

VERMONT'S CHILDREN 2007

Vermont's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	623,050
Population, Children Under 18 ²	132,619
State Poverty Rate ³	7.6
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	15.4
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	13.5
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	17.6

All statistics are for 2005.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2004, Vermont had 12,354 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of those, 2,690 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2004, 1,138 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Vermont, a rate of 8.4 per 1,000 children, and representing a 7.7% decrease from 2003. Of these children, 5.7% were neglected, 49.4% were physically abused, and 45.7% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2004, no children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Vermont.⁹
- On September 30, 2004, 1,432 children in Vermont lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 1,409 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 17.2% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 29.2% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 95.3% were white, 2.3% were black, 0.7% were Hispanic, 0.2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 1.5% were children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 763 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 55.8% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2004, 220 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Vermont, a 24.1% increase from 167 in 2003.¹³
- Of the 1,432 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 278 or 19.4% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 2,160 Vermont grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 1,432 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 8.7% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Vermont children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 96.8% were white, 2.4% were black, and 0.8% were Hispanic.¹⁷

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CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Vermont decreased from 11,459 in March 2005 to 10,895 in March 2006, a decrease of 5.2%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 4,401, a 3.6% decrease from March 2005.¹⁸
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Vermont was at 53.5% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2004, Vermont spent \$68,523,794 in TANF funds, including 51.6% on basic assistance, 11.2% on transportation, and 37.3% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2005, Vermont collected and distributed \$44,520,139 in child support funds, a decrease of 8.5% from 2004.²¹
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Vermont was \$723 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$13.90 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²²

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2005, Vermont had an estimated monthly average of 4,100 children served by subsidized child care; 3,300 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 3,700 in 2003.²³
- In 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Vermont, a family of three could make no more than \$31,032, which is equivalent to 56% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2006, Vermont had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2005, Head Start served 1,569 Vermont children, the same as in 2004.²⁶

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2002, 69,000 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Vermont, representing 43.9% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2001, 2,358 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in Vermont, representing 3.5% of all children in Medicaid.²⁸
- In 2001, Vermont spent \$30,999,287 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$13,146 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.²⁹
- Vermont reported spending \$1,100,616.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on targeted case management services for foster children.³⁰
- In 2005, Vermont had 6,614 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 1.2% decrease from 2004, when 6,693 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2003, 460 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Vermont a ranking of 1 nationally in number of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³²

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- In 2003, 33 infants younger than 1 year died in Vermont, giving the state a ranking of 1 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2004, the birth rate for teens age 15–17 in Vermont was 8.2 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 40.1. This reflects a total rate of 20.9 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁴
- Cumulative through 2004, 439 adults and adolescents, as well as six children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Vermont.³⁵
- In 2004, an estimated 5,000 children age 12–17, and 31,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Vermont.³⁶

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 108 children aged-out of out-of-home care in Vermont.³⁷
- In 2004, 1,000 Vermont teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁸
- In 2004, 6% of teens age 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.³⁹
- In 2004, approximately 3,000 children age 12–17 in Vermont needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴⁰
- In 2004, approximately 3,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2003, five children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 3.21 per 100,000 children.⁴²

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, one child under age 18 was killed in firearm homicides in Vermont, compared with none in 2002.⁴³
- In 2005, 1,599 children younger than 18 were arrested in Vermont, a 14.1% increase from 1,401 arrests in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 38 were for violent crimes and 11 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁴
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 51 children in juvenile correction facilities in Vermont.⁴⁵

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR VERMONT'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, Vermont spent \$78,159,179 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.⁴⁶ Of this amount, 60% was from federal funds, and 40% was from state funds.⁴⁷

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- In 2004, of the \$46,992,240 in federal funds received for child welfare, 45% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 3% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 30% was from Medicaid, 12% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 8% was from TANF, and 2% came from other federal sources.⁴⁸
- Out of 1,432 children in out-of-home care in Vermont on September 30, 2004, only 755, or 52.7%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁹

VERMONT'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.⁵⁰
- 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.⁵¹
- 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.⁵²
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Vermont was \$34,611; the median income for a family of four was \$65,876.⁵³

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