

VERMONT'S CHILDREN 2005

Vermont's Children At a Glance

State Population (2003) ¹	619,107
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ²	137,446
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	9.7%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ⁴	11.7%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2003) ⁵	9.2%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	17.5%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2002, 4,000 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in Vermont, a rate of 28.6 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, no children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Vermont.⁸
- On September 30, 2002, 1,526 children in Vermont lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 1,360 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 19.3% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 29.9% were 16 or older.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 96.6% white children, 1.6% black children, 0.9% Hispanic children, 0.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 0.7% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in Vermont.¹⁰

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 657 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 62.9% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹¹
- In 2002, 153 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Vermont, a 31.9% increase from 116 in 2001.¹²
- Of the 1,526 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 540 or 35.4% were waiting to be adopted.¹³

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2003, more than 2,228 Vermont grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁴
- Of the 1,526 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 9.8% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- Of all Vermont children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 94.0% were white, 2.7% were black, 0.7% were Hispanic, none were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.7% were other races.¹⁶

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of *individuals* receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Vermont declined from 13,497 in March 2002 to 12,737 in March 2003, a decrease of 5.6%. The number of *families* receiving TANF in March 2003 was 4,904, a 4.7% decrease from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in Vermont was 21% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2003, Vermont spent \$66,610,006 in TANF funds, including 51.7% on cash assistance, 11.1% on transportation and support activities, and 37.2% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2002, Vermont collected and distributed \$41,502,260 in child support funds, an increase of 2.0% from 2001.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Vermont was \$717 per month, or 72% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$6.25 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, Vermont served an estimated monthly average of 3,500 children with subsidized child care, a decrease from 2000, when 5,700 children were served, and in 1999, when 5,000 children were served.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 83% of Vermont's median income, or \$31,032, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- In 2001, Vermont had no children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2003, 1,573 Vermont children were served by Head Start, the same as in 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, 62,173 Vermont children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 41.7% of the total number of enrollees.²⁶
- In 2003, Vermont had 6,467 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 4.9% increase from 2002, when 6,162 children were enrolled.²⁷
- In 2002, nine babies were born to girls younger than 15 in Vermont. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 533, reflecting a rate of 24.2 births per 1,000 girls.²⁸
- As of December 2002, 436 adults and adolescents, as well as 6 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Vermont.²⁹
- In 2001, 2 children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.25 per 100,000 children in the population.³⁰
- In 2002, an estimated 7,000 children ages 12–17, and 43,000 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, 5% of teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 1% decrease from 2000.³²
- In 2002, 12% 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, no children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Vermont, compared with none in 2000 as well.³⁴
- In 2003, 1,527 children under age 18 were arrested in Vermont, an 18% decrease from 1,851 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 44 were for violent crimes and 6 were for possession of weapons.³⁵
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 62 children in juvenile correction facilities in Vermont.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 V E R M O N T ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2002, Vermont spent \$67,265,907 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, and 35% was from state funds.³⁸
- In 2002, of the \$67,265,907 spent for child welfare, 29% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 2% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 19% was from Medicaid, 9% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 5% was from TANF, and 1% was from Supplemental Security Income. The remaining funds (35%) came from state and local sources.³⁹
- Out of 1,526 children in out-of-home care in Vermont on September 30, 2002, only 979 or 64% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁰

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VERMONT'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
- In 2002, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Vermont was \$34,632 ; the median income for a family of four in Vermont was \$62,331.⁴⁴

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