

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S CHILDREN 2004

The District of Columbia's Children At a Glance

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| State Population (2002) ¹ | 570,898 |
| State Population, Children | |
| Under 18 (2001) ² | 114,000 |
| State Poverty Rate (2002) ³ | 17.0% |
| Poverty Rate, Children | |
| Under 18 (2002) ⁴ | 33.0% |
| Poverty Rate, Children | |
| Ages 5–17 (2002) ⁵ | 34.8% |
| Poverty Rate, Children | |
| Birth to Age 4 (2002) ⁶ | 28.4% |

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2001, 4,513 children were reported as abused or neglected and referred for investigation in the District of Columbia, a rate of 39.6 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2001, 2,908 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in the District of Columbia, a rate of 25.5 per 1,000 children—the same as in 2000. Of every 1,000 children, 21.7 were neglected, 4.4 were physically abused, and 1 was sexually abused.⁸
- In 2001, nine children died as a result of abuse or neglect in the District of Columbia.⁹
- On September 30, 2001, 3,339 children in the District of Columbia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 3,054 children on September 30, 2000. In 2001, 21.6% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 21.5% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2001, 23 white children, 3,063 black children, 46 Hispanic children, 253 children of other races and ethnicities, and no American Indian/Alaskan Native children were in out-of-home care in the state.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 390 children leaving out-of-home care in 2001, 58% were reunited with their families.¹²
- In 2001, 230 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in the District of Columbia, a 74% increase from 132 in 1997.¹³
- Of the 3,339 children in out-of-home care in 2001, 1,205 or 36% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- Of the 3,339 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2001, 16% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- In 2002, more than 6,448 District of Columbia grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁶

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The number of people receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in the District of Columbia increased from 42,490 in March 2002 to 43,136 in March 2003, an increase of 1.5%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2003 was 16,882, a 5.4% increase from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and Food Stamp benefits in the District of Columbia was 41% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2002, the District of Columbia spent \$209,139,260 in TANF funds, including 32.0% on cash assistance and 68.0% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2001, the District of Columbia collected and distributed \$37,760,166 in child support funds, an increase of 7.8% from 2000.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the District of Columbia was \$1,218 per month, or 124% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$6.15 per hour.²¹

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

- In 2001, an estimated monthly average of 13,500 of the District of Columbia's children received subsidized child care, an increase from 9,500 in 2000 and 6,500 in 1999.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 80% of the District of Columbia's median income, or \$41,640, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- In 2001, the District of Columbia had 9,236 children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁴
- Due to the state budget shortfall, the District of Columbia has suspended its child care funds, effective June 1, for nonwelfare families. These families will be placed on waiting lists. Grants for playground and educational materials have also been suspended.²⁵
- In 2002, Head Start served 3,403 District of Columbia children, a 1.8% increase from 2001.²⁶
- In 2000, 79% of all 18- to 24-year-olds in the District of Columbia had at least a high school degree or equivalent.²⁷

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

- In 2000, 77,921 children younger than 18 were enrolled in Medicaid in the District of Columbia, representing 62.1% of the District of Columbia's total enrollees.²⁸
- In 2002, the District of Columbia had 5,060 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, an 80.3% increase from 2001, when 2,807 children were enrolled.²⁹
- In 2001, 37 babies in the District of Columbia were born to girls younger than 15. In 2001, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 981—a rate of 75 births per 1,000 girls.³⁰
- As of December 2002, 14,707 adults and adolescents, as well as 175 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in the District of Columbia.³¹
- In 2002, two District of Columbia children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.58 per 100,000 children in the population.³²
- In 2001, an estimated 1,000 children ages 12–17, and 9,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³³

J U V E N I L E J U S T I C E A N D D E L I N Q U E N C Y P R E V E N T I O N

- In 2001, 9 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in the District of Columbia, a 25% decrease from 12 in 2000.³⁴
- In 2002, 277 children younger than 18 were arrested in the District of Columbia. Of these arrests, 62 were for violent crimes and 14 were for possession of a weapon.³⁵
- A 1999 census of juvenile offenders showed 259 children in juvenile correction facilities in the District of Columbia.³⁶

F U N D I N G C H I L D W E L F A R E S E R V I C E S F O R T H E D I S T R I C T O F C O L U M B I A ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2000, the District of Columbia spent \$147,119,620 for child welfare services—all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁷ Of this amount, 49% came from federal funds, and 51% from state funds; none came from local funds.³⁸
- In 2000, of the \$71,888,466 in federal funds received for child welfare, 60% came from the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program, 2% from the Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families programs, 20% from Medicaid, 2% from the Social Services Block Grant, 15% from TANF, 1% from Supplemental Security Income, and 1% from other federal sources.³⁹
- Of the 3,339 children in out-of-home care in the District of Columbia on September 30, 2001, only 95, or 2.8%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁰

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

- The child welfare workforce is facing challenges in every state. A combination of high caseloads, high worker turnover, and low salaries impinges on the delivery of services to achieve safety, permanency, and child well-being.
- In 2000, the national average starting salary for child protective service workers was \$26,900; for direct service workers, \$27,500. The yearly turnover rate for these workers was 15.6% and 19.5%, respectively.⁴¹
- In 2002, the median income in the District of Columbia for a family of four was \$63,406.⁴²

**Additional child welfare statistics, references, and pertinent notes are available on
CWLA's National Data Analysis System at <http://ndas.cwla.org>.**

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CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

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