

MISSISSIPPI'S CHILDREN 2009

Mississippi's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	2,918,785
Population, Children Under 18 ²	768,704
State Poverty Rate ³	22.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	32.8%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	32.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	27.0%

*All statistics are for 2007.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2006, Mississippi had 23,621 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 16,888 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2006, 6,272 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Mississippi, a rate of 8.3 per 1,000 children, representing a 1.9% increase from 2005. Of these children, 3,725 were neglected, 1,249 were physically abused, and 934 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2006, four children in Mississippi died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2006, 3,203 children in Mississippi lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 3,269 children in 2005. In 2006, 34.6% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 16.2% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Mississippi children in out-of-home care in 2006, 43.1% were white, 52.6% black, 1.6% Hispanic, and 2.7% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 1,943 children exiting out-of-home care in Mississippi in 2006, 55% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2006, 248 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Mississippi, a 2% increase from 242 in 2005.¹³
- Of the 3,203 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 911 or 28.4% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2007, approximately 48,144 Mississippi grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 3,203 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 34.1% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Mississippi children in kinship care in 2006, 47.1% were white, 49.3% were black, 1.3% were Hispanic, 0.1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.2% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Mississippi decreased from 22,461 in March 2007 to 21,896 in March 2008, a decrease of 2.5%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 10,809, a 3.6% decrease from March 2007.¹⁸



- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Mississippi was at 26.4% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2006, Mississippi spent \$74,005,118 in TANF funds, including 30.2% on basic assistance, none on child care, 6.2% on transportation, and 67.8% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2007, Mississippi spent \$52,124,767 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 102,669 participants.²¹
- In 2007, Mississippi collected and distributed \$218,495,922 in child support funds, a 5.7% increase from 2006.²²
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Mississippi was \$619 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$11.90 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, Mississippi had a monthly average of 39,100 children served by subsidized child care; 33,300 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 25,100 in 2004.²⁴
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Mississippi, a family of three could make no more than \$34,999, which is equivalent to 87% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2008, Mississippi had 7,455 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 26,657 Mississippi children, a 0.1% increase from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 396,800 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Mississippi—51.0% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2005, 4,111 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Mississippi on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2005, of the 4,111 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 510 received Targeted Case Management services, and none received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2007, Mississippi had 60,122 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 0.6% decrease from 2006, when 60,457 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2007, Mississippi had 94,000 uninsured children, representing 12.1% of its child population.³²
- In 2005, 5,016 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Mississippi a rank of 26 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2005, 481 infants under age 1 died in Mississippi, giving it a rank of 30 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2005, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Mississippi was 33 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 102. This reflects a total rate of 61 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵



- Cumulative through 2006, 6,642 adults and adolescents, as well as 56 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Mississippi.³⁶
- In 2006, an estimated 18,000 children ages 12–17, and 171,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Mississippi.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 75 children aged out of out-of-home care in Mississippi.³⁸
- In 2007, 16,000 Mississippi teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2007, 10% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2006, 21% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2006, approximately 10,000 children ages 12–17 in Mississippi needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2006, approximately 11,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2005, 31 Mississippi children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 3.45 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, 10 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Mississippi, a 38% decrease from 16 in 2004.⁴⁵
- In 2007, 8,454 children younger than 18 were arrested in Mississippi, a 28.7% decrease from 11,802 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 177 were for violent crimes and 154 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 444 children in juvenile correction facilities in Mississippi.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR MISSISSIPPI'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Mississippi spent \$83,832,451 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 77% was from federal funds, 23% from state funds, and 0.5% from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$64,215,154 in federal funds received for child welfare, 35% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 16% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 20% from the Social Services Block Grant, 27% from TANF, and 2% from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 3,203 children in out-of-home care in Mississippi in 2006, only 835, or 26.1%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰



MISSISSIPPI'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.⁵¹
- 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.⁵²
- 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.⁵³

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