

MONTANA'S CHILDREN 2006

Montana's Children At a Glance

State Population (2004) ¹	926,865
Population, Children Under 18 (2004) ²	208,093
State Poverty Rate (2004) ³	14.1
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 (2004) ⁴	16.5
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 (2004) ⁵	13.6

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2003, there were 15,017 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of these, 9,023 reports were referred for investigation.⁶
- In 2003, 1,951 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Montana, a rate of 9 per 1,000 children, representing a 2.2% decrease from 2002. Of these children, 38.7% were neglected, 59.1% were physically abused, and 8.7% were sexually abused.⁷
- In 2003, 3 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Montana.⁸
- On September 30, 2003, 1,866 children in Montana lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 1,912 children on September 30, 2002. In 2003, 34% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 13.9% were 16 or older.⁹
- Of all Montana children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2005, 52.4% were white, 1.4% were black, 5.7% were Hispanic, 33.4% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 7.1% were of other races and ethnicities.¹⁰

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 1,087 children exiting out-of-home care in 2003, 57.7% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹¹
- In 2003, 224 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Montana, a 9.3% decrease from 247 in 2002.¹²
- Of the 1,866 children in out-of-home care in 2003, 661 or 35.4% were waiting to be adopted.¹³

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2004, approximately 7,384 Montana grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁴
- Of the 1,866 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2003, 32.6% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- Of all Montana children in kinship care on September 30, 2003, 47.2% were white, 1% were black, 5.3% were Hispanic, 38.7% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 7.9% were other races.¹⁶

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Montana decreased from 14,649 in March 2004 to 12,894 in March 2005, a decrease of 12%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2005 was 4,861, a 9.8% decrease from March 2004.¹⁷
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Montana was at 49.2% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2004, Montana spent \$44,888,266 in TANF funds, including 46.7% on basic assistance, 4.2% on child care, and 45% on nonassistance.¹⁹

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- In 2004, Montana collected and distributed \$45,000,554 in child support funds, an increase of 1.6% from 2003.²⁰
- In 2004, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Montana was \$546 per month, or 66.3% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$5.15 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 5,100 of Montana's children received subsidized child care; 5,200 children received subsidized child care in 2003, and 6,800 in 2002.²²
- In 2005, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Montana, a family of three could make no more than \$23,508, which is equivalent to 54% of the state's median income.²³
- In 2005, Montana had no children on a waiting list for child care assistance.²⁴
- In 2004, Head Start served 2,945 Montana children, a 0.2% decrease from 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, 54,900 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 53.9% of the total number of enrollees in Montana.²⁶
- In 2001, 3,947 children in foster care were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 7.2% of all children enrolled in Medicaid in Montana.²⁷
- Montana spent \$7,024 per enrollee in 2001 on Medicaid services for children in foster care.²⁸
- In 2004, Montana had 15,281 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 16.8% increase from 2003, when 13,084 children were enrolled.²⁹
- In 2003, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Montana was 16.5 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 61.4 births. This reflects a total rate of 35.0 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁰
- As of December 2003, 363 adults and adolescents, as well as 3 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Montana.³¹
- In 2003, an estimated 12,000 children ages 12–17, and 79,000 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, 9% of Montana teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 29% increase from 2000.³³
- In 2004, 12% 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 5,000 children ages 12–17 in Montana needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.³⁵
- In 2003, an estimated 8,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.³⁶
- In 2002, 13 children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 5.24 per 100,000 children in the population.³⁷

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 2002, 2 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Montana, a 33% decrease from 3 in 2001.³⁸

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- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 266 children in juvenile correction facilities in Montana.³⁹

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR MONTANA'S CHILDREN

- In 2002, Montana spent \$44,723,037 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, 48.7% was from federal funds, and 51.3% was from state funds.⁴⁰
- In 2002, of the \$21,764,484 in federal funds received for child welfare, 64.7% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 8.4% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 6.4% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 12.2% was from TANF, 2.8% came from Supplemental Security Income, and 5.5% came from other federal sources.⁴¹
- Out of 1,866 children in out-of-home care in Montana on September 30, 2003, only 828 children, or 44.4%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴²

MONTANA'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.⁴³
- 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.⁴⁴
- 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.⁴⁵

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