in juvenile correction facilities in Mississippi.<sup>47</sup>

### **FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR MISSISSIPPI'S CHILDREN**

- In 2006, Mississippi spent \$83,832,451 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 77% was from federal funds, 23% from state funds, and 0.5% from local funds.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2006, of the \$64,215,154 in federal funds received for child welfare, 35% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 16% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 0% was from Medicaid, 20% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 27% was from TANF, and 2% came from other federal sources.<sup>49</sup>
- Out of 3,328 children in out-of-home care in Mississippi in 2007, only 838, or 25.2%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>50</sup>

### **MISSISSIPPI'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.<sup>51</sup>
  - 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.<sup>52</sup>
  - 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.<sup>53</sup>
  - In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Mississippi was not available, but the median income for a family of four in Mississippi was \$46,810.<sup>54</sup>
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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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