

WASHINGTON'S CHILDREN 2005

Washington's Children At a Glance

State Population (2003) ¹	6,131,445
State Population, Children Under 18 (2003) ²	1,496,581
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	11.0%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 (2003) ⁴	13.9%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 (2003) ⁵	11.9%
Poverty Rate, Children Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	17.1%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2002, 28,718 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in Washington, a rate of 19.1 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, 4,673 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Washington, a rate of 3.1 per 1,000 children, representing a 22% decrease from 2000. Of these children, 73.1% were neglected, 21.3% were physically abused, and 6.9% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2002, 15 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Washington.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 8,738 children in Washington lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 9,101 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 41.5% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 11.1% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2002, 60.2% white children, 11.5% black children, 11.7% Hispanic children, 8.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 8.5% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in Washington.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 6,541 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 67.7% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹²
- In 2002, 1,077 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Washington, a 10.5% decrease from 1,204 in 2001.¹³
- Of the 8,738 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 3,350 or 38.3% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2003, more than 30,672 Washington grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 8,738 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 32.6% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Washington children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 60.4% were white, 12.1% were black, 10.7% were Hispanic, 9.2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 7.6% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of *individuals* receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Washington declined from 142,531 in March 2002 to 140,721 in March 2003, a decrease of 1.3%. The number of *families* receiving TANF in March 2003 was 56,513, a 1.0% increase from March 2002.¹⁸
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in Washington was 27% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2003, Washington spent \$571,614,363 in TANF funds, including 47.1% on cash assistance and 52.9% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2002, Washington collected and distributed \$590,896,606 in child support funds, an increase of 3.1% from 2001.²¹

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- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Washington was \$788 per month, or 70% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$7.01 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, Washington served an estimated monthly average of 51,200 children with subsidized child care, a decrease from 2000, when 54,000 children were served, and in 1999, when 46,100 children were served.²³
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 57% of Washington's median income, or \$32,916, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2001, Washington had no children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁵
- In 2003, 11,001 Washington children were served by Head Start, a 1.5% 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, 553,015 Washington children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 57.8% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2003, Washington had 9,571 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 9.3% increase from 2002, when 8,754 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2002, nine babies were born to girls younger than 15 in Washington. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 7,035, reflecting a rate of 33.0 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 10,439 adults and adolescents, as well as 34 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Washington.³⁰
- In 2001, 40 children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.37 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2002, an estimated 46,000 children ages 12–17, and 429,000 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, 6% of teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 3% decrease from 2000.³³
- In 2002, 14% 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, 10 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Washington, compared with 5 in 2000.³⁵
- In 2003, 36,088 children under age 18 were arrested in Washington, a 7% decrease from 38,772 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 1,279 were for violent crimes and 589 were for possession of weapons.³⁶
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,054 children in juvenile correction facilities in Washington.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 W A S H I N G T O N ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2002, Washington spent \$396,477,199 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, 48% was from federal funds, and 52% 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 \$396,477,199 spent for child welfare, 17% 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, 10% was from Medicaid, 10% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 4% was TANF, and 4% was from other federal sources. The remaining funds (52%) came from state and local sources.⁴⁰
- Out of 8,738 children in out-of-home care in Washington on September 30, 2002, only 3,169 or 36% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴¹

WASHINGTON'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
- In 2002, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Washington was \$34,932; the median income for a family of four in Washington was \$66,531.⁴⁵

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