

NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN 2004

Nebraska's Children At a Glance

State Population (2002) ¹	1,729,180
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2001) ²	450,000
State Poverty Rate (2002) ³	10.6%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2002) ⁴	13.0%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2002) ⁵	10.9%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2002) ⁶	17.7%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2001, 6,602 children were reported as abused or neglected and referred for investigation in Nebraska, a rate of 14.7 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2001, 3,314 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Nebraska, a rate of 7.4 per 1,000 children, representing a 10% decrease from 2000. Of every 1,000 children, 5.1 were neglected, 1.9 were physically abused, and 0.8 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2001, nine children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Nebraska.⁹
- On September 30, 2001, 6,254 children in Nebraska lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 5,674 children on September 30, 2000. In 2001, 20.4% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 29.6% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2001, 4,209 white children, 1,055 black children, 501 Hispanic children, 455 American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 535 children of other races and ethnicities were in out-of-home care in the state.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 2,636 children leaving out-of-home care in 2001, 80% were reunited with their families.¹²
- In 2001, 292 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Nebraska, a 62% increase from 180 in 1997.¹³
- Of the 6,254 children in out-of-home care in 2001, 604 or 10% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- Of the 6,254 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2001, 11% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- In 2002, more than 9,904 Nebraska 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 Nebraska increased from 25,709 in March 2002 to 27,079 in March 2003, an increase of 5.3%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2003 was 11,132, a 7.0% increase from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and Food Stamp benefits in Nebraska was 42% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2002, Nebraska spent \$76,756,593 in TANF funds, including 68.1% on cash assistance and 31.9% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2001, Nebraska collected and distributed \$159,886,802 in child support funds, an increase of 12.2% from 2000.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Nebraska was \$535 per month, or 65% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$5.15 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 12,800 of Nebraska's children received subsidized child care, an increase from 12,400 in 2000 and 12,100 in 1999.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 53% of Nebraska's median income, or \$25,260, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- Due to the state budget shortfall, Nebraska can no longer provide child care assistance to low-income working families whose incomes are between 125% and 185% of the federal poverty level, unless those families received cash assistance within the past 24 months.²⁴
- In 2002, Head Start served 5,252 Nebraska children, a 5.4% increase from 2001.²⁵
- In 2000, 80% of all 18- to 24-year-olds in Nebraska had at least a high school degree or equivalent.²⁶

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, 143,165 children younger than 18 were enrolled in Medicaid in Nebraska, representing 32.3% of Nebraska's total enrollees.²⁷
- In 2002, Nebraska had 16,227 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 16.5% increase from 2001, when 13,933 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2001, 25 babies in Nebraska were born to girls younger than 15. In 2001, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 2,393—a rate of 36 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 1,227 adults and adolescents, as well as 10 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Nebraska.³⁰
- In 2002, 19 Nebraska children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 3.82 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2001, an estimated 6,000 children ages 12–17, and 19,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³²

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, three children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Nebraska, a 57% decrease from seven in 2000.³³
- In 2002, 15,772 children younger than 18 were arrested in Nebraska, an 18% decrease from 19,189 arrests in 1998. Of the arrests in 2002, 4,404 were for violent crimes and 127 were for possession of a weapon.³⁴
- A 1999 census of juvenile offenders showed 720 children in juvenile correction facilities in Nebraska.³⁵

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 N E B R A S K A ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2000, Nebraska spent \$98,877,519 for child welfare services—all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁶ Of this amount, 29% came from federal funds, and 71% from state funds; none came from local funds.³⁷
- In 2000, of the \$29,062,132 in federal funds received for child welfare, 93% came from the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program, and 7% from the Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families programs.³⁸
- Of the 6,254 children in out-of-home care in Nebraska on September 30, 2001, only 1,453, or 23.2%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.³⁹

NEBRASKA'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.⁴⁰
- In 2000, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of child abuse and neglect in Nebraska was \$27,840.⁴¹
- In 2002, the median income in Nebraska for a family of four was \$57,040.⁴²

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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