

O K L A H O M A ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 0 4

Oklahoma's Children At a Glance

State Population (2002) ¹	3,493,714
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2001) ²	893,000
State Poverty Rate (2002) ³	14.1%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2002) ⁴	19.3%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2002) ⁵	18.0%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2002) ⁶	21.3%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2001, 36,566 children were reported as abused or neglected and referred for investigation in Oklahoma, a rate of 40.9 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2001, 13,698 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Oklahoma, a rate of 15.3 per 1,000 children, representing a 1% decrease from 2000. Of every 1,000 children, 12.8 were neglected, 3.1 were physically abused, and 1.2 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2001, 33 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Oklahoma.⁹
- On September 30, 2001, 8,674 children in Oklahoma lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 8,406 children on September 30, 2000. In 2001, 31.3% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 17.8% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2001, 4,536 white children, 1,693 black children, 492 Hispanic children, 1,233 American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 1,212 children of other races and ethnicities were in out-of-home care in the state.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 5,864 children leaving out-of-home care in 2001, 70% were reunited with their families.¹²
- In 2001, 956 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Oklahoma, a 129% increase from 418 in 1997.¹³
- Of the 8,674 children in out-of-home care in 2001, 3,385 or 39% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- Of the 8,674 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2001, 28% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- In 2002, more than 37,752 Oklahoma 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 Oklahoma declined from 36,186 in March 2002 to 35,974 in March 2003, a decrease of 0.6%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2003 was 14,815, a 1.8% increase from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and Food Stamp benefits in Oklahoma was 48% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2002, Oklahoma spent \$147,601,224 in TANF funds, including 30.4% on cash assistance, 24.6% on child care, 17.0% on transportation and support activities, 5.0% on a range of other services, and 23.2% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2001, Oklahoma collected and distributed \$116,245,538 in child support funds, an increase of 8.5% from 2000.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Oklahoma was \$510 per month, or 62% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.²¹

C H I L D W E L F A R E L E A G U E O F A M E R I C A

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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 38,700 of Oklahoma's children received subsidized child care, an increase from 28,300 in 2000 and 30,800 in 1999.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 53% of the Oklahoma's median income, or \$23,232, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- Despite the state budget shortfall, Oklahoma has not proposed any child care cuts. Significant TANF transfers and direct spending on child care from TANF facilitated this effort.²⁴
- In 2002, Head Start served 13,460 Oklahoma children, a 1.8% increase from 2001.²⁵
- In 2000, 75% of all 18- to 24-year-olds in Oklahoma had at least a high school degree or equivalent.²⁶

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, 369,671 children younger than 18 were enrolled in Medicaid in Oklahoma, representing 42.9% of Oklahoma's total enrollees.²⁷
- In 2002, Oklahoma had 84,490 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 117.4% increase from 2001, when 38,858 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2001, 105 babies in Oklahoma were born to girls younger than 15. In 2001, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 7,476—a rate of 58 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 4,202 adults and adolescents, as well as 27 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Oklahoma.³⁰
- In 2002, 27 Oklahoma children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.73 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2001, an estimated 14,000 children ages 12–17, and 48,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³²

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, six children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Oklahoma, a 50% increase from four in 2000.³³
- In 2002, 22,805 children younger than 18 were arrested in Oklahoma, a 28% decrease from 31,580 arrests in 1998. Of the arrests in 2002, 6,770 were for violent crimes and 326 were for possession of a weapon.³⁴
- A 1999 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,123 children in juvenile correction facilities in Oklahoma.³⁵

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 O K L A H O M A ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2000, Oklahoma spent \$131,333,096 for child welfare services—all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁶ Of this amount, 63% came from federal funds, and 37% from state funds; none came from local funds.³⁷
- In 2000, of the \$82,231,629 in federal funds received for child welfare, 25% came from the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program, 10% from the Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families programs, 33% from Medicaid, 27% from the Social Services Block Grant, 3% from Supplemental Security Income, and 2% from Survivors Benefits.³⁸
- Of the 8,674 children in out-of-home care in Oklahoma on September 30, 2001, only 4,038, or 46.6%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.³⁹

OKLAHOMA'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.⁴⁰
- In 2000, a caseworker in Oklahoma responsible for investigating and assessing child abuse and neglect carried an estimated caseload of 15 families.⁴¹
- In 2000, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of child abuse and neglect in Oklahoma was \$27,600.⁴²
- In 2002, the median income in Oklahoma for a family of four was \$48,459.⁴³

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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