

NORTH CAROLINA'S CHILDREN 2006

North Carolina's Children At a Glance

State Population (2004) ¹	8,541,221
Population, Children Under 18 (2004) ²	2,118,492
State Poverty Rate (2004) ³	14.6
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 (2004) ⁴	19.2
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 (2004) ⁵	18.6

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2003, 32,847 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in North Carolina, a rate of 15.7 per 1,000 children, representing a 7.5% decrease from 2002. Of these children, 90.3% were neglected, 3.1% were physically abused, and 3.6% were sexually abused.⁶
- In 2003, no children died as a result of abuse or neglect in North Carolina.⁷
- On September 30, 2003, 9,534 children in North Carolina lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 9,527 children on September 30, 2002. In 2003, 34.9% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 15.2% were 16 or older.⁸
- Of all North Carolina children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2005, 45.9% were white, 43.1% were black, 6.1% were Hispanic, 2.1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.8% were of other races and ethnicities.⁹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 5,067 children exiting out-of-home care in 2003, 54.9% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹⁰
- In 2003, 1,296 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in North Carolina, a 2.1% decrease from 1,324 in 2002.¹¹
- Of the 9,534 children in out-of-home care in 2003, 3,100 or 32.5% were waiting to be adopted.¹²

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2004, approximately 91,837 North Carolina grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹³
- Of the 9,534 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2003, 20.1% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁴
- Of all North Carolina children in kinship care on September 30, 2003, 44.8% were white, 43% were black, 5.9% were Hispanic, 4% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.4% were other races.¹⁵

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in North Carolina decreased from 75,919 in March 2004 to 65,919 in March 2005, a decrease of 13.2%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2005 was 33,201, a 10.9% decrease from March 2004.¹⁶
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in North Carolina was at 31.9% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁷
- In 2004, North Carolina spent \$437,816,037 in TANF funds, including 27.2% on basic assistance and 72.2% on nonassistance.¹⁸
- In 2004, North Carolina collected and distributed \$527,372,864 in child support funds, an increase of 6.3% from 2003.¹⁹

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- In 2004, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in North Carolina was \$623 per month, or 75.6% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.²⁰

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 99,600 of North Carolina's children received subsidized child care; 88,300 children received subsidized child care in 2003, and 77,300 in 2002.²¹
- In 2005, to be eligible for subsidized child care in North Carolina, a family of three could make no more than \$35,352, which is equivalent to 72% of the state's median income.²²
- In 2005, North Carolina had 15,871 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²³
- In 2004, Head Start served 19,098 North Carolina children, a 0.1% decrease from 2003.²⁴

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, 689,500 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 50.1% of the total number of enrollees in North Carolina.²⁵
- In 2001, 15,680 children in foster care were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 2.3% of all children enrolled in Medicaid in North Carolina.²⁶
- North Carolina spent \$4,673 per enrollee in 2001 on Medicaid services for children in foster care.²⁷
- In 2004, North Carolina had 174,259 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 15.8% increase from 2003, when 150,444 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2003, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in North Carolina was 26.6 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 84.4 births. This reflects a total rate of 49.0 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.²⁹
- As of December 2003, 13,335 adults and adolescents, as well as 121 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in North Carolina.³⁰
- In 2003, an estimated 57,000 children ages 12–17, and 506,000 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 2004, 9% of North Carolina teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 43.8% decrease from 2000.³²
- In 2004, 10% of teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.³³
- In 2003, an estimated 36,000 children ages 12–17 in North Carolina needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.³⁴
- In 2003, an estimated 37,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.³⁵
- In 2002, 36 children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.58 per 100,000 children in the population.³⁶

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, 18 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in North Carolina, the same as in 2001.³⁷
- In 2004, 37,870 children younger than 18 were arrested in North Carolina, a 16.1% decrease from 45,130 arrests in 2003. Of the arrests in 2004, 1,637 were for a violent crime and 1,201 were for possession of a weapon.³⁸

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- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,318 children in juvenile correction facilities in North Carolina.³⁹

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NORTH CAROLINA'S CHILDREN

- In 2002, North Carolina spent \$314,207,149 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, 65% was from federal funds, 14.4% was from state funds, and 20.6% was from local funds.⁴⁰
- In 2002, of the \$204,357,182 in federal funds received for child welfare, 35.1% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 8.8% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 1.6% was from TANF, and 0.2% came from other federal sources.⁴¹
- Out of 9,534 children in out-of-home care in North Carolina on September 30, 2003, only 3,561 children, or 37.4%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴²

NORTH CAROLINA'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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