

# COLORADO'S CHILDREN 2009

## Colorado's Children At a Glance\*

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	4,861,515
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	1,192,679
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	9.8%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	12.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 <sup>5</sup> .....	11.4%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	15.2%

\*All statistics are for 2007.

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2006, Colorado had 64,377 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 30,940 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2006, 10,862 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Colorado, a rate of 9.3 per 1,000 children, representing a 15.5% increase from 2005. Of these children, 7,585 were neglected, 1,715 were physically abused, and 1,024 were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2006, 24 children in Colorado died as a result of abuse or neglect.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2006, 8,139 children in Colorado lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 8,213 children in 2005. In 2006, 26.4% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 30.2% were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of Colorado children in out-of-home care in 2006, 47.3% were white, 11.5% black, 35.6% Hispanic, 1.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.4% children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

## ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 6,896 children exiting out-of-home care in Colorado in 2006, 53% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2006, 956 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Colorado, compared with 954 in 2005.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 8,139 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 2,127 or 26.1% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 34,962 Colorado grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 8,139 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 16.5% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all Colorado children in kinship care in 2006, 46.4% were white, 10.4% were black, 38.5% were Hispanic, 0.5% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.2% were other races.<sup>17</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Colorado decreased from 27,979 in March 2007 to 22,260 in March 2008, a decrease of 20.4%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 9,087, an 18.5% decrease from March 2007.<sup>18</sup>



- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Colorado was at 42.6% of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2006, Colorado spent \$209,433,371 in TANF funds, including 30.1% on basic assistance, 2.0% on transportation, and 67.9% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2007, Colorado spent \$35,441,943 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 91,062 participants.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2007, Colorado collected and distributed \$262,509,170 in child support funds, a 4.2% increase from 2006.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Colorado was \$836 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$16.09 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>23</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, Colorado had a monthly average of 16,300 children served by subsidized child care; 19,100 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 20,600 in 2004.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Colorado, a family of three could make no more than \$38,628, which is equivalent to 65% of the state's median income.<sup>25</sup>
- As of early 2008, Colorado had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2007, Head Start served 9,820 Colorado children, a 0.1% decrease from 2001.<sup>27</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 315,100 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Colorado—58.9% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2005, 19,203 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Colorado on the basis of being in foster care.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2007, Colorado had 51,939 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 3.6% decrease from 2006, when 53,894 children were enrolled.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2007, Colorado had 157,000 uninsured children, representing 13% of its child population.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2005, 6,325 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Colorado a rank of 31 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>32</sup>
- In 2005, 444 infants under age 1 died in Colorado, giving it a rank of 28 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best and 50 the worst).<sup>33</sup>
- In 2005, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Colorado was 24 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 72. This reflects a total rate of 43 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>34</sup>
- Cumulative through 2006, 8,742 adults and adolescents, as well as 31 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Colorado.<sup>35</sup>
- In 2006, an estimated 39,000 children ages 12–17, and 379,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Colorado.<sup>36</sup>



## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 427 children aged out of out-of-home care in Colorado.<sup>37</sup>
- In 2007, 18,000 Colorado teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2007, 7% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2006, 13% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2006, approximately 20,000 children ages 12–17 in Colorado needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2006, approximately 26,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2005, 75 Colorado children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 5.59 per 100,000 children.<sup>43</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, 12 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Colorado, a 14% decrease from 14 in 2004.<sup>44</sup>
- In 2007, 43,848 children younger than 18 were arrested in Colorado, a 0.8% decrease from 44,178 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 814 were for violent crimes and 645 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>45</sup>
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,034 children in juvenile correction facilities in Colorado.<sup>46</sup>

## FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR COLORADO'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Colorado spent \$453,473,443 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 49% was from federal funds, 36% from state funds, and 15.1% from local funds.<sup>47</sup>
- In 2006, of the \$222,669,745 in federal funds received for child welfare, 37% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 3% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 15% from Medicaid, 42% from the Social Services Block Grant, and 3% from other federal sources.<sup>48</sup>
- Out of 8,139 children in out-of-home care in Colorado in 2006, only 2,723, or 33.5%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>49</sup>

## COLORADO'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.<sup>50</sup>



- 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.<sup>51</sup>
- 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.<sup>52</sup>

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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