

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S CHILDREN 2005

The District of Columbia's Children At a Glance

State Population (2003) ¹	563,384
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ²	108,403
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	19.9%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ⁴	36.0%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2003) ⁵	35.3%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	35.0%

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2002, 8,243 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in District of Columbia, a rate of 75.2 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, 3,032 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in the District of Columbia, a rate of 27.0 per 1,000 children, representing a 4% increase from 2000. Of these children, 79.2% were neglected, 22.9% were physically abused, and 5.3% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2002, 13 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in the District of Columbia.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 3,321 children in the District of Columbia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 3,339 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 19.9% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 22.7% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2002, 0.4% white children, 87.0% black children, 1.9% Hispanic children, 0.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 10.6% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in the District of Columbia.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 396 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 76.5% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹²
- In 2002, 252 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in the District of Columbia, a 9.6% increase from 230 in 2001.¹³
- Of the 3,321 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 1,178 or 35.5% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2003, more than 6,858 District of Columbia grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 3,321 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 21.0% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all District of Columbia children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 0.1% were white, 90.8% were black, 0.9% were Hispanic, none were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 8.2% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of *individuals* 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 2002.¹⁸
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in the District of Columbia was 41% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2003, the District of Columbia spent \$166,347,659 in TANF funds, including 40.6% on cash assistance and 59.4% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2002, the District of Columbia collected and distributed \$40,543,493 in child support funds, an increase of 7.4% from 2001.²¹

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- 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.²²

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

- In 2001, the District of Columbia served an estimated monthly average of 13,500 children with subsidized child care, an increase from 2000, when 9,500 children were served, and in 1999, when 6,500 children were served.²³
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 78% of the District of Columbia's median income, or \$41,640, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2001, the District of Columbia had 9,236 children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁵
- In 2003, 3,403 District of Columbia children were served by Head Start, the same as in 2002.²⁶

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

- In 2001, 73,503 District of Columbia children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 52.2% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2003, the District of Columbia had 5,875 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 16.1% increase from 2002, when 5,060 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2002, 247 babies were born to girls younger than 15 in the District of Columbia. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 937, reflecting a rate of 69.1 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 14,707 adults and adolescents, as well as 175 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in the District of Columbia.³⁰
- In 2001, two children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.58 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2002, an estimated 2,000 children ages 12–17, and 59,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³²

V U L N E R A B L E Y O U T H

- In 2003, 6% of teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 7% decrease from 2000.³³
- In 2002, 20% of young adults ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.³⁴

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 under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in the District of Columbia, compared with 12 in 2000.³⁵
- In 2003, 332 children under age 18 were arrested in the District of Columbia, a 20% increase from 277 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 27 were for violent crimes and 3 were for possession of weapons.³⁶
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 171 children in juvenile correction facilities in the District of Columbia.³⁷

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 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 2002, the District of Columbia spent \$218,074,750 for child welfare services. Child welfare services refer to all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁸ Of this amount, 35% was from federal funds and 65% was from state funds.³⁹

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- In 2002, of the \$218,074,750 spent for child welfare, 18% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 1% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 11% was from Medicaid, and 5% came from TANF. The remaining funds (65%) came from state and local sources.⁴⁰
- Out of 3,321 children in out-of-home care in the District of Columbia on September 30, 2002, only 66 or 2% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴¹

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

- 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.⁴²
- 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.⁴³
- According to the 2003 GAO report, the average caseload for child welfare/foster care caseworkers is 24–31 children and that 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.⁴⁴
- In 2002, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in the District of Columbia was \$39,846 ; the median income for a family of four in District of Columbia was \$55,692.⁴⁵

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