

NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN 2007

Nebraska's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	1,758,787
Population, Children Under 18 ²	431,629
State Poverty Rate ³	9.5
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	14.8
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	12.9
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	18.2

All statistics are for 2005.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2004, Nebraska had 17,060 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of those, 10,962 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2004, 4,785 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Nebraska, a rate of 11.0 per 1,000 children, and representing a 23.5% increase from 2003. Of these children, 79.2% were neglected, 18.2% were physically abused, and 8.0% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2004, 11 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Nebraska.⁹
- On September 30, 2004, 6,292 children in Nebraska lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 6,091 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 25.5% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 28.8% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 63.2% were white, 15.3% were black, 10.2% were Hispanic, 7.8% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.6% were children of other aces and ethnicities.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 3,118 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 69.4% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2004, 367 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Nebraska, a 25.3% increase from 274 in 2003.¹³
- Of the 6,292 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 925 or 14.7% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 8,669 Nebraska grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 6,292 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 16.0% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Nebraska children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 66.6% were white, 14.4% were black, 8.1% were Hispanic, 8.8% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.1% 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 Nebraska increased from 23,300 in March 2005 to 24,517 in March 2006, an increase of 5.0%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 10,262, a 4.6% increase from March 2005.¹⁸
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Nebraska was at 40.4% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2004, Nebraska spent \$88,944,672 in TANF funds, including 72.4% on basic assistance, and 27.6% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2005, Nebraska collected and distributed \$159,216,677 in child support funds, an increase of 3.7% from 2004.²¹
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Nebraska was \$591 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$11.36 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²²

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2005, Nebraska had an estimated monthly average of 13,400 children served by subsidized child care; 13,400 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 12,000 in 2003.²³
- In 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Nebraska, a family of three could make no more than \$19,308, which is equivalent to 36% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2006, Nebraska had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2005, Head Start served 5,080 Nebraska children, the same as in 2004.²⁶

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2002, 160,600 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Nebraska, representing 60.4% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2001, 10,120 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in Nebraska, representing 6.8% of all children in Medicaid.²⁸
- In 2001, Nebraska spent \$56,762,855 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$5,609 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.²⁹
- Nebraska reported spending \$213,855.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on targeted case management services for foster children.³⁰
- Nebraska reported spending \$684.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on rehabilitative services for foster children.³¹
- In 2005, Nebraska had 44,706 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 0.1% increase from 2004, when 44,646 children were enrolled.³²

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- In 2003, 1,792 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Nebraska a ranking of 13 nationally in number of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2003, 141 infants younger than 1 year died in Nebraska, giving the state a ranking of 13 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 Nebraska was 18.2 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 60.5. This reflects a total rate of 35.9 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2004, 1,318 adults and adolescents, as well as 11 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Nebraska.³⁶
- In 2004, an estimated 16,000 children age 12–17, and 78,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Nebraska.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 101 children aged-out of out-of-home care in Nebraska.³⁸
- In 2004, 5,000 Nebraska teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2004, 6% of teens age 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴⁰
- In 2004, approximately 7,000 children age 12–17 in Nebraska needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2004, approximately 12,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2003, 17 children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 3.45 per 100,000 children.⁴³

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, four children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Nebraska, the same number as in 2002.⁴⁴
- In 2005, 15,219 children younger than 18 were arrested in Nebraska, a 4.4% increase from 14,577 arrests in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 185 were for violent crimes and 167 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁵
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 672 children in juvenile correction facilities in Nebraska.⁴⁶

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, Nebraska spent \$166,017,977 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, 46% was from federal funds, and 54% was from state funds.⁴⁸

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- In 2004, of the \$76,809,632 in federal funds received for child welfare, 32% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 5% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 59% was from Medicaid, and 4% came from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 6,292 children in out-of-home care in Nebraska on September 30, 2004, only 1,394, or 22.2%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰

NEBRASKA'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 Nebraska was \$29,111; the median income for a family of four was \$63,625.⁵⁴

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