

T E N N E S S E E ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 0 4

Tennessee's Children At a Glance

State Population (2002) ¹	5,797,289
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2001) ²	1,406,000
State Poverty Rate (2002) ³	14.8%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2002) ⁴	20.0%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2002) ⁵	17.4%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2002) ⁶	23.5%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2001, 35,097 children were reported as abused or neglected and referred for investigation in Tennessee, a rate of 25 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2001, 9,571 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Tennessee, a rate of 6.8 per 1,000 children, representing a 42% decrease from 2000. Of every 1,000 children, 2.7 were neglected, 1.1 were physically abused, and 1.7 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2001, 13 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Tennessee.⁹
- On September 30, 2001, 9,679 children in Tennessee lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 10,144 children on September 30, 2000. In 2001, 19.8% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 31.8% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2001, 5,866 white children, 3,497 black children, 195 Hispanic children, 20 American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 295 children of other races and ethnicities were in out-of-home care in the state.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 5,089 children leaving out-of-home care in 2001, 71% were reunited with their families.¹²
- In 2001, 646 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Tennessee, a 231% increase from 195 in 1997.¹³
- Of the 9,679 children in out-of-home care in 2001, 2,965 or 31% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- Of the 9,679 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2001, 5% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- In 2002, more than 53,899 Tennessee 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 Tennessee increased from 163,802 in March 2002 to 180,466 in March 2003, an increase of 10.2%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2003 was 68,517, a 9.3% increase from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and Food Stamp benefits in Tennessee was 57% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2002, Tennessee spent \$311,499,367 in TANF funds, including 42.3% on cash assistance, 6.8% on child care, 2.8% on transportation and support activities, and 48.2% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2001, Tennessee collected and distributed \$276,337,064 in child support funds, an increase of 11.3% from 2000.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Tennessee was \$542 per month, or 66% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the federal minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.²¹

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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 59,600 of Tennessee's children received subsidized child care, an increase from 57,800 in 2000 and 63,100 in 1999.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 60% of the Tennessee's median income, or \$26,208, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- In 2001, Tennessee had 12,500 children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁴
- Due to the state budget shortfall, and anticipated cuts in TANF funding, Tennessee has developed a plan to increase parent copayments, the first increase in 10 years.²⁵
- In 2002, Head Start served 16,507 Tennessee children, a 1% increase from 2001.²⁶
- In 2000, 75% of all 18- to 24-year-olds in Tennessee 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, 654,063 children younger than 18 were enrolled in Medicaid in Tennessee, representing 47.5% of Tennessee's total enrollees.²⁸
- In 2001, 8,615 children were enrolled in Tennessee's State Children's Health Insurance Program.²⁹
- In 2001, 215 babies in Tennessee were born to girls younger than 15. In 2001, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 10,838—a rate of 58 births per 1,000 girls.³⁰
- As of December 2002, 9,872 adults and adolescents, as well as 52 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Tennessee.³¹
- In 2002, 38 Tennessee children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.44 per 100,000 children in the population.³²
- In 2001, an estimated 25,000 children ages 12–17, and 85,000 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, 16 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Tennessee, a 6% decrease from 17 in 2000.³⁴
- In 2002, 26,686 children younger than 18 were arrested in Tennessee, a 15% increase from 23,227 arrests in 1998. Of the arrests in 2002, 5,963 were for violent crimes and 452 were for possession of a weapon.³⁵
- A 1999 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,534 children in juvenile correction facilities in Tennessee.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 T E N N E S S E E ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2000, Tennessee spent \$378,515,341 for child welfare services—all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁷ Of this amount, 41% came from federal funds, and 59% from state funds; none came from local funds.³⁸
- In 2000, of the \$155,831,637 in federal funds received for child welfare, 22% came from the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program, 7% from the Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families programs, 47% from Medicaid, 17% from the Social Services Block Grant, 1% from Supplemental Security Income, 2% from Survivors Benefits, and 3% from other federal sources.³⁹
- Of the 9,679 children in out-of-home care in Tennessee on September 30, 2001, only 4,959, or 51.2%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁰

T E N N E S S E E ' S C H I L D W E L F A R E W O R K F O R C E

- 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, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of child abuse and neglect in Tennessee was \$20,892.⁴²
- In 2002, the median income in Tennessee for a family of four was \$54,899.⁴³

**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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