



# NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN 2010

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

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

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	1,783,432
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	446,533
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	10.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	16.2%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 <sup>5</sup> .....	13.4%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	16.9%

\*All statistics are for 2008.

- In 2007, Nebraska had 23,050 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 11,290 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2007, 4,108 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Nebraska, a rate of 9.2 per 1,000 children, representing a 33.3% decrease from 2006. Of these children, 3,083 were neglected, 289 were physically abused, and 236 were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2007, 16 children in Nebraska died as a result of abuse or neglect.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2007, 5,875 children in Nebraska lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 6,187 children in 2006. In 2007, 1,697 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 1,636 were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of Nebraska children in out-of-home care in 2007, 60.2% were white, 16.5% black, 9.8% Hispanic, 8.9% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.7% children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

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

- Of the 3,704 children exiting out-of-home care in Nebraska in 2007, 66.7% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2007, 480 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Nebraska, a 10.1% decrease from 534 in 2006.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 5,875 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 805 or 13.7% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2008, approximately 8,698 Nebraska grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 5,875 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 19.8% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all Nebraska children in kinship care in 2007, 60.5% were white, 15.4% were black, 9.5% were Hispanic, 9.9% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.7% were other races.<sup>17</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Nebraska increased from 16,232 in March 2008 to 17,592 in March 2009, an increase of 8.4%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 7,310, a 6.8% increase from March 2008.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Nebraska was at 39.8% of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2007, Nebraska spent \$108,416,661 in TANF funds, including 40.1% on basic assistance, 0.0% on child care, 0.0% on transportation, and 60% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2008, Nebraska spent \$21,480,373 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 44,507 participants.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2008, Nebraska collected and distributed \$185,557,212 in child support funds, an increase of 7.2% from 2007.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Nebraska was \$656 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$12.61 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>23</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Nebraska had a monthly average of 14,900 children served by subsidized child care; 13,100 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 13,400 in 2005.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Nebraska, a family of three could make no more than \$21,120, which is equivalent to 36% of the state's median income.<sup>25</sup>
- As of early 2009, Nebraska had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2007, Head Start served 5,080 Nebraska children, a 2.0% increase from 2001.<sup>27</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 142,800 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Nebraska—59.1% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2007, 13,867 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Nebraska on the basis of being in foster care.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2007, of the 13,867 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 0 received Targeted Case Management services, and 1 received Rehabilitative Services.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2008, Nebraska had 25,397 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 3.7% increase from 2007, when 24,491 children were enrolled.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2008, Nebraska had 46,000 uninsured children, representing 10.1% of its child population.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2006, 1,900 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Nebraska a rank of 15 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>33</sup>
- In 2006, 149 infants under age 1 died in Nebraska, giving it a rank of 10 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 Nebraska was 16 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 59. This reflects a total rate of 33 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>35</sup>
- Cumulative through 2007, 1,561 adults and adolescents, as well as 11 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Nebraska.<sup>36</sup>
- In 2007, an estimated 12,000 children ages 12–17, and 80,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Nebraska.<sup>37</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 365 children aged out of out-of-home care in Nebraska.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2008, 5,000 Nebraska teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2008, 4,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2007, 19,000 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 5,000 children ages 12–17 in Nebraska needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 9,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>43</sup>
- In 2006, 28 Nebraska children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 5.35 per 100,000 children.<sup>44</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 9 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Nebraska, a 200% increase from 3 in 2005.<sup>45</sup>
- In 2008, 15,375 children younger than 18 were arrested in Nebraska, a 12.2% increase from 13,708 arrests in 2007. Of the arrests in 2008, 247 were for violent crimes and 198 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>46</sup>
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 735 children in juvenile correction facilities in Nebraska.<sup>47</sup>

## FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Nebraska spent \$184,015,695 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 50% was from federal funds, 50% from state funds, and 0.0% from local funds.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2006, of the \$92,586,462 in federal funds received for child welfare, 33% 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, 57% was from Medicaid, 0% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 0% was from TANF, and 5% came from other federal sources.<sup>49</sup>
- Out of 5,875 children in out-of-home care in Nebraska in 2007, only 1,111, or 18.9%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>50</sup>

## NEBRASKA'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 Nebraska was \$29,111; the median income for a family of four in Nebraska was \$60,626.<sup>54</sup>

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