

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S CHILDREN 2006

District of Columbia's Children At a Glance

State Population (2004) ¹	553,523
Population, Children	
Under 18 (2004) ²	109,547
State Poverty Rate (2004) ³	16.7
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2004) ⁴	27.3
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2004) ⁵	26.2

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2003, there were 4,933 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of these, 4,673 reports were referred for investigation.⁶
- In 2003, 2,518 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in the District of Columbia, a rate of 23.2 per 1,000 children, representing a 17% decrease from 2002. Of these children, 82.3% were neglected, 19.5% were physically abused, and 4.9% were sexually abused.⁷
- In 2003, 6 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in the District of Columbia.⁸
- On September 30, 2003, 3,092 children in the District of Columbia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 3,321 children on September 30, 2002. In 2003, 18.1% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 25.4% were 16 or older.⁹
- Of all District of Columbia children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2005, 0.2% were white, 85.1% were black, 2.3% were Hispanic, and 12.4% were of other races and ethnicities.¹⁰

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 757 children exiting out-of-home care in 2003, 44.5% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹¹
- In 2003, 240 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in the District of Columbia, a 4.8% decrease from 252 in 2002.¹²
- Of the 3,092 children in out-of-home care in 2003, 1,130 or 36.5% were waiting to be adopted.¹³

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2004, approximately 5,733 District of Columbia grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁴
- Of the 3,092 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2003, 20.1% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- Of all District of Columbia children in kinship care on September 30, 2003, 88.4% were black, 1.4% were Hispanic, and 10.2% were other races.¹⁶

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in the District of Columbia decreased from 43,886 in March 2004 to 41,916 in March 2005, a decrease of 4.5%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2005 was 16,905, a 1.8% decrease from March 2004.¹⁷
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in the District of Columbia was at 41.6% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2004, the District of Columbia spent \$168,633,780 in TANF funds, including 41.3% on basic assistance and 58.7% on nonassistance.¹⁹

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- In 2004, the District of Columbia collected and distributed \$44,704,165 in child support funds, an increase of 0.9% from 2003.²⁰
- In 2004, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the District of Columbia was \$1,187 per month, or 112.4% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$6.60 per hour.²¹

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

- In 2004, an estimated monthly average of 7,400 of DC's children received subsidized child care; 8,500 children received subsidized child care in 2003, and 9,200 in 2002.²²
- In 2005, to be eligible for subsidized child care in the District of Columbia, a family of three could make no more than \$34,700, which is equivalent to 74% of the state's median income.²³
- In 2005, the District of Columbia had 1,483 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁴
- In 2004, Head Start served 3,403 DC children, the same as in 2003.²⁵

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, 76,300 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 50% of the total number of enrollees in the District of Columbia.²⁶
- In 2001, 4,632 children in foster care were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 6.1% of all children enrolled in Medicaid in the District of Columbia.²⁷
- DC spent \$9,654 per enrollee in 2001 on Medicaid services for children in foster care.²⁸
- In 2004, the District of Columbia had 6,093 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 3.7% increase from 2003, when 5,875 children were enrolled.²⁹
- In 2003, the birth rate for DC teens 15–17 was 39.4 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 84.9 births. This reflects a total rate of 60.3 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁰
- As of December 2003, 15,660 adults and adolescents, as well as 181 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in the District of Columbia.³¹
- In 2003, an estimated 2,000 children ages 12–17, and 55,000 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 2004, 8% of DC teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 38.5% decrease from 2000.³³
- In 2004, 9% of teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.³⁴
- In 2003, an estimated 1,000 children ages 12–17 in the District of Columbia needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.³⁵
- In 2003, an estimated 1,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.³⁶
- In 2002, 1 child younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 0.83 per 100,000 children in the population.³⁷

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JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2002, 13 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in the District of Columbia, a 44.4% increase from 9 in 2001.³⁸
- In 2004, 338 children younger than 18 were arrested in the District of Columbia, a 1.8% increase from 332 arrests in 2003. Of the arrests in 2004, 41 were for a violent crime and 9 were for possession of a weapon.³⁹
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 171 children in juvenile correction facilities in the District of Columbia.⁴⁰

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR DC'S CHILDREN

- In 2002, the District of Columbia spent \$218,074,750 for child welfare services. *Child welfare services* refer to all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this number, 35.4% was from federal funds, and 64.6% was from state funds.⁴¹
- In 2002, of the \$77,138,769 in federal funds received for child welfare, 50.2% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 2.4% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 30.6% was from Medicaid, 0.7% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 14.3% was from TANF, 0.5% came from Supplemental Security Income, and 1.3% came from other federal sources.⁴²
- Out of 3,092 children in out-of-home care in the District of Columbia on September 30, 2003, only 44 children, or 1.4%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴³

DC'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.⁴⁴
- 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.⁴⁵
- 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 provided to children and families. CWLA recommends that foster care caseworkers have caseloads of 12–15 children.⁴⁶
- In 2002, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in the District of Columbia was \$39,846 ; the median income for a family of four in the District of Columbia was \$55,692.⁴⁷

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