

GEORGIA'S CHILDREN 2005

Georgia's Children At a Glance

State Population (2003) ¹	8,684,715
State Population, Children Under 18 (2003) ²	2,296,759
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	13.4%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 (2003) ⁴	19.0%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 (2003) ⁵	17.3%
Poverty Rate, Children Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	21.0%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2002, 126,677 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in Georgia, a rate of 55.9 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, 41,206 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Georgia, a rate of 18.2 per 1,000 children, representing a 12% increase from 2000. Of these children, 74.6% were neglected, 9.6% were physically abused, and 5.5% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2002, 51 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Georgia.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 13,149 children in Georgia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 12,414 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 37.1% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 12.2% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2002, 40.0% white children, 53.3% black children, 3.5% Hispanic children, 0.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 3.2% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in Georgia.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 9,431 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 75.5% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹²
- In 2002, 1,097 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Georgia, a 22.0% increase from 899 in 2001.¹³
- Of the 13,149 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 3,231 or 24.6% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2003, more than 86,115 Georgia grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 13,149 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 18.4% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Georgia children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 38.6% were white, 57.4% were black, 1.7% were Hispanic, none were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.3% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of *individuals* receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Georgia increased from 127,568 in March 2002 to 132,003 in March 2003, an increase of 3.5%. The number of *families* receiving TANF in March 2003 was 55,325, a 3.2% increase from March 2002.¹⁸
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in Georgia was 49% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2003, Georgia spent \$500,550,617 in TANF funds, including 33.7% on cash assistance, 4.5% on child care, 2.4% on transportation and support activities, and 59.4% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2002, Georgia collected and distributed \$415,190,279 in child support funds, an increase of 8.3% from 2001.²¹

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- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Georgia was \$728 per month, or 88% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.²²

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

- In 2001, Georgia served an estimated monthly average of 57,800 children with subsidized child care, an increase from 2000, when 53,400 children were served, and in 1999, when 38,100 children were served.²³
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 46% of Georgia's median income, or \$42,828, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2001, Georgia had 13,166 children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁵
- In 2003, 23,400 Georgia children were served by Head Start, a 0.1% decrease from 2002.²⁶

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

- In 2001, 736,961 Georgia children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 58.6% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2003, Georgia had 251,711 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 13.9% increase from 2002, when 221,005 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2002, 217 babies were born to girls younger than 15 in Georgia. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 16,258, reflecting a rate of 55.7 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 25,795 adults and adolescents, as well as 213 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Georgia.³⁰
- In 2001, 58 children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.35 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2002, an estimated 58,000 children ages 12–17, and 603,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³²

V U L N E R A B L E Y O U T H

- In 2003, 11% of teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 5% decrease from 2000.³³
- In 2002, 15% of young adults ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.³⁴

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, 29 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Georgia, compared with 35 in 2000.³⁵
- In 2003, 36,061 children under age 18 were arrested in Georgia, a 34% increase from 26,900 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 1,479 were for violent crimes and 852 were for possession of weapons.³⁶
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,942 children in juvenile correction facilities in Georgia.³⁷

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

- In 2002, Georgia spent \$385,718,188 for child welfare services. Child welfare services refer to all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁸ Of this amount, 60% was from federal funds, 40% was from state funds, and 1% was from local funds.³⁹

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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- In 2002, of the \$385,718,188 spent for child welfare, 23% 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, 14% was Medicaid, 6% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 12% was from TANF, and 2% was from other federal sources. The remaining funds (40%) came from state and local sources.⁴⁰
- Out of 13,149 children in out-of-home care in Georgia on September 30, 2002, only 3,941 or 30% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴¹

GEORGIA'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.⁴²
- 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 those children and families.⁴³
- According to the 2003 GAO report, the average caseload for child welfare/foster care caseworkers is 24–31 children and that 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.⁴⁴

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