

# NEW JERSEY'S CHILDREN 2007

## New Jersey's Children At a Glance

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	8,717,925
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	2,161,801
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	6.8
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	11.8
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 <sup>5</sup> .....	10.7
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	13.7

*All statistics are for 2005.*

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2004, 8,159 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in New Jersey, a rate of 3.8 per 1,000 children, and representing a 0.4% increase from 2003. Of these children, 52.3% were neglected, 26.6% were physically abused, and 8.1% were sexually abused.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2004, 34 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in New Jersey.<sup>8</sup>
- On September 30, 2004, 12,702 children in New Jersey lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 12,801 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 37.7% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 14.6% were 16 or older.<sup>9</sup>
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 24.1% were white, 59.3% were black, 6.4% were Hispanic, 0.2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 10.1% were children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>10</sup>

## PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 7,101 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 67.4% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>11</sup>
- In 2004, 1328 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in New Jersey, a 29.6% increase from 935 in 2003.<sup>12</sup>
- Of the 12,702 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 5,934 or 46.7% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>13</sup>

## KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 57,140 New Jersey grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>14</sup>
- Of the 12,702 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 10.1% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>15</sup>
- Of all New Jersey children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 23.0% were white, 64.5% were black, 4.9% were Hispanic, 0.2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 7.4% were of other races.<sup>16</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in New Jersey decreased from 109,486 in March 2005 to 100,906 in March 2006, a decrease of 8.5%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 40,839, a 12.3% decrease from March 2005.<sup>17</sup>

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- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in New Jersey was at 42.5% of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2004, New Jersey spent \$888,893,039 in TANF funds, including 30.1% on basic assistance, 4.2% on child care, 1.4% on transportation, and 64.7% on nonassistance.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2005, New Jersey collected and distributed \$915,475,680 in child support funds, an increase of 6.2% from 2004.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in New Jersey was \$1,085 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$20.87 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>21</sup>

## C H I L D C A R E A N D H E A D S T A R T

- In 2005, New Jersey had an estimated monthly average of 37,800 children served by subsidized child care; 38,300 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 37,500 in 2003.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in New Jersey, a family of three could make no more than \$32,180, which is equivalent to 44% of the state's median income.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2006, New Jersey had 4,803 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2005, Head Start served 14,717 New Jersey children, a 2.7% decrease from 2004.<sup>25</sup>

## H E A L T H A N D S U B S T A N C E A B U S E

- In 2002, 484,700 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in New Jersey, representing 49.3% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2001, 19,828 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in New Jersey, representing 4.3% of all children in Medicaid.<sup>27</sup>
- In 2001, New Jersey spent \$142,733,135 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$7,199 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.<sup>28</sup>
- New Jersey reported spending \$27,292,309.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on rehabilitative services for foster children.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2005, New Jersey had 129,591 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 1.8% increase from 2004, when 127,244 children were enrolled.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2003, 9,498 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving New Jersey a ranking of 40 nationally in number of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>31</sup>
- In 2003, 661 infants younger than 1 year died in New Jersey, giving the state a ranking of 37 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>32</sup>
- In 2004, the birth rate for teens age 15–17 in New Jersey was 12.5 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 42.7. This reflects a total rate of 24.1 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>33</sup>

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- Cumulative through 2004, 46,459 adults and adolescents, as well as 765 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in New Jersey.<sup>34</sup>
- In 2004, an estimated 65,000 children age 12–17, and 349,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in New Jersey.<sup>35</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 418 children aged-out of out-of-home care in New Jersey.<sup>36</sup>
- In 2004, 22,000 New Jersey teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.<sup>37</sup>
- In 2004, 7% 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 38,000 children age 12–17 in New Jersey needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2004, approximately 41,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2003, 21 children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 0.89 per 100,000 children.<sup>41</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, 12 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in New Jersey, compared with 9 in 2002.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2005, 59,154 children younger than 18 were arrested in New Jersey, a 2.1% decrease from 60,443 arrests in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 3,266 were for violent crimes and 1,966 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>43</sup>
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,941 children in juvenile correction facilities in New Jersey.<sup>44</sup>

## FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NEW JERSEY'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, New Jersey spent \$507,810,949 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, 34% was from federal funds, and 66% was from state funds.<sup>46</sup>
- In 2004, of the \$171,649,949 in federal funds received for child welfare, 52% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 7% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 18% was from Medicaid, 12% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 7% was from TANF, and 3% came from other federal sources.<sup>47</sup>
- Out of 12,702 children in out-of-home care in New Jersey on September 30, 2004, only 4,300, or 33.9%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>48</sup>

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## NEW JERSEY'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 New Jersey was \$35,334; the median income for a family of four was \$87,412.<sup>52</sup>

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