

NORTH CAROLINA'S CHILDREN 2005

North Carolina's Children At a Glance	
State Population (2003) ¹	8,407,248
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ²	2,087,443
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	14.0%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ⁴	18.8%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2003) ⁵	16.6%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	22.5%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2002, 127,702 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in North Carolina, a rate of 62.1 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, 26 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in North Carolina.⁸
- On September 30, 2002, 9,527 children in North Carolina lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 10,130 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 32.5% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 15.2% were 16 or older.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 45.5% white children, 44.7% black children, 5.7% Hispanic children, 1.7% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 2.5% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in North Carolina.¹⁰

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 5,404 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 55.8% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹¹
- In 2002, 1,324 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in North Carolina, a 0.2% decrease from 1,327 in 2001.¹²
- Of the 9,527 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 3,131 or 32.9% were waiting to be adopted.¹³

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2003, more than 86,433 North Carolina grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁴
- Of the 9,527 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 19.1% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- Of all North Carolina children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 43.9% were white, 45.4% were black, 5.8% were Hispanic, 2.8% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.1% were other races.¹⁶

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of *individuals* receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in North Carolina declined from 91,274 in March 2002 to 83,906 in March 2003, a decrease of 8.1%. The number of *families* receiving TANF in March 2003 was 40,441, a 6.2% decrease from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in North Carolina was 50% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2003, North Carolina spent \$456,796,925 in TANF funds, including 29.2% on cash assistance, 0.6% on a range of other services, and 70.2% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2002, North Carolina collected and distributed \$468,742,468 in child support funds, an increase of 8.9% from 2001.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in North Carolina was \$603 per month, or 73% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state 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, North Carolina served an estimated monthly average of 81,700 children with subsidized child care, a decrease from 2000, when 82,700 children were served, and in 1999, when 69,300 children were served.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 75% of North Carolina's median income, or \$34,224, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- In 2001, North Carolina had 22,616 children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2003, 19,125 North Carolina children were served by Head Start, a 0.4% decrease from 2002.²⁵

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, 669,596 North Carolina children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 51.3% of the total number of enrollees.²⁶
- In 2003, North Carolina had 149,979 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 24.9% increase from 2002, when 120,090 children were enrolled.²⁷
- In 2002, 47 babies were born to girls younger than 15 in North Carolina. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 13,756, reflecting a rate of 52.2 births per 1,000 girls.²⁸
- As of December 2002, 12,264 adults and adolescents, as well as 120 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in North Carolina.²⁹
- In 2001, 57 children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.54 per 100,000 children in the population.³⁰
- In 2002, an estimated 70,000 children ages 12–17, and 544,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³¹

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 2000.³²
- In 2002, 18% of young adults ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.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, 18 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in North Carolina, compared with 28 in 2000.³⁴
- In 2003, 45,130 children under age 18 were arrested in North Carolina, a 2% decrease from 45,879 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 2,276 were for violent crimes and 1,318 were for possession of weapons.³⁵
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,318 children in juvenile correction facilities in North Carolina.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 N O R T H C A R O L I N A ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2002, North Carolina spent \$314,207,149 for child welfare services. Child welfare services refer to all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁷ Of this amount, 65% was from federal funds, 14% was from state funds, and 21% was from local funds.³⁸
- In 2002, of the \$314,207,149 spent for child welfare, 23% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 6% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, and 1% was from TANF. The remaining funds (35%) came from state and local sources.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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- Out of 9,527 children in out-of-home care in North Carolina on September 30, 2002, only 3,485 or 37% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁰

NORTH CAROLINA'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.⁴¹
- 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.⁴²
- 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.⁴³

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