

ALABAMA'S CHILDREN 2004

Alabama's Children At a Glance

State Population (2002) ¹	4,486,508
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2001) ²	1,123,000
State Poverty Rate (2002) ³	14.5%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2002) ⁴	19.1%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2002) ⁵	17.5%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2002) ⁶	26.8%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2001, 21,092 children were reported as abused or neglected and referred for investigation in Alabama, a rate of 18.8 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2001, 9,229 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Alabama, a rate of 8.2 per 1,000 children, representing an 8% decrease from 2000. Of every 1,000 children, 3.7 were neglected, 3.6 were physically abused, and 1.7 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2001, 24 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Alabama.⁹
- On September 30, 2001, 5,859 children in Alabama lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 5,621 children on September 30, 2000. In 2001, 27.0% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 18.2% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2001, 2,742 white children, 3,006 black children, 59 Hispanic children, 9 American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 56 children of other races and ethnicities were in out-of-home care in the state.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 2,271 children leaving out-of-home care in 2001, 75% were reunited with their families.¹²
- In 2001, 238 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Alabama, a 75% increase from 136 in 1997.¹³
- Of the 5,859 children in out-of-home care in 2001, 1,507 or 26% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- Of the 5,859 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2001, 13% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- In 2002, more than 69,712 Alabama grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁶

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The number of people receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Alabama increased from 42,438 in March 2002 to 44,646 in March 2003, an increase of 5.2%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2003 was 18,786, a 4.4% increase from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and Food Stamp benefits in Alabama was 59% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2002, Alabama spent \$134,707,159 in TANF funds, including 24.4% on cash assistance, 0.1% on child care, 1.8% on transportation and support activities, and 73.7% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2001, Alabama collected and distributed \$200,240,037 in child support funds, an increase of 4.2% from 2000.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Alabama was \$485 per month, or 59% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the federal minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.²¹

C H I L D C A R E A N D H E A D S T A R T

- In 2001, an estimated monthly average of 34,000 of Alabama's children received subsidized child care, an increase from 31,500 in 2000 and 24,500 in 1999.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 43% of Alabama's median income, or \$19,020, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- In 2001, Alabama had 4,500 children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁴
- Due to the state budget shortfall, Alabama is no longer implementing several planned eligibility changes that would have helped more low-income families needing child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2002, Head Start served 16,529 Alabama children, a 0.2% increase from 2001.²⁶
- In 2000, 72% of all 18- to 24-year-olds in Alabama had at least a high school degree or equivalent.²⁷

H E A L T H , M E N T A L H E A L T H , A N D S U B S T A N C E A B U S E

- In 2000, 369,230 children younger than 18 were enrolled in Medicaid in Alabama, representing 33.4% of Alabama's total enrollees.²⁸
- In 2002, Alabama had 83,359 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 22.3% increase from 2001, when 68,179 children were enrolled.²⁹
- In 2001, 185 babies in Alabama were born to girls younger than 15. In 2001, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 8,820—a rate of 58 births per 1,000 girls.³⁰
- As of December 2002, 7,059 adults and adolescents, as well as 76 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Alabama.³¹
- In 2002, 31 Alabama children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.5 per 100,000 children in the population.³²
- In 2001, an estimated 12,000 children ages 12–17, and 53,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³³

J U V E N I L E J U S T I C E A N D D E L I N Q U E N C Y P R E V E N T I O N

- In 2001, 14 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Alabama, a 13% decrease from 16 in 2000.³⁴
- In 2002, 11,861 children younger than 18 were arrested in Alabama, a 24% decrease from 15,661 arrests in 1998. Of the arrests in 2002, 3,912 were for violent crimes and 128 were for possession of a weapon.³⁵
- A 1999 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,589 children in juvenile correction facilities in Alabama.³⁶

F U N D I N G C H I L D W E L F A R E S E R V I C E S F O R A L A B A M A ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2000, Alabama spent \$192,865,312 for child welfare services—all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁷ Of this amount, 37% came from federal funds, 62% from state funds, and 1% from local funds.³⁸
- In 2000, of the \$71,540,146 in federal funds received for child welfare, 26% came from the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program, 15% from the Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families programs, 17% from Medicaid, 28% from the Social Services Block Grant, 13% from TANF, and 1% from other federal sources.³⁹
- Of the 5,859 children in out-of-home care in Alabama on September 30, 2001, only 1,631, or 27.8%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁰

ALABAMA'S CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

- The child welfare workforce is facing challenges in every state. A combination of high caseloads, high worker turnover, and low salaries impinges on the delivery of services to achieve safety, permanency, and child well-being.
- In 2000, the national average starting salary for child protective service workers was \$26,900; for direct service workers, \$27,500. The yearly turnover rate for these workers was 15.6% and 19.5%, respectively.⁴¹
- In 2000, a caseworker in Alabama responsible for investigating and assessing child abuse and neglect carried an estimated caseload of 14 families. A caseworker responsible for providing in-home services carried an estimated caseload of 18 families. In-home services include parent support programs, child day care, community-based counseling, and other services to enable children to live safely in their own homes.⁴²
- In 2000, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of child abuse and neglect in Alabama was \$22,193.⁴³
- In 2002, the median income in Alabama for a family of four was \$51,451.⁴⁴

Additional child welfare statistics, references, and pertinent notes are available on CWLA's National Data Analysis System at <http://ndas.cwla.org>.

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CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

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