

GEORGIA'S CHILDREN 2009

Georgia's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	9,544,750
Population, Children Under 18 ²	2,531,609
State Poverty Rate ³	13.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	20.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 ⁵	18.2%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	16.3%

*All statistics are for 2007.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2006, Georgia had 75,215 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 60,277 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2006, 39,802 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Georgia, a rate of 16.2 per 1,000 children, representing a 15.6% decrease from 2005. Of these children, 28,365 were neglected, 4,124 were physically abused, and 1,642 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2006, 63 children in Georgia died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2006, 13,175 children in Georgia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 13,965 children in 2005. In 2006, 37.3% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 13.4% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Georgia children in out-of-home care in 2006, 44.3% were white, 47.9% black, 4.7% Hispanic, 0.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.1% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 10,513 children exiting out-of-home care in Georgia in 2006, 48% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2006, 1,250 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Georgia, an 11% increase from 1,127 in 2005.¹³
- Of the 13,175 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 2,306 or 17.5% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2007, approximately 100,495 Georgia grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 13,175 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 18.4% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Georgia children in kinship care in 2006, 48.5% were white, 46.8% were black, 2.2% were Hispanic, and 2.5% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Georgia decreased from 44,275 in March 2007 to 38,971 in March 2008, a decrease of 12.0%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 22,032, a 10.6% decrease from March 2007.¹⁸



- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Georgia was at 33.2% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2006, Georgia spent \$581,661,388 in TANF funds, including 16.5% on basic assistance, 3.81% on child care, 2.3% on transportation, and 77.4% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2007, Georgia spent \$147,858,511 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 283,111 participants.²¹
- In 2007, Georgia collected and distributed \$550,671,301 in child support funds, a 4.8% increase from 2006.²²
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Georgia was \$727 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$13.98 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, Georgia had a monthly average of 64,600 children served by subsidized child care; 60,600 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 59,500 in 2004.²⁴
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Georgia, a family of three could make no more than \$26,560, which is equivalent to 49% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2008, Georgia had 10,268 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 23,436 Georgia children, a 1.3% increase from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 108,200 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia—59.3% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2005, 25,767 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2005, of the 25,767 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 12,055 received Targeted Case Management services, and none received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2007, Georgia had 276,551 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 7.5% increase from 2006, when 257,212 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2007, Georgia had 289,000 uninsured children, representing 11.5% of its child population.³²
- In 2005, 13,498 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Georgia a rank of 45 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2005, 1,159 infants under age 1 died in Georgia, giving it a rank of 44 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2005, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Georgia was 28 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 92. This reflects a total rate of 53 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵



- Cumulative through 2006, 31,734 adults and adolescents, as well as 231 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Georgia.³⁶
- In 2006, an estimated 56,000 children ages 12–17, and 568,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Georgia.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 790 children aged out of out-of-home care in Georgia.³⁸
- In 2007, 57,000 Georgia teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2007, 11% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2006, 17% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2006, approximately 32,000 children ages 12–17 in Georgia needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2006, approximately 34,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2005, 46 Georgia children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.65 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, 39 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Georgia, a 3% decrease from 40 in 2004.⁴⁵
- In 2007, 45,233 children younger than 18 were arrested in Georgia, an 85.6% increase from 24,368 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 2,021 were for violent crimes and 1,533 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,631 children in juvenile correction facilities in Georgia.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR GEORGIA'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Georgia spent \$819,687,496 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 66% was from federal funds, 33% from state funds, and 1.4% from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$537,857,317 in federal funds received for child welfare, 19% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 4% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 35% from Medicaid, 5% from the Social Services Block Grant, 36% from TANF, and 1% from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 13,175 children in out-of-home care in Georgia in 2006, only 4,324, or 32.8%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰



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.⁵¹
- 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.⁵²
- 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.⁵³
- 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 in Georgia was \$62,294.⁵⁴

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