

MISSISSIPPI'S CHILDREN 2008

Mississippi's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	2,910,540
Population, Children Under 18 ²	748,544
State Poverty Rate ³	20.6
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	28.8
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	29.6
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	33.4

All statistics are for 2006.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2005, Mississippi had 22,212 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 15,745 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2005, 4,177 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Mississippi, a rate of 8.2 per 1,000 children, and representing a 7.3% increase from 2004. Of these children, 56.6% were neglected, 21.2% were physically abused, and 15% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2005, 14 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Mississippi.⁹
- In 2005, 3,269 children in Mississippi lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,989 children in 2004. In 2005, 35.2% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 15.9% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care in 2005, 44.8% were white, 50.7% black, 1.7% Hispanic, 0.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.6% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 1,659 children exiting out-of-home care in 2005, 71.8% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2005, 242 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Mississippi, an 11.6% decrease from 270 in 2004.¹³
- Of the 3,269 children in out-of-home care in 2005, 873, or 26.7%, were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 51,200 Mississippi grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 3,269 children in out-of-home care in 2005, 33% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Mississippi children in kinship care in 2005, 50.1% were white, 46.2% were black, 1.4% were Hispanic, 0.3% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 1.9% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Mississippi decreased from 25,824 in March 2006 to 22,944 in March 2007, a decrease of 13%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2007 was 11,366, a 26.1% decrease from March 2006.¹⁸

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- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Mississippi was at 26.4% of the federal poverty level.¹⁹
- In 2006, Mississippi spent \$74,005,118 in TANF funds, including 30.2% on basic assistance, 6.2% on transportation, 67.8% on nonassistance, and none on child care.²⁰
- In 2006, Mississippi collected and distributed \$206,634,659 in child support funds, an increase of 5.8% from 2005.²¹
- In 2006, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Mississippi was \$553 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$10.63 per hour working a 40-hour week.²²

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

- In 2005, Mississippi had an estimated monthly average of 33,300 children served by subsidized child care; 25,100 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 23,300 in 2003.²³
- In 2007, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Mississippi a family of three could make no more than \$34,999, which is equivalent to 82% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2007, Mississippi had 13 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2006, Head Start served 26,657 Mississippi children, the same as in 2005.²⁶

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

- In 2004, 414,900 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Mississippi, representing 52.8% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2004, 26,787 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Mississippi on the basis of being in foster care.²⁸
- In 2004, Mississippi spent \$175,699,848 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$6,559 per foster care enrollee on Medicaid services.²⁹
- Mississippi reported spending \$5,976,850 of its total Medicaid spending in 2004 for children in foster care on targeted case management services.³⁰
- Mississippi reported spending \$3,703,289 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2004 for foster children on rehabilitative services.³¹
- In 2006, Mississippi had 83,359 children enrolled in its Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), a 4.81% increase from 2005, when 79,352 children were enrolled.³²
- In 2004, 4,956 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Mississippi a rank of 50 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2004, 420 infants younger than age 1 died in Mississippi, giving it a rank of 49 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴

- In 2004, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Mississippi was 33.9 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 102.6. This reflects a total rate of 61.9 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2005, 7,392 adults and adolescents, as well as 48 children under the age of 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Mississippi.³⁶
- In 2005, an estimated 18,000 children ages 12–17, and 110,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Mississippi.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2005, 98 children aged out of out-of-home care in Mississippi.³⁸
- In 2005, 14,000 Mississippi teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2005, 22% of teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴⁰
- In 2005, approximately 10,000 children ages 12–17 in Mississippi needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2005, approximately 11,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2004, 22 children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.58 per 100,000 children.⁴³

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2004, 23 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Mississippi, a 130% increase from 10 in 2003.⁴⁴
- In 2006, 11,802 children younger than 18 were arrested in Mississippi, a 3.78% decrease from 11,372 arrests in 2005. Of the arrests in 2006, 260 were for violent crimes and 239 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁵
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 528 children in juvenile correction facilities in Mississippi.⁴⁶

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR MISSISSIPPI'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, Mississippi spent \$83,187,283 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 77% was from federal funds, 22% was from state funds, and 1% was from local funds.⁴⁷
- In 2004, of the \$63,943,149 in federal funds received for child welfare, 25% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 22% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 26% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 25% was from TANF, and 1% came from other federal sources.⁴⁸
- Out of 3,269 children in out-of-home care in Mississippi in 2005, only 32 children, or 1%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁹

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MISSISSIPPI'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 caseloads of 12–15 children.⁵²

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