

W Y O M I N G ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 0 5

Wyoming's Children At a Glance	
State Population (2003) ¹	501,242
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ²	121,073
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	9.7%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ⁴	12.3%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2003) ⁵	11.4%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	13.5%

C H I L D A B U S E A N D N E G L E C T

- In 2002, 4,355 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in Wyoming, a rate of 35.4 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, 692 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Wyoming, a rate of 5.7 per 1,000 children, representing a 30% decrease from 2000. Of these children, 60.7% were neglected, 30.8% were physically abused, and 12.3% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2002, three children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Wyoming.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 929 children in Wyoming lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 965 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 18.3% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 34.2% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2002, 83.6% white children, 3.2% black children, 7.5% Hispanic children, 1.8% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 3.8% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in Wyoming.¹¹

P E R M A N E N T F A M I L I E S F O R C H I L D R E N

- Of the 727 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 74.7% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹²
- In 2002, 52 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Wyoming, a 13.0% increase from 46 in 2001.¹³
- Of the 929 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 121 or 13.0% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

K I N S H I P S U P P O R T

- In 2003, more than 2,937 Wyoming grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 929 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 12.3% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Wyoming children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 85.1% were white, 0.9% were black, 7.9% were Hispanic, 0.9% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 5.3% were other races.¹⁷

C H I L D P O V E R T Y A N D I N C O M E S U P P O R T

- The total number of *individuals* receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Wyoming declined from 906 in March 2002 to 729 in March 2003, a decrease of 19.5%. The number of *families* receiving TANF in March 2003 was 411, a 14.4% decrease from March 2002.¹⁸
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in Wyoming was 44% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2003, Wyoming spent \$71,181,018 in TANF funds, including 20.8% on cash assistance, 2.9% on child care, and 76.4% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2002, Wyoming collected and distributed \$46,608,491 in child support funds, an increase of 4.2% from 2001.²¹

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- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Wyoming 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, Wyoming served an estimated monthly average of 3,200 children with subsidized child care, an increase from 2000, when 3,000 children were served, and in 1999, when 3,300 children were served.²³
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 65% of Wyoming's median income, or \$27,060, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2001, Wyoming had no children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁵
- In 2003, 1,803 Wyoming children were served by Head Start, the same as in 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, 29,127 Wyoming children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 57.0% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2003, Wyoming had 5,241 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 3.6% increase from 2002, when 5,059 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2002, one baby was born to a girl younger than 15 in Wyoming. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 804, reflecting a rate of 39.9 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 201 adults and adolescents, as well as 3 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Wyoming.³⁰
- In 2001, 10 children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 7.09 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2002, an estimated 5,000 children ages 12–17, and 39,000 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, 5% of teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 5% 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, no children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Wyoming, compared with none in 2000 as well.³⁵
- In 2003, 6,126 children under age 18 were arrested in Wyoming, a 2% decrease from 6,231 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 49 were for violent crimes and 45 were for possession of weapons.³⁶
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 327 children in juvenile correction facilities in Wyoming.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 Y O M I N G ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2002, Wyoming spent \$30,087,462 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, 51% was from federal funds, and 49% was from state funds.³⁹

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- In 2002, of the \$30,087,462 spent for child welfare, 13% 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, 8% was from Medicaid, 10% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 14% was TANF, 1% was from Supplemental Security Income, 1% came from Survivors Benefits, and 1% was from other federal sources. The remaining funds (49%) came from state and local sources.⁴⁰
- Out of 929 children in out-of-home care in Wyoming on September 30, 2002, only 64 or 7% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴¹

W Y O M I N G ' 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 Wyoming was \$27,612 ; the median income for a family of four in Wyoming was \$57,148.⁴⁵

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