

GEORGIA'S CHILDREN 2008

Georgia's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	9,363,941
Population, Children Under 18 ²	2,362,722
State Poverty Rate ³	12.6
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	20.4
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	18.3
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	22.8

All statistics are for 2006.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2005, Georgia had 89,986 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 74,165 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2005, 28,299 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Georgia, a rate of 20 per 1,000 children, and representing a 13.5% decrease from 2004. Of these children, 70.3% were neglected, 10.4% were physically abused, and 4.6% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2005, 76 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Georgia.⁹
- In 2005, 13,965 children in Georgia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 14,216 children in 2004. In 2005, 37.5% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 12.8% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care in 2005, 45% were white, 46.9% black, 4.8% Hispanic, and 3.2% children of other races and ethnicities; none were American Indian/Alaskan Native.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 11,064 children exiting out-of-home care in 2005, 74.5% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2005, 1,127 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Georgia, a 12.6% decrease from 1,269 in 2004.¹³
- Of the 13,965 children in out-of-home care in 2005, 2,372, or 17%, were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 95,338 Georgia grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 13,965 children in out-of-home care in 2005, 15.3% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Georgia children in kinship care in 2005, 51.8% were white, 43% were black, 2.8% were Hispanic, none were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.3% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Georgia decreased from 55,535 in March 2006 to 43,542 in March 2007, a decrease of 19.6%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2007 was 24,147, a 37.4% decrease from March 2006.¹⁸

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- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Georgia was at 33.2% of the federal poverty level.¹⁹
- In 2006, Georgia spent \$581,661,388 in TANF funds, including 16.5% on basic assistance, 3.8% on child care, 2.3% on transportation, and 77.4% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2006, Georgia collected and distributed \$525,393,042 in child support funds, an increase of 5.3% from 2005.²¹
- In 2006, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Georgia was \$679 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$13.05 per hour working a 40-hour week.²²

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2005, Georgia had an estimated monthly average of 60,600 children served by subsidized child care; 59,500 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 61,900 in 2003.²³
- In 2007, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Georgia a family of three could make no more than \$26,560, which is equivalent to 52% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2007, Georgia had 24,808 families children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2006, Head Start served 23,508 Georgia children, the same as in 2005.²⁶

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2004, 1,239,600 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia, representing 62.4% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2004, 24,095 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia on the basis of being in foster care.²⁸
- In 2004, Georgia spent \$151,054,249 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$6,269 per foster care enrollee on Medicaid services.²⁹
- Georgia reported spending \$19,348,810 of its total Medicaid spending in 2004 for children in foster care on targeted case management services.³⁰
- Georgia reported spending \$0 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2004 for foster children on rehabilitative services.³¹
- In 2006, Georgia had 343,690 children enrolled in its Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), a 10.75% increase from 2005, when 306,733 children were enrolled.³²
- In 2004, 12,930 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Georgia a rank of 43 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2004, 1,181 infants younger than age 1 died in Georgia, giving it a rank of 42 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2004, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Georgia was 29.3 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 90.8. This reflects a total rate of 53.4 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵

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- Cumulative through 2005, 15,853 adults and adolescents, as well as 54 children under the age of 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Georgia.³⁶
- In 2005, an estimated 51,000 children ages 12–17, and 341,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Georgia.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2005, 683 children aged out of out-of-home care in Georgia.³⁸
- In 2005, 49,000 Georgia teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2005, 18% of teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴⁰
- In 2005, approximately 29,000 children ages 12–17 in Georgia needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2005, approximately 32,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2004, 59 children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.27 per 100,000 children.⁴³

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2004, 57 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Georgia, a 78% increase from 32 in 2003.⁴⁴
- In 2006, 24,368 children younger than 18 were arrested in Georgia, a 14.28% increase from 28,429 arrests in 2005. Of the arrests in 2006, 1,396 were for violent crimes and 697 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁵
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,451 children in juvenile correction facilities in Georgia.⁴⁶

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR GEORGIA'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, Georgia spent \$441,987,629 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 64% was from federal funds, 35% was from state funds, and 1% was from local funds.⁴⁷
- In 2004, of the \$282,945,598 in federal funds received for child welfare, 32% 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, 19% was from Medicaid, 9% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 31% was from TANF, and 1% came from other federal sources.⁴⁸
- Out of 13,965 children in out-of-home care in Georgia in 2005, only 5,113 children, or 36.6%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁹

GEORGIA'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 clearly demonstrated 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 being provided to children and families. CWLA recommends that foster care caseworkers have case-loads of 12–15 children.⁵²
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Georgia was \$25,895; the median income for a family of four was \$62,294.⁵³

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