

# THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S CHILDREN 2007

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## The District of Columbia's Children At a Glance

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	550,521
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	112,837
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	21.3
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	32.2
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 <sup>5</sup> .....	30.9
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	34.3

*All statistics are for 2005.*

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2004, the District of Columbia had 5,297 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of those, 4,977 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2004, 2,378 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in DC, a rate of 21.7 per 1,000 children, and representing a 5.6% decrease from 2003. Of these children, 85.8% were neglected, 15.3% were physically abused, and 4.6% were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2004, five children died as a result of abuse or neglect in the District of Columbia.<sup>9</sup>
- On September 30, 2004, 2,608 DC children lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 3,092 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 18.3% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 28.2% were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 0.2% were white, 90.8% were black, 3.5% were Hispanic, and 5.6% were children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

## PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 1,024 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 27.1% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2004, 436 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in DC, a 45.0% increase from 240 in 2003.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 2,608 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 795 or 30.5% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>

## KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 5,764 DC grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 2,608 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 14.1% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all DC children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 94.0% were black, 1.4% were Hispanic, and 4.6% were of other races.<sup>17</sup>

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## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in DC decreased from 41,916 in March 2005 to 38,506 in March 2006, a decrease of 8.9%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 15,683 , a 7.8% decrease from March 2005.<sup>18</sup>
- 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.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2004, the District of Columbia spent \$168,633,780 in TANF funds, including 41.3% on basic assistance and 58.7% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2005, the District of Columbia collected and distributed \$47,972,545 in child support funds, an increase of 7.3% from 2004.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the District of Columbia was \$1,225 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$23.56 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>22</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2005, the District of Columbia had an estimated monthly average of 3,800 children served by subsidized child care; 4,500 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 8,500 in 2003.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in the District of Columbia, a family of three could make no more than \$40,225, which is equivalent to 85% of the state's median income.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2006, the District of Columbia had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>25</sup>
- In 2005, Head Start served 3,403 District of Columbia children—the same number as in 2004.<sup>26</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2002, 95,200 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in the District of Columbia, representing 46.6% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>27</sup>
- In 2001, 4,632 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in the District of Columbia, representing 6.1% of all children in Medicaid.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2001, the District of Columbia spent \$44,718,246 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$9,654 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2005, the District of Columbia had 6,631 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, an 8.8% increase from 2004, when 6,093 children were enrolled.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2003, 833 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams in the District of Columbia.<sup>31</sup>

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- In 2003, 80 infants younger than 1 year died in the District of Columbia.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2004, the birth rate for teens age 15–17 in the District of Columbia was 42.4 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 102.7. This reflects a total rate of 66.7 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>33</sup>
- Cumulative through 2004, 16,079 adults and adolescents, as well as 180 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in the District of Columbia.<sup>34</sup>
- In 2004, an estimated 2,000 children age 12–17, and 38,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in the District of Columbia.<sup>35</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 118 children aged-out of out-of-home care in the District of Columbia.<sup>36</sup>
- In 2004, 1,000 DC teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.<sup>37</sup>
- In 2004, 9% of teens age 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2004, approximately 1,000 children age 12–17 in the District of Columbia needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2004, approximately 1,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2003, three children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.49 per 100,000 children.<sup>41</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, 9 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in the District of Columbia, a 31% decrease from 13 in 2002.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2005, 347 children younger than 18 were arrested in the District of Columbia, a 2.7% increase from 338 arrests in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 30 were for violent crimes, and 12 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>43</sup>
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 285 children in juvenile correction facilities in District of Columbia.<sup>44</sup>

## FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR DC'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, the District of Columbia spent \$229,968,546 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.<sup>45</sup> Of this amount, 39% was from federal funds, and 61% was from local funds.<sup>46</sup>

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- In 2004, of the \$89,703,493 in federal funds received for child welfare, 41% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 2% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 49% was from Medicaid, 1% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 5% was from TANF, and 3% came from other federal sources.<sup>47</sup>
- Out of 2,608 children in out-of-home care in the District of Columbia on September 30, 2004, only 1,181, or 45.3%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>48</sup>

## THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'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.<sup>49</sup>
- The federal Child and Family Service Reviews have demonstrated clearly that the more time a caseworker spends with a child and family, the better the outcomes for those children and families.<sup>50</sup>
- According to the 2003 GAO report, the average caseload for child welfare/foster care caseworkers is 24–31 children; 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.<sup>51</sup>
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in the District of Columbia was \$41,440; the median income for a family of four was \$56,067.<sup>52</sup>

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