

# OKLAHOMA'S CHILDREN 2007

## Oklahoma's Children At a Glance

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	3,547,884
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	853,336
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	15.6
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	23.0
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 <sup>5</sup> .....	20.4
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	27.5

*All statistics are for 2005.*

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2004, Oklahoma had 59,888 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of those, 36,070 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2004, 12,483 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Oklahoma, a rate of 14.5 per 1,000 children, and representing a 0.4% decrease from 2003. Of these children, 88.0% were neglected, 19.0% were physically abused, and 6.9% were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2004, 39 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Oklahoma.<sup>9</sup>
- On September 30, 2004, 10,572 children in Oklahoma lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 9,194 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 40.3% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 10.1% were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 45.0% were white, 16.4% were black, 10.4% were Hispanic, 11.4% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 16.9% were children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

## PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 5,063 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 67.0% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2004, 1,141 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Oklahoma, a 1.0% decrease from 1,152 in 2003.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 10,572 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 3,205 or 30.3% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>

## KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 44,430 Oklahoma grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 10,572 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 24.9% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all Oklahoma children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 45.7% were white, 20.9% were black, 9.4% were Hispanic, 8.7% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 15.4% 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 Oklahoma decreased from 26,448 in March 2005 to 23,492 in March 2006, a decrease of 12.6%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 10,537, a 10.4% decrease from March 2005.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Oklahoma was at 30.7% of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2004, Oklahoma spent \$194,597,138 in TANF funds, including 21.8% on basic assistance, 36.1% on child care, 14.0% on transportation, and 20.4% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2005, Oklahoma collected and distributed \$177,478,235 in child support funds, an increase of 15.2% from 2004.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Oklahoma was \$548 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$10.55 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>22</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2005, Oklahoma had an estimated monthly average of 19,700 children served by subsidized child care; 21,800 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 21,300 in 2003.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Oklahoma, a family of three could make no more than \$29,100, which is equivalent to 69% of the state's median income.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2006, Oklahoma had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>25</sup>
- In 2005, Head Start served 13,915 Oklahoma children, a 3.3% increase from 2004.<sup>26</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2002, 438,700 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Oklahoma, representing 64.7% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>27</sup>
- In 2001, 6,387 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in Oklahoma, representing 1.5% of all children in Medicaid.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2001, Oklahoma spent \$39,669,933 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$6,211 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.<sup>29</sup>
- Oklahoma reported spending \$6,213,691.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on targeted case management services for foster children.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2005, Oklahoma had 108,100 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 7.3% increase from 2004, when 100,761 children were enrolled.<sup>31</sup>

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- In 2003, 3,951 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Oklahoma a ranking of 23 nationally in number of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>32</sup>
- In 2003, 397 infants younger than 1 year died in Oklahoma, giving the state a ranking of 26 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>33</sup>
- In 2004, the birth rate for teens age 15–17 in Oklahoma was 29.8 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 91.9. This reflects a total rate of 55.6 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>34</sup>
- Cumulative through 2004, 4,356 adults and adolescents, as well as 25 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Oklahoma.<sup>35</sup>
- In 2004, an estimated 32,000 children age 12–17, and 145,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Oklahoma.<sup>36</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 315 children aged-out of out-of-home care in Oklahoma.<sup>37</sup>
- In 2004, 11,000 Oklahoma teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.<sup>38</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>39</sup>
- In 2004, approximately 17,000 children age 12–17 in Oklahoma needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2004, approximately 19,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2003, 42 children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 4.3 per 100,000 children.<sup>42</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, seven children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Oklahoma, the same number as in 2002.<sup>43</sup>
- In 2005, 19,813 children younger than 18 were arrested in Oklahoma, a 14.3% decrease from 23,128 arrests in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 682 were for violent crimes and 322 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>44</sup>
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,059 children in juvenile correction facilities in Oklahoma.<sup>45</sup>

## FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR OKLAHOMA'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, Oklahoma spent \$203,121,755 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.<sup>46</sup> Of this amount, 64% was from federal funds, and 36% was from state funds.<sup>47</sup>

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- In 2004, of the \$129,862,389 in federal funds received for child welfare, 32% 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, 25% was from Medicaid, 18% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 13% was from TANF, and 6% came from other federal sources.<sup>48</sup>
- Out of 10,572 children in out-of-home care in Oklahoma on September 30, 2004, only 5,041, or 47.7%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>49</sup>

## OKLAHOMA'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>50</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>51</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>52</sup>
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Oklahoma was \$24,000; the median income for a family of four was \$50,216.<sup>53</sup>

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