

NORTH CAROLINA'S CHILDREN 2007

North Carolina's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	8,683,242
Population, Children Under 18 ²	2,141,041
State Poverty Rate ³	13.1
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	21.3
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	20.0
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	23.5

All statistics are for 2005.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2004, 29,085 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in North Carolina, a rate of 13.7 per 1,000 children, and representing a 11.5% decrease from 2003. Of these children, 88.0% were neglected, 4.0% were physically abused, and 4.1% were sexually abused.⁷
- On September 30, 2004, 10,077 children in North Carolina lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 9,534 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 35.9% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 15.7% were 16 or older.⁸
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 44.8% were white, 42.9% were black, 6.7% were Hispanic, 2.1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.4% were children of other races and ethnicities.⁹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 5,194 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 52.9% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹⁰
- In 2004, 1,198 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in North Carolina, an 8.2% decrease from 1,296 in 2003.¹¹
- Of the 10,077 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 3,101 or 30.8% were waiting to be adopted.¹²

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 82,149 North Carolina grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹³
- Of the 10,077 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 21.7% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁴
- Of all North Carolina children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 43.2% were white, 43.2% were black, 5.9% were Hispanic, 4.3% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.3% were of 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 65,919 in March 2005 to 58,320 in March 2006, a decrease of 13.0%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 30,111, a 10.3% decrease from March 2005.¹⁶

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- 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 2005, North Carolina collected and distributed \$565,129,209 in child support funds, an increase of 7.2% from 2004.¹⁹
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in North Carolina was \$631 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$12.14 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²⁰

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

- In 2005, North Carolina had an estimated monthly average of 104,200 children served by subsidized child care; 99,600 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 88,300 in 2003.²¹
- In 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in North Carolina, a family of three could make no more than \$35,592, which is equivalent to 75% of the state's median income.²²
- In 2006, North Carolina had 37,195 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²³
- In 2005, Head Start served 19,003 North Carolina children, a 0.5% decrease from 2004.²⁴

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

- In 2002, 715,700 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in North Carolina, representing 51.5% of the total number of enrollees.²⁵
- In 2001, 15,680 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in North Carolina, representing 2.3% of all children in Medicaid.²⁶
- In 2001, North Carolina spent \$73,275,317 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$4,673 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.²⁷
- North Carolina reported spending \$5,443,165.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on targeted case management services for foster children.²⁸
- In 2005, North Carolina had 196,181 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 12.5% increase from 2004, when 174,434 children were enrolled.²⁹
- In 2003, 10,631 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving North Carolina a ranking of 41 nationally in number of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁰
- In 2003, 972 infants younger than 1 year died in North Carolina, giving the state a ranking of 41 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³¹
- In 2004, the birth rate for teens age 15–17 in North Carolina was 26.1 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 84.5. This reflects a total rate of 48.8 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³²

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- Cumulative through 2004, 13,958 adults and adolescents, as well as 120 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in North Carolina.³³
- In 2004, an estimated 51,000 children age 12–17, and 330,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in North Carolina.³⁴

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 389 children aged-out of out-of-home care in North Carolina.³⁵
- In 2004, 34,000 North Carolina teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁶
- In 2004, 10% of teens age 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.³⁷
- In 2004, approximately 31,000 children age 12–17 in North Carolina needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.³⁸
- In 2004, approximately 31,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.³⁹
- In 2003, 50 children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.17 per 100,000 children.⁴⁰

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, 24 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in North Carolina, a 33% increase from 18 in 2002.⁴¹
- In 2005, 47,488 children younger than 18 were arrested in North Carolina, a 25.4% increase from 37,870 arrests in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 2,508 were for violent crimes and 1,545 were for possession of a weapon.⁴²
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,203 children in juvenile correction facilities in North Carolina.⁴³

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NORTH CAROLINA'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, North Carolina spent \$368,145,619 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.⁴⁴ Of this amount, 53% was from federal funds, 19% was from state funds, and 29% was from local funds.⁴⁵
- In 2004, of the \$193,772,277 in federal funds received for child welfare, 39% 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, 3% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 48% was from TANF, and 1% came from other federal sources.⁴⁶
- Out of 10,077 children in out-of-home care in North Carolina on September 30, 2004, only 3,902, or 38.7%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁷

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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.⁴⁸
- 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.⁴⁹
- 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.⁵⁰

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