



# The Nation's Children 2010

## America's Children: A Snapshot

Child population under age 18, 2008 <sup>1</sup>	73,941,848
White children (not Hispanic) under age 18, 2008 <sup>2</sup>	56.2%
Non-white children under age 18, 2008 <sup>3</sup>	43.8%
Children and youth under age 14, 2008 <sup>4</sup>	77.1%
Children and youth ages 14–17, 2008 <sup>5</sup>	22.9%

## America's Most Vulnerable Children: A Snapshot

Estimate of referrals of possible child abuse and neglect, 2007 <sup>6</sup>	3,200,000
Children substantiated/indicated as abused or neglected, 2007 <sup>7</sup>	794,000
Estimated children who died as a result of abuse or neglect, 2007 <sup>8</sup>	1,586
Children living in out-of-home care, 2007 <sup>9</sup>	492,618
Children adopted from the public foster care system, 2007 <sup>10</sup>	51,401
Children waiting to be adopted, 2007 <sup>11</sup>	133,818
Children living in poverty, 2008 <sup>12</sup>	13,507,000
Estimated children living in low-income families, 2008 <sup>13</sup>	28,800,000
National Poverty Rate, 2008 <sup>14</sup>	13.2%
National Poverty Rate for children under age 18, 2008 <sup>15</sup>	19.0%
National Poverty Rate for children ages 5-17, 2008 <sup>16</sup>	17.7%
National Poverty Rate for children under age 5, 2008 <sup>17</sup>	22.2%

## Child Abuse and Neglect

- In 2007, approximately 3.2 million allegations of child abuse and neglect, representing 5.8 million children, were made to child protective services agencies. Of those, 2,085,443 reports were referred for investigation, as reported by 37 states.<sup>18</sup>
- During FFY 2007, an estimated 794,000 children in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico were determined to be victims of abuse or neglect. Of these children, 59.0% were neglected, 10.8% were physically abused, and 7.6% were sexually abused. The victimization rate was 10.6 per 1,000 children, representing a 12.4% decrease from 2006, which can be explained by definitional changes.<sup>19</sup>
- Of the children substantiated as abused and neglected, only 62% received follow up services. Of the children reported as abused and neglected but not substantiated, 31.2% received follow up services. One-fifth (20.7%) of children substantiated as abused or neglected were placed in foster care as a result of an investigation.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2007, 492,818 children lived apart from their families in out-of-home care. Of the children living apart from their families, 34% were age 5 or younger, 45% were ages 6 through 15, and 21.2% were 16 or older.<sup>21</sup>
- Of the children living in out-of-home care in 2007, 40% were white, 31% were black, 20% were Hispanic, 2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 7% were children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>22</sup>

### **Permanent Families for Children**

- Of the 292,830 children exiting out-of-home care in the United States in 2007, 152,517 were reunited with their parents or other family members. In addition, 17,950 children exited out-of-home care to guardianship.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 51,401 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency, a 1.3% increase from 50,703 in 2006.<sup>24</sup>
- Of the 492,618 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 133,818 or 27.1% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>25</sup>

### **Kinship Support**

- In 2008 approximately 2,617,580 grandparents across the country had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>26</sup>
- Of the 492,618 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 123,390 were living with relatives while in care.<sup>27</sup>
- Of all of the children in kinship care in 2007, 37% were white, 33% were black, 22% were Hispanic, 2% were Native American, and 6% were other races.<sup>28</sup>

### **Child Poverty and Income Support**

- The percentage of children under 18 living in poverty increased from 16.1% in 2000<sup>29</sup> to 19.0% in 2008.<sup>30</sup>
- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in the United States declined from 4,144,833 in October 2006 to 3,851,225 in October 2008, a decrease of 7.1%. The number of families receiving TANF in October 2008 was 1,653,545, a 6.5% decrease from 1,768,761 in 2006.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2008, approximately \$6.2 billion was spent on the Women, Infant, and Child (WIC) Nutrition Program, serving 8.7 million participants.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2008, nearly \$26.6 billion in child support funds were collected and distributed in the United States, an increase of 6.9% from 2007.<sup>33</sup>

### **Child Care and Head Start**

- In 2008, an estimated monthly average of 1,600,300 of the nation's children received subsidized child care. This is a decrease: 1,706,600 children were served in 2007, 1,770,100 children were served in 2006, and 1,746,100 children were served in 2005.<sup>34</sup>
- In 2007, Head Start served 908,412 children.<sup>35</sup>
- In 2008, the Child Care and Development Block Grant was funded at \$4.979 billion. The amount of TANF funds used for child care, however, has declined steadily from its peak of \$4 billion in 2000 to \$3.1 billion in 2006.<sup>36</sup>
- Child care subsidies fall far short of meeting the need. Without an increase in funding, 200,000 children are expected to lose child care assistance between 2007 and 2009.<sup>37</sup>

