

WASHINGTON'S CHILDREN 2007

Washington's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	6,287,759
Population, Children Under 18 ²	1,484,365
State Poverty Rate ³	10.2
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	15.1
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	13.5
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	17.5

All statistics are for 2005.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2004, Washington State had 73,532 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of those, 32,314 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2004, 6,730 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Washington State, a rate of 4.5 per 1,000 children, and representing a 11.8% increase from 2003. Of these children, 80.1% were neglected, 18.9% were physically abused, and 6.9% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2004, seven children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Washington State.⁹
- On September 30, 2004, 9,368 children in Washington State lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 9,213 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 43.2% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 11.1% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 55.6% were white, 11.6% were black, 13.7% were Hispanic, 8.8% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 10.3% were children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 6,082 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 61.8% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2004, 1,245 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Washington State, a 5.6% decrease from 1,315 in 2003.¹³
- Of the 9,368 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 2,669 or 28.5% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 32,967 Washington State grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 9,368 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 33.4% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Washington State children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 55.0% were white, 12.6% were black, 12.2% were Hispanic, 9.7% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 10.5% 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 Washington State decreased from 140,461 in March 2005 to 130,227 in March 2006, a decrease of 7.9%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 55,128 , a 5.8% decrease from March 2005.¹⁸
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Washington State was at 63.0% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2004, Washington State spent \$588,580,742 in TANF funds, including 54.6% on basic assistance, and 45.4% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2005, Washington State collected and distributed \$609,073,256 in child support funds, an increase of 3.0% from 2004.²¹
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Washington State was \$757 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$14.55 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²²

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2005, Washington State had an estimated monthly average of 53,900 children served by subsidized child care; 54,900 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 52,900 in 2003.²³
- In 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Washington State, a family of three could make no more than \$32,184, which is equivalent to 55% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2006, Washington State had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2005, Head Start served 11,102 Washington State children, a 0.1% decrease from 2004.²⁶

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2002, 613,900 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Washington State, representing 55.2% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2001, 15,905 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in Washington State, representing 2.8% of all children in Medicaid.²⁸
- In 2001, Washington State spent \$22,839,012 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$1,436 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.²⁹
- Washington State reported spending \$26,766.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on rehabilitative services for foster children.³⁰
- In 2005, Washington State had 15,547 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, an 8.6% decrease from 2004, when 17,002 children were enrolled.³¹

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- In 2003, 4,843 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Washington State a ranking of 27 nationally in number of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³²
- In 2003, 451 infants younger than 1 year died in Washington, giving the state a ranking of 28 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 Washington State was 15.7 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 54.1. This reflects a total rate of 31.3 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁴
- Cumulative through 2004, 11,012 adults and adolescents, as well as 34 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Washington States.³⁵
- In 2004, an estimated 48,000 children age 12–17, and 312,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Washington State.³⁶

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 357 children aged-out of out-of-home care in Washington State.³⁷
- In 2004, 23,000 Washington State teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁸
- In 2004, 9% of teens age 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.³⁹
- In 2004, approximately 24,000 children age 12–17 in Washington State needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴⁰
- In 2004, approximately 33,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2003, 48 children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.86 per 100,000 children.⁴²

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, 8 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Washington State, compared with 12 in 2002.⁴³
- In 2005, 35,315 children younger than 18 were arrested in Washington State, an increase of 30 over the 35,285 arrests made in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 1,329 were for violent crimes and 688 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁴
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,656 children in juvenile correction facilities in Washington State.⁴⁵

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FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR WASHINGTON'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, Washington State spent \$432,948,513 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, 48% was from federal funds, and 52% was from state funds.⁴⁷
- In 2004, of the \$206,085,394 in federal funds received for child welfare, 44% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 6% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 18% was from Medicaid, 19% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 9% was from TANF, and 5% came from other federal sources.⁴⁸
- Out of 9,368 children in out-of-home care in Washington State on September 30, 2004, only 3,277, or 35.0%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁹

WASHINGTON'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 Washington State was \$34,932; the median income for a family of four was \$69,130.⁵³

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