



# GEORGIA'S CHILDREN 2010

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

### Georgia's Children At a Glance\*

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	9,685,744
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	2,542,478
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	15.5%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	21.5%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 <sup>5</sup> .....	19.5%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	23.8%

\*All statistics are for 2008.

- In 2007, Georgia had 63,621 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 48,965 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2007, 35,729 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Georgia, a rate of 14.1 per 1,000 children, representing a 10.2% decrease from 2006. Of these children, 21,687 were neglected, 2,873 were physically abused, and 1,080 were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2007, 61 children in Georgia died as a result of abuse or neglect.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2007, 12,236 children in Georgia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 13,175 children in 2006. In 2007, 4,672 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 1,778 were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of Georgia children in out-of-home care in 2007, 42.7% were white, 47.5% black, 5.7% Hispanic, <.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.0% children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

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

- Of the 9,606 children exiting out-of-home care in Georgia in 2007, 45.1% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2007, 1,267 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Georgia, a 1.4% increase from 1,250 in 2006.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 12,236 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 2,162 or 17.7% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2008, approximately 111,608 Georgia grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 12,236 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 18.3% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all Georgia children in kinship care in 2007, 42.6% were white, 50.7% were black, 3.6% were Hispanic, <.1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.0% were other races.<sup>17</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Georgia decreased from 38,971 in March 2008 to 37,251 in March 2009, a decrease of 4.4%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 20,837, a 5.4% decrease from March 2008.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Georgia was at 33.2% of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2007, Georgia spent \$499,788,062 in TANF funds, including 10.3% on basic assistance, 4.6% on child care, 2.1% on transportation, and 83% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2008, Georgia spent \$176,503,058 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 305,516 participants.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2008, Georgia collected and distributed \$584,770,906 in child support funds, an increase of 6.2% from 2007.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Georgia was \$762 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$14.66 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>23</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Georgia had a monthly average of 53,600 children served by subsidized child care; 64,600 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 60,600 in 2005.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Georgia, a family of three could make no more than \$26,560, which is equivalent to 47% of the state's median income.<sup>25</sup>
- As of early 2009, Georgia had 2,992 children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2007, Head Start served 23,436 Georgia children, a 1.3% increase from 2001.<sup>27</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 1,076,600 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia—59.4% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2007, 36,897 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia on the basis of being in foster care.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2007, of the 36,897 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 16,896 received Targeted Case Management services, and 0 received Rehabilitative Services.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2008, Georgia had 225,497 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 18.5% decrease from 2007, when 276,551 children were enrolled.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2008, Georgia had 266,000 uninsured children, representing 10.5% of its child population.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2006, 14,232 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Georgia a rank of 44 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>33</sup>
- In 2006, 1,206 infants under age 1 died in Georgia, giving it a rank of 42 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>34</sup>
- In 2006, the birthrate for teens 15–17 in Georgia was 28 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 97. This reflects a total rate of 54 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>35</sup>
- Cumulative through 2007, 33,607 adults and adolescents, as well as 240 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Georgia.<sup>36</sup>
- In 2007, an estimated 58,000 children ages 12–17, and 399,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Georgia.<sup>37</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 730 children aged out of out-of-home care in Georgia.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2008, 49,000 Georgia teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2008, 63,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2007, 170,000 people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 34,000 children ages 12–17 in Georgia needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 34,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>43</sup>
- In 2006, 50 Georgia children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.76 per 100,000 children.<sup>44</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 43 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Georgia, a 10.3% increase from 39 in 2005.<sup>45</sup>
- In 2008, 38,807 children younger than 18 were arrested in Georgia, a 14.2% decrease from 45,233 arrests in 2007. Of

the arrests in 2008, 1,890 were for violent crimes and 1,344 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>46</sup>

- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,631 children in juvenile correction facilities in Georgia.<sup>47</sup>

### **FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR GEORGIA'S CHILDREN**

- In 2006, Georgia spent \$819,687,496 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 66% was from federal funds, 33% from state funds, and 1.4% from local funds.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2006, of the \$537,857,317 in federal funds received for child welfare, 19% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 4% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 35% was from Medicaid, 5% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 36% was from TANF, and 1% came from other federal sources.<sup>49</sup>
- Out of 12,236 children in out-of-home care in Georgia in 2007, only 4,382, or 35.8%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>50</sup>

### **GEORGIA'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>51</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 that child and family.<sup>52</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>53</sup>
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Georgia was \$25,895; the median income for a family of four in Georgia was \$59,497.<sup>54</sup>

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