- Income eligibility limits for obtaining child care assistance remained low in 2008, with more than three-quarters of states capping eligibility at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). In the majority of communities across the country, a family needs an income equal to at least 200% of FPL—\$35,200 a year for a family of 3 in 2008—to meet its basic needs, including housing, food, child care, transportation, health care, and other necessities.<sup>38</sup>
- As of early 2008, an estimated 380,240 children or families nationwide were on the waiting list for subsidized child care, an increase of 4% from 2007.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2008, in 31 states a family at 150% of FPL was charged a copayment of more than \$141 per month (6.4% of income), and in 6 states a family at this income level was not even eligible for child care assistance.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2008, only 10 states paid child care providers at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates, compared with 22 states in 2001.<sup>41</sup>

## Health

### *Pregnancy and Parenting*

- In 2007, 6,218 babies were born to girls under the age of 15, approximately the same rate as 2006. Girls ages 15 to 19 gave birth to 445,045 babies in 2007, reflecting a rate of 42.5 births per 1,000 for that age group and about a 1% increase from 2006.<sup>42</sup>
- Females who have been in foster care appear to have higher birth rates (17.2%) than their counterparts outside of foster care (8.2%).<sup>43</sup>
- By age 21, 71% of surveyed foster care females report having been pregnant at least once, while only one-third of non-foster care females of the same age have ever been pregnant.<sup>44</sup>
- Teen childbearing costs taxpayers \$9.1 billion annually, with \$2.3 billion of these costs falling on the child welfare system because children born to teen mothers are at increased risk of ending up in foster care and child protective services.<sup>45</sup>

### *Newborn Health and Infant Mortality*

- Nationally, in 2006, 351,974 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams. Low birthweight babies were 8.3% of all live births in 2006, compared to 7.6% in 2000.<sup>46</sup>
- During 2006, 28,527 infants under age 1 died in the United States, amounting to about 78 infant deaths each day. The U.S. infant mortality rate was 6.7 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2006.<sup>47</sup>

### *HIV/AIDS*

- From the beginning of the epidemic through 2007, 1,030,832 adults and adolescents, and 9,590 children under the age of 13, were reported as having AIDS.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2006, people aged 13–29 accounted for the largest number of new HIV infections.<sup>49</sup>

## Child and Youth Mental Health

- Recent estimates show approximately 1 in 5 children with a diagnosable mental disorder and 1 in

10 with a severe emotional or behavioral disorder which causes significant impaired functioning at home, at school, or in the community.<sup>50</sup>

- Co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders are increasingly prevalent for youth treated for substance abuse disorders, with 80% to 85% also having a mental health disorder.<sup>51</sup>
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth aged 15–24. In 2006, 4,189 youth 15–24 committed suicide in the United States, a rate of 9.9 per 100,000 adolescents in the population.<sup>52</sup> In total, 1,744 suicides were by youth under age 20, a rate of 2.16 per 100,000 for this age group.<sup>53</sup>
- Half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75% have begun by age 24; thus, mental disorders are really the chronic diseases of the young.<sup>54</sup>
- In 2008, there were 3.1 million youths (12.7% of the population) who received treatment or counseling for emotional or behavior problems in the prior year.<sup>55</sup>
- Only 1 in 5 children with serious emotional disturbance receives mental health specialty services.<sup>56</sup>

#### *Foster Care and Mental Health*

- A 2006 literature review by Casey Family Programs reveals that studies show between one-half and three-fourths of the children entering foster care exhibit behavior or social competency problems that warrant mental health care.<sup>57</sup>
- A majority of foster care youth—85%—are estimated to have an emotional disorder and/or a substance abuse problem<sup>58</sup> and 30% have severe behavioral, emotional, or developmental problems.<sup>59</sup>
- Of adults surveyed who had been placed in foster care as children, more than half (54.4%) had experienced clinical levels of at least one mental health problem in the last 12 months. One quarter (25%) suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the past 12 months—a rate nearly double that of U.S. war veterans.<sup>60</sup>
- A 2004 national study showed that 3 out of 4 youth in child welfare who meet a stringent criterion for need were not receiving specialty mental health services within 12 months after a child abuse and neglect investigation.<sup>61</sup>

#### *Foster Care and Medicaid*

- In 2007, 942,238 children were enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care.<sup>62</sup>
- Of the 942,238 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care in 2007, 174,359 received Targeted Case Management (TCM) services and 103,190 received rehabilitative services.<sup>63</sup>
- In SFY 2006, states spent approximately \$1.4 billion in Medicaid dollars on Medicaid TCM and rehabilitative services.<sup>64</sup>
- Children in foster care receiving TCM services are much more likely to receive other important services such as physician, prescription drug, dental, and home health services than children in foster care who do not receive TCM services.<sup>65</sup>
- Although foster children represent only 3.7% of the nondisabled children enrolled in Medicaid, due to disproportionate needs, they account for 12.3% of total expenditures,<sup>66</sup> and 25%-41% of Medicaid mental health expenditures.<sup>67</sup>

