

NEW JERSEY'S CHILDREN 2009

New Jersey's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	8,685,920
Population, Children Under 18 ²	2,063,789
State Poverty Rate ³	8.7%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	10.7%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 ⁵	9.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	9.8%

*All statistics are for 2007.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2006, 11,680 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in New Jersey, a rate of 5.6 per 1,000 children, representing a 19.0% increase from 2005. Of these children, 6,759 were neglected, 3,392 were physically abused, and 1,026 were sexually abused.⁷
- In 2006, 32 children in New Jersey died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁸
- In 2006, 10,594 children in New Jersey lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 12,042 children in 2005. In 2006, 38.6% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 16.5% were 16 or older.⁹
- Of New Jersey children in out-of-home care in 2006, 25.5% were white, 53.5% black, 6.5% Hispanic, 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 14.3% children of other races and ethnicities.¹⁰

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 6,993 children exiting out-of-home care in New Jersey in 2006, 51% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹¹
- In 2006, 1,325 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in New Jersey, a 4% decrease from 1,377 in 2005.¹²
- Of the 10,594 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 5,572 or 52.6% were waiting to be adopted.¹³
- In 2007, approximately 49,732 New Jersey grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁴
- Of the 10,594 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 14.5% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- Of all New Jersey children in kinship care in 2006, 27.5% were white, 50.8% were black, 5.8% were Hispanic, 0.1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 15.8% were other races.¹⁶

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in New Jersey decreased from 82,185 in March 2007 to 79,136 in March 2008, a decrease of 3.7%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 33,344, a 4.4% decrease from March 2007.¹⁷
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in New Jersey was at 42.7% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸



- In 2006, New Jersey spent \$585,503,366 in TANF funds, including 13.3% on basic assistance, 2.61% on child care, 1.8% on transportation, and 82.3% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2007, New Jersey spent \$71,623,257 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 150,502 participants.²⁰
- In 2007, New Jersey collected and distributed \$1,004,134,768 in child support funds, a 4.4% increase from 2006.²¹
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in New Jersey was \$1,157 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$22.25 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²²

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, New Jersey had a monthly average of 37,900 children served by subsidized child care; 37,400 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 38,300 in 2004.²³
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in New Jersey, a family of three could make no more than \$34,340, which is equivalent to 45% of the state's median income.²⁴
- As of early 2008, New Jersey had 3,094 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2007, Head Start served 14,854 New Jersey children, a 3.1% decrease from 2001.²⁶

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 511,200 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in New Jersey—51.3% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2005, 26,253 children were enrolled in Medicaid in New Jersey on the basis of being in foster care.²⁸
- In 2005, of the 26,253 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 405 received Targeted Case Management services, and 4,178 received Rehabilitative Services.²⁹
- In 2007, New Jersey had 125,494 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 1.6% decrease from 2006, when 127,525 children were enrolled.³⁰
- In 2007, New Jersey had 270,000 uninsured children, representing 12.9% of its child population.³¹
- In 2005, 9,313 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving New Jersey a rank of 40 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³²
- In 2005, 595 infants under age 1 died in New Jersey, giving it a rank of 35 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2005, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in New Jersey was 12 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 42. This reflects a total rate of 23 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁴
- Cumulative through 2006, 48,750 adults and adolescents, as well as 778 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in New Jersey.³⁵



- In 2006, an estimated 54,000 children ages 12–17, and 486,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in New Jersey.³⁶

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 552 children aged out of out-of-home care in New Jersey.³⁷
- In 2007, 22,000 New Jersey teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.³⁸
- In 2007, 7% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.³⁹
- In 2006, 13% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴⁰
- In 2006, approximately 27,000 children ages 12–17 in New Jersey needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2006, approximately 40,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2005, 39 New Jersey children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.61 per 100,000 children.⁴³

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, 27 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in New Jersey, a 7% decrease from 29 in 2004.⁴⁴
- In 2007, 55,824 children younger than 18 were arrested in New Jersey, an 8.2% decrease from 60,840 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 3,123 were for violent crimes and 1,733 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁵
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 1,704 children in juvenile correction facilities in New Jersey.⁴⁶

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NEW JERSEY'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, New Jersey spent \$725,732,715 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 35% was from federal funds, and 65% from state funds.⁴⁷
- In 2006, of the \$251,073,715 in federal funds received for child welfare, 38% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 5% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 31% from Medicaid, 12% from the Social Services Block Grant, 13% from TANF, and 1% from other federal sources.⁴⁸
- Out of 10,594 children in out-of-home care in New Jersey in 2006, only 2,622, or 24.7%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁹



NEW JERSEY'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.⁵⁰
- 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.⁵¹
- 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.⁵²
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in New Jersey was \$35,334; the median income for a family of four in New Jersey was \$87,412.⁵³

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