



# W Y O M I N G ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 1 0

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

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

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	532,668
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	127,968
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	10.1%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	12.8%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 <sup>5</sup> .....	11.7%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	14.9%

\*All statistics are for 2008.

- In 2007, Wyoming had 5,070 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 2,442 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2007, 772 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Wyoming, a rate of 6.2 per 1,000 children, representing a 1.8% decrease from 2006. Of these children, 548 were neglected, 54 were physically abused, and 71 were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2007, 2 children in Wyoming died as a result of abuse or neglect.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2007, 1,231 children in Wyoming lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 1,301 children in 2006. In 2007, 327 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 349 were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of Wyoming children in out-of-home care in 2007, 76.7% were white, 3.0% black, 12.2% Hispanic, 1.5% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 6.6% children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

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

- Of the 1,043 children exiting out-of-home care in Wyoming in 2007, 72.8% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2007, 75 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Wyoming, a 31.6% increase from 57 in 2006.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 1,231 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 151 or 12.3% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2008, approximately 6,265 Wyoming grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 1,231 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 18.8% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all Wyoming children in kinship care in 2007, 73.6% were white, 3.5% were black, 16.5% were Hispanic, 0.9% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 5.6% were other races.<sup>17</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Wyoming increased from 513 in March 2008 to 534 in March 2009, an increase of 4.1%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 282, a 2.9% increase from March 2008.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Wyoming was at 30.2% of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2007, Wyoming spent \$25,881,810 in TANF funds, including 17.5% on basic assistance, 6.0% on child care, 3.3% on transportation, and 73% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2008, Wyoming spent \$5,068,725 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 12,617 participants.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2008, Wyoming collected and distributed \$62,367,134 in child support funds, an increase of 10.9% from 2007.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Wyoming was \$682 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$13.11 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>23</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Wyoming had a monthly average of 4,400 children served by subsidized child care; 4,700 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 4,600 in 2005.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Wyoming, a family of three could make no more than \$34,968, which is equivalent to 58% of the state's median income.<sup>25</sup>
- As of early 2009, Wyoming had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2007, Head Start served 1,840 Wyoming children, a 4.7% increase from 2001.<sup>27</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 53,800 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Wyoming—65.9% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2007, 3,230 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Wyoming on the basis of being in foster care.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2007, of the 3,230 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 336 received Targeted Case Management services, and 680 received Rehabilitative Services.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2008, Wyoming had 6,039 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 6.2% increase from 2007, when 5,684 children were enrolled.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2008, Wyoming had 12,000 uninsured children, representing 9.0% of its child population.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2006, 682 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Wyoming a rank of 36 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>33</sup>
- In 2006, 54 infants under age 1 died in Wyoming, giving it a rank of 28 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 Wyoming was 18 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 92. This reflects a total rate of 47 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>35</sup>
- Cumulative through 2007, 242 adults and adolescents, as well as 2 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Wyoming.<sup>36</sup>
- In 2007, an estimated 5,000 children ages 12–17, and 28,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Wyoming.<sup>37</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 58 children aged out of out-of-home care in Wyoming.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2008, 2,000 Wyoming teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2008, 2,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2007, 4,000 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 2,000 children ages 12–17 in Wyoming needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 3,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>43</sup>
- In 2006, 6 Wyoming children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 4.13 per 100,000 children.<sup>44</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 0 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Wyoming, a 100% decrease from 2 in 2005.<sup>45</sup>
- In 2008, 6,861 children younger than 18 were arrested in Wyoming, a 3.9% decrease from 7,139 arrests in 2007. Of the arrests in 2008, 73 were for violent crimes and 46 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>46</sup>
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 315 children in juvenile correction facilities in Wyoming.<sup>47</sup>

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

- In 2006, Wyoming spent \$26,989,857 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 41% was from federal funds, 59% from state funds, and 0.0% from local funds.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2006, of the \$11,119,922 in federal funds received for child welfare, 36% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 8% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 13% was from Medicaid, 26% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 4% was from TANF, and 14% came from other federal sources.<sup>49</sup>
- Out of 1,231 children in out-of-home care in Wyoming in 2007, only 185, or 15.0%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>50</sup>

## **WYOMING'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 Wyoming was \$28,000; the median income for a family of four in Wyoming was \$58,541.<sup>54</sup>

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