## Substance Abuse and Child Welfare

- In 2008, 23.1 million people age 12 or older—9.2% of this population—needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol use problem. However, only 2.3 million people age 12 or older—9.9% of those needing treatment—received treatment at a specialty facility for a problem related to the use of alcohol or illicit drugs. This left 20.8 million people who needed treatment unable to receive it at a specialty facility in the past year.<sup>68</sup>
- Parental addiction is a significant factor in child abuse and neglect, with studies suggesting that 40% to 80% of families in the child welfare system are affected by it.<sup>69</sup>
- The 2005 National Study on Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) found that among children who were in out-of-home care, prior to removal, 46.1% of their caregivers had a problem with alcohol or drugs, according to the child welfare worker assessment.<sup>70</sup>
- In a survey by the National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research, 85% of states reported substance abuse was one of the two major problems exhibited by families in which maltreatment was suspected.<sup>71</sup>
- Data indicate that abused and neglected children from substance-abusing families are more likely to be placed in foster care and are more likely to remain there longer than maltreated children from families who do not abuse substances.<sup>72</sup>
- In a 2007 National Association of Counties survey, 40% of all sheriffs reported increases in domestic violence and child abuse and endangerment due to parental methamphetamine use in the past year.<sup>73</sup>
- Between 2004 and 2008, at least 7,797 children were injured at or affected by methamphetamine lab, having been present during lab seizure or otherwise.<sup>74</sup>

## Vulnerable Youth

- In 2007, 28,959 children aged out of out-of-home care.<sup>75</sup>
- Of the 28,959 children emancipated from foster care in 2007, 1,698 were under the age of 18.<sup>76</sup>
- In 2007, there were about 1.2 million teens between the ages of 16 and 19 who were not in school and had not graduated from high school. In 2007, there were about 1.4 million teens between the ages of 16 and 19 who were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>77</sup>
- Among youth ages 12 to 17, there were 1.9 million (7.8%) who needed treatment for an illicit drug use problem in 2008. Of this group, only 7.4% of those who needed treatment, or 143,000, received treatment at a specialty facility.<sup>78</sup>
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth aged 15–24. In 2006, 4,189 youth 15–24 committed suicide in the United States, a rate of 9.9 per 100,000 adolescents in the population.<sup>79</sup> In total, 1,744 suicides were by youth under age 20, a rate of 2.16 per 100,000 for this age group.<sup>80</sup>
- A national survey found that nearly 9 out of 10 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) students (86.2%) experienced harassment at school in the past year. Three-fifths (60.8%) felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation and about a third (32.7%) reported skipping a day of school in the past month because of feeling unsafe.<sup>81</sup>

## Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

- In 2007, 1,649,977 children under the age of 18 were arrested. Of the arrests in 2007, 73,427 were for violent crimes and 33,187 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>82</sup>
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 92,854 children in juvenile correction facilities in the United States, a 4% decrease from 96,655 children in 2003.<sup>83</sup>

## Funding Child Welfare Services

- In SFY 2006, states spent at least \$25.7 billion for child welfare services,<sup>84</sup> which includes all direct and administrative services that the state agency provides to children and families.<sup>85</sup> Of this amount, 48% was from federal funds, 41% was from state funds, and 11% was from local funds.<sup>86</sup>
- In 2006, of the \$12.4 billion federal dollars spent for child welfare, 48% was Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 5% was Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 13% was Medicaid, 12% was Social Services Block Grant, 19% was TANF, and 3% was other federal sources, including SSI and Survivors Benefits.<sup>87</sup>
- Out of 492,618 children in out-of-home care in 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2007, only 211,456 children received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>88</sup>

## Child Welfare Workforce

- A 2003 General Accounting Office (GAO) report documented that staff shortages, high caseloads, high worker turnover, and low salaries impinge on the delivery of services to achieve safety, permanence, and well-being for children.<sup>89</sup>
- While CWLA standards suggest a caseload ratio of 12 to 15 children per caseworker<sup>90</sup>, the 2003 GAO report cites that the actual average caseload for a child welfare/foster care caseworker is 24 to 31. The report concludes that these high caseloads contribute to high worker turnover rates and to insufficient services being provided to children and families.<sup>91</sup>
- According to a 2004 child welfare workforce survey, the average caseload size—where “case” is defined as the work with one child—was 26.3 for child protective service workers.<sup>92</sup>
- The average median income for a Child Welfare Social Worker was \$37,480 in 2006, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.<sup>93</sup>
- The average vacancy rate for child protective service workers at public agencies was 8.5% in 2004, down from 9.3% in 2000. The average number of weeks required to fill a vacant child protective service position was 10 weeks.<sup>94</sup>
- The turnover rate for child protective workers increased from 19.9% in 2000 to 22.1% in 2004.<sup>95</sup>
- The findings of 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>96</sup>

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