

MONTANA'S CHILDREN 2005

Montana's Children At a Glance

State Population (2003) ¹	917,621
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ²	215,774
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	14.2%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ⁴	18.0%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5–17 (2003) ⁵	14.8%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	25.5%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2002, 17,078 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in Montana, a rate of 78.1 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, 1,995 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Montana, a rate of 9.2 per 1,000 children, representing a 30% increase from 2000. Of these children, 34.5% were neglected, 67.6% were physically abused, and 10.3% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2002, four children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Montana.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 1,912 children in Montana lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,008 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 32.5% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 13.7% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2002, 54.7% white children, 1.4% black children, 5.1% Hispanic children, 33.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 5.8% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in Montana.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 1,280 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 59.4% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹²
- In 2002, 247 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Montana, a 10.2% decrease from 275 in 2001.¹³
- Of the 1,912 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 691 or 36.1% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2003, more than 7,440 Montana grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 1,912 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 35.5% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Montana children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 49.7% were white, 0.9% were black, 5.2% were Hispanic, 37.2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 7.1% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of *individuals* receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Montana increased from 17,110 in March 2002 to 18,074 in March 2003, an increase of 5.6%. The number of *families* receiving TANF in March 2003 was 6,421, a 5.9% increase from March 2002.¹⁸
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in Montana was 34% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2003, Montana spent \$55,715,316 in TANF funds, including 54.8% on cash assistance, 4.7% on child care, 3.3% on a range of other services, and 37.2% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2002, Montana collected and distributed \$43,450,853 in child support funds, an increase of 5.9% from 2001.²¹

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- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Montana was \$537 per month, or 65% 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, Montana served an estimated monthly average of 7,200 children with subsidized child care, an increase from 2000, when 6,900 children were served, and in 1999, when 6,400 children were served.²³
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 56% of Montana's median income, or \$21,948, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2001, Montana had no children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁵
- In 2003, 2,952 Montana children were served by Head Start, a 1.0% 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, 49,792 Montana children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 46.2% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2003, Montana had 13,084 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 5.7% decrease from 2002, when 13,875 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2002, 89 babies were born to girls younger than 15 in Montana. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 1,266, reflecting a rate of 36.4 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 356 adults and adolescents, as well as 3 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Montana.³⁰
- In 2001, 11 children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 4.41 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2002, an estimated 11,000 children ages 12–17, and 73,000 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, 10% of teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 3% increase 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, three children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Montana, compared with three in 2000.³⁵
- In 2003, 5,292 children under age 18 were arrested in Montana, an 11% decrease from 5,953 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 128 were for violent crimes and 20 were for possession of weapons.³⁶
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 266 children in juvenile correction facilities in Montana.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 M O N T A N A ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2002, Montana spent \$44,723,037 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, 49% was from federal funds and 51% was from state 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 \$44,723,037 spent for child welfare, 32% 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, 3% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 6% was from TANF, 1% was from Supplemental Security Income, and 3% came from other federal sources.⁴⁰
- Out of 1,912 children in out-of-home care in Montana on September 30, 2002, only 669 or 35% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴¹

MONTANA'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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