

NEW JERSEY'S CHILDREN 2004

New Jersey's Children At a Glance

State Population (2002) ¹	8,590,300
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2001) ²	2,095,000
State Poverty Rate (2002) ³	7.9%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2002) ⁴	9.3%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2002) ⁵	8.3%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2002) ⁶	11.5%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2001, 39,373 children were reported as abused or neglected and referred for investigation in New Jersey, a rate of 18.8 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2001, 8,514 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in New Jersey, a rate of 4.1 per 1,000 children, representing a 2% decrease from 2000. Of every 1,000 children, 2.1 were neglected, 1 was physically abused, and 0.4 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2001, 33 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in New Jersey.⁹
- On September 30, 2001, 10,666 children in New Jersey lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 9,794 children on September 30, 2000. In 2001, 37.6% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 13.1% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2001, 2,491 white children, 6,649 black children, 726 Hispanic children, 28 American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 1,497 children of other races and ethnicities were in out-of-home care in the state.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 4,607 children leaving out-of-home care in 2001, 70% were reunited with their families.¹²
- In 2001, 1,028 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in New Jersey, an 80% increase from 570 in 1997.¹³
- Of the 10,666 children in out-of-home care in 2001, 7,287 or 68% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- Of the 10,666 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2001, 14% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- In 2002, more than 71,478 New Jersey 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 New Jersey declined from 104,064 in March 2002 to 101,854 in March 2003, a decrease of 2.1%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2003 was 42,189, a 0.2% decrease from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and Food Stamp benefits in New Jersey was 37% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2002, New Jersey spent \$952,207,694 in TANF funds, including 20.3% on cash assistance, 0.6% on child care, 2.6% on transportation and support activities, 1.4% on a range of other services, and 74.9% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2001, New Jersey collected and distributed \$724,682,527 in child support funds, an increase of 6.7% from 2000.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in New Jersey was \$1,026 per month, or 125% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.²¹

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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 44,200 of New Jersey's children received subsidized child care, a decrease from 45,800 in 2000 and 34,000 in 1999.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 61% of New Jersey's median income, or \$36,570, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- In 2001, New Jersey had 8,724 children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁴
- Despite the state budget shortfall, New Jersey has not implemented nor proposed any child care cuts.²⁵
- In 2002, Head Start served 15,262 New Jersey children, a 0.4% decrease from 2001.²⁶
- In 2000, 76% of all 18- to 24-year-olds in New Jersey 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, 469,155 children younger than 18 were enrolled in Medicaid in New Jersey, representing 23.4% of New Jersey's total enrollees.²⁸
- In 2002, New Jersey had 117,053 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 17.2% increase from 2001, when 99,847 children were enrolled.²⁹
- In 2001, 143 babies in New Jersey were born to girls younger than 15. In 2001, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 7,693—a rate of 30 births per 1,000 girls.³⁰
- As of December 2002, 44,473 adults and adolescents, as well as 764 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in New Jersey.³¹
- In 2002, 22 New Jersey children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 0.95 per 100,000 children in the population.³²
- In 2001, an estimated 23,000 children ages 12–17, and 94,000 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, 7 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in New Jersey, a 46% decrease from 13 in 2000.³⁴
- In 2002, 62,093 children younger than 18 were arrested in New Jersey, a 16% decrease from 73,700 arrests in 1998. Of the arrests in 2002, 13,027 were for violent crimes and 1,669 were for possession of a weapon.³⁵
- A 1999 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,386 children in juvenile correction facilities in New Jersey.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 N E W J E R S E Y ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2000, New Jersey spent \$446,673,656 for child welfare services—all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁷ Of this amount, 44% came from federal funds, and 56% from state funds; none came from local funds.³⁸
- In 2000, of the \$197,520,933 in federal funds received for child welfare, 39% came from the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program, 5% from the Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families programs, 21% from Medicaid, 12% from the Social Services Block Grant, 20% from TANF, 1% from Supplemental Security Income, 1% from Survivors Benefits, and 1% from other federal sources.³⁹
- Of the 10,666 children in out-of-home care in New Jersey on September 30, 2001, only 5,870, or 55.0%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁰

NEW JERSEY'S CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

- The child welfare workforce is facing challenges in every state. A combination of high case-loads, 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 2000, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of child abuse and neglect in New Jersey was \$29,864.⁴²
- In 2002, the median income in New Jersey for a family of four was \$78,560.⁴³

**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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