

GEORGIA'S CHILDREN 2007

Georgia's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	9,072,576
Population, Children Under 18 ²	2,362,722
State Poverty Rate ³	14.4
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	20.2
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	18.5
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	23.3

All statistics are for 2005.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2004, Georgia had 101,986 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of those, 85,817 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2004, 52,851 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Georgia, a rate of 22.7 per 1,000 children, and representing a 20.3% increase from 2003. Of these children, 69.0% were neglected, 10.8% were physically abused, and 4.6% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2004, 98 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Georgia.⁹
- On September 30, 2004, 14,216 children in Georgia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 13,578 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 38.4% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 12.1% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 42.7% were white, 49.4% were black, 4.6% were Hispanic, and 3.3% were children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 11,094 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 76.1% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2004, 1,269 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Georgia, a 14.0% increase from 1,091 in 2003.¹³
- Of the 14,216 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 2,520 or 17.7% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 93,189 Georgia grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 14,216 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 13.5% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Georgia children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 48.5% were white, 46.4% were black, 2.5% were Hispanic, and 2.7% were of other races.¹⁷

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CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Georgia decreased from 87,979 in March 2005 to 62,252 in March 2006, a decrease of 41.3%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 31,775, a 29.5% decrease from March 2005.¹⁸
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Georgia was at 33.6% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2004, Georgia spent \$535,343,125 in TANF funds, including 30.3% on basic assistance, 4.1% on child care, 2.3% on transportation, and 63.2% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2005, Georgia collected and distributed \$498,897,914 in child support funds, an increase of 7.2% from 2004.²¹
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Georgia was \$688 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$13.24 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²²

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2005, Georgia had an estimated monthly average of 60,600 children served by subsidized child care; 59,500 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 61,900 in 2003.²³
- In 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Georgia, a family of three could make no more than \$24,416, which is equivalent to 47% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2006, Georgia had 10250 families children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2005, Head Start served 23,508 Georgia children, a 0.2% increase from 2004.²⁶

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2002, 864,400 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia, representing 59.3% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2001, 18,877 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia, representing 2.6% of all children in Medicaid.²⁸
- In 2001, Georgia spent \$47,381,816 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$2,510 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.²⁹
- Georgia reported spending \$7,093,688.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on targeted case management services for foster children.³⁰
- Georgia reported spending \$10,074.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on rehabilitative services for foster children.³¹

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- In 2005, Georgia had 306,733 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 9.5% increase from 2004, when 280,083 children were enrolled.³²
- In 2003, 12,205 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Georgia a ranking of 44 nationally in number of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2003, 1,151 infants younger than 1 year died in Georgia, giving the state a ranking of 44 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2004, the birth rate for teens age 15–17 in Georgia was 29.3 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 90.8. This reflects a total rate of 53.4 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2004, 28,026 adults and adolescents, as well as 222 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Georgia.³⁶
- In 2004, an estimated 54,000 children age 12–17, and 346,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Georgia.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 621 children aged-out of out-of-home care in Georgia.³⁸
- In 2004, 53,000 Georgia teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2004, 11% of teens age 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴⁰
- In 2004, approximately 34,000 children age 12–17 in Georgia needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2004, approximately 31,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2003, 56 children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.2 per 100,000 children.⁴³

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, 32 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Georgia, a 3% decrease from 33 in 2002.⁴⁴
- In 2005, 28,429 children younger than 18 were arrested in Georgia, an 18.2% increase from 24,054 arrests in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 1,316 were for violent crimes and 778 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁵
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,451 children in juvenile correction facilities in Georgia.⁴⁶

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FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR GEORGIA'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, Georgia spent \$441,987,629 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.⁴⁷ Of this amount, 64% was from federal funds, 35% was from state funds, and 1% was from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2004, of the \$282,945,598 in federal funds received for child welfare, 32% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 8% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 19% was from Medicaid, 9% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 31% was from TANF, and 1% came from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 14,216 children in out-of-home care in Georgia on September 30, 2004, only 4,687, or 33.0%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰

GEORGIA'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.⁵¹
- 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.⁵²
- 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.⁵³
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Georgia was \$25,895; the median income for a family of four was \$62,294.⁵⁴

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