

Oklahoma's Children At a Glance	
State Population (2003) ¹	3,511,532
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ²	878,243
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	16.1%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ⁴	22.3%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2003) ⁵	19.6%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	29.2%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2002, 68,971 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in Oklahoma, a rate of 78.4 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, 13,721 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Oklahoma, a rate of 15.7 per 1,000 children, representing a 50% increase from 2000. Of these children, 85.9% were neglected, 20.5% were physically abused, and 7.6% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2002, 23 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Oklahoma.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 8,812 children in Oklahoma lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 8,674 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 38.4% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 11.2% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2002, 47.5% white children, 18.4% black children, 7.7% Hispanic children, 13.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 13.3% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in Oklahoma.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 6,328 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 68.9% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹²
- In 2002, 1,011 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Oklahoma, a 5.8% increase from 956 in 2001.¹³
- Of the 8,812 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 2,435 or 27.6% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2003, more than 45,136 Oklahoma grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 8,812 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 28.2% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Oklahoma children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 48.4% were white, 22.4% were black, 7.7% were Hispanic, 9.5% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 12.1% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of *individuals* 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 2002.¹⁸
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in Oklahoma was 48% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2003, Oklahoma spent \$203,172,290 in TANF funds, including 28.8% on cash assistance, 35.1% on child care, 13.1% on transportation and support activities, 8.6% on a range of other services, and 14.4% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2002, Oklahoma collected and distributed \$131,791,800 in child support funds, an increase of 13.4% from 2001.²¹

- 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.²²

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

- In 2001, Oklahoma served an estimated monthly average of 38,700 children with subsidized child care, an increase from 2000, when 28,300 children were served, and in 1999, when 30,800 children were served.²³
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 83% of Oklahoma's median income, or \$23,232, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2001, Oklahoma had no children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁵
- In 2003, 13,474 Oklahoma children were served by Head Start, a 0.1% increase 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, 376,172 Oklahoma children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 65.9% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2003, Oklahoma had 91,914 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, an 8.8% increase from 2002, when 84,490 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2002, 26 babies were born to girls younger than 15 in Oklahoma. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 7,358, reflecting a rate of 58.0 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 4,202 adults and adolescents, as well as 27 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Oklahoma.³⁰
- In 2001, 27 children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.73 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2002, an estimated 23,000 children ages 12–17, and 220,000 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, 7% of teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 7% decrease from 2000.³³
- In 2002, 13% 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, six children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Oklahoma, compared with four in 2000.³⁵
- In 2003, 24,678 children under age 18 were arrested in Oklahoma, an 8% increase from 22,805 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 869 were for violent crimes and 325 were for possession of weapons.³⁶
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 870 children in juvenile correction facilities in Oklahoma.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 O K L A H O M A ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2002, Oklahoma spent \$195,095,580 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, 64% was from federal funds, and 36% 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 \$195,095,580 spent for child welfare, 24% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 3% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 15% was from Medicaid, 11% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 7% was from TANF, 2% came from Supplemental Security Income, and 2% was from other federal sources. The remaining funds (36%) came from state and local sources.⁴⁰
- Out of 8,812 children in out-of-home care in Oklahoma on September 30, 2002, only 109 or 1% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴¹

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

- 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
- In 2002, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Oklahoma was \$27,600 ; the median income for a family of four in Oklahoma was \$51,377.⁴⁵

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