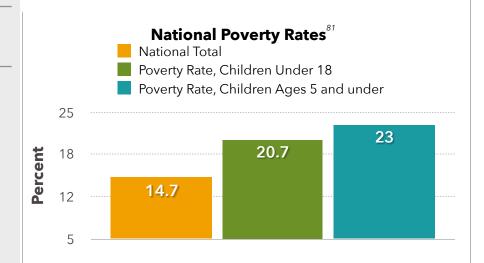
# THE NATION'S CHILDREN 2018

## Population of Children Under 18: 73,612,438

## PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the **250,248** children exiting out-of-home care in 2016 in the United States, **125,975** were reunited with their parents or other family members. In addition, 23,659 children exited out-of-home care to guardianship.<sup>82</sup>
- In 2016, approximately **57,208** children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency, a 6.8% increase from 53,556 in 2015.83
- Of the **437,465** children in out-of-home care in 2016, there were **117,794** children waiting to be adopted.<sup>84</sup>



#### **AMERICA'S CHILDREN: A SNAPSHOT**

#### AMERICA'S MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN

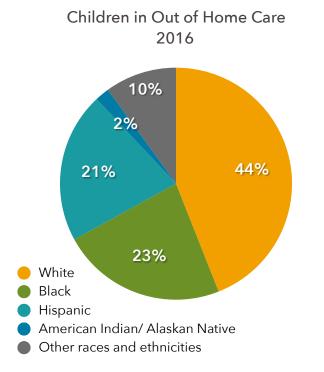
Estimated referrals of possible child abuse and neglect, 2016	3,472,0007
Children substantiated/indicated as abused or neglected, 2016	676,0008
Estimated children who died as a result of abuse or neglect, 2016	1,7509
Children living in out-of-home care, 2016	437,46510
Children adopted from the public foster care system, 2016	57,208 <sup>11</sup>
Children waiting to be adopted, 2016	117,794 <sup>12</sup>
Children living in poverty, 2016	14,115,713 <sup>13</sup>
Children living in low-income families (200% of poverty), 2016	29,976,000 <sup>14</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- In 2016, the percentage of children under 18 living in poverty is 19.5%, a slight decrease from 20.7% in 2015.85
- The total number of children receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in the United States decreased from 2,681,139 in 2014 to 2,373,639 in 2015. The number of families receiving TANF in 2015 was down to 1,348,254 from 1,520,894 in 2014.86
- For 2017, approximately \$5.6 billion was spent on the Women, Infant, and Child (WIC) Nutrition Program, serving 7.3 million participants, a decrease from 7.7 million participants in FY 2016.87
- In 2016, \$33 billion in child support funds was collected and distributed in the United States, similar to the prior year.<sup>88</sup>

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2016, approximately 4.1 million allegations of child abuse and neglect, representing 7.4 million children, were made to child protective services agencies. 2.3 million of the reports were referred for a CPS investigation, as reported by 45 states. 15
- During 2016, an estimated 676,000 children in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico were determined to be victims of abuse or neglect. Of these children, 74.8% were neglected, 18.2% were physically abused, and 8.5% were sexually abused.
- Of the substantiations of child abuse and neglect in 2016,
   57.4% received follow-up services. That service was foster care 37% of the time. Of the non-substantiated reports,
   32.9% received follow-up services.
- 437,465 children lived apart from their families in foster care in 2016. Of those children, 41% were age 5 or younger, 44% were ages 6 through 15, and 15% were 16 or older. <sup>18</sup>





- 2,646,027 grandparents were responsible for their grandchildren in 2016.89
- In 2016, of the 437,465 children in out-of-home care, 139,017 were living with relatives while in care.90
- In 2016, approximately
  7.7 million children under
  age 18 lived in homes
  with a householder who
  was their grandparent or
  other relative. Of these,
  approximately 5.9 million
  lived with grandparents
  who were the
  householders. 91

#### HEALTH

#### PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

- •In 2016, the birth rate for U.S. teenagers aged 15-19 was 20.3 births per 1,000 women, falling 9% from 2015, setting another record low.<sup>19</sup>
- •Teen girls in foster care are estimated to be twice as likely as their peers not in foster care to get pregnant by age 19. <sup>20</sup>
- •Children born to teen mothers are at increased risk of ending up in foster care and child protective services. It is estimated that teen childbearing costs taxpayers \$9.4 billion annually, including \$3.1 billion in child welfare costs.<sup>21</sup>

#### NEWBORN HEALTH AND INFANT MORTALITY

- •Nationally, low-birth-weight babies represented 8.17% of all live births in 2016, a slight increase from 8.07% in 2015 but lower than a four-decade high of 8.26% in 2006.<sup>22</sup>
- •The infant mortality rate for 2016 was 587.0 deaths per 1,000 live births, an increase from 589.5 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015.<sup>23</sup>

#### **HIV/AIDS**

- •In 2015, there were 7,340 cases of individuals ages 13-24 living with an HIV infection.<sup>24</sup>
- •In 2015, 7,840 individuals ages 13-24 were living with AIDS.<sup>25</sup>

#### CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

• Suicide is the second leading cause of death among those 10-19 years old, accounting for over 18% of deaths annually for this age group. Among American Indian/Alaskan Natives aged 10-19, the suicide rate is approximately 1.7 times higher than the national average for that age group.<sup>26</sup>

- Mental health disorders are chronic diseases among youth; half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75% have begun by age 24.<sup>27</sup>
- The average age of onset was 6 for anxiety disorders, 11 for behavior disorders, 13 for mood disorders, and 15 for substance use disorders.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2016, approximately 3.6 million youth aged 12-17 (14.7%) received treatment or counseling for problems with emotions or behavior in a specialty mental health setting (inpatient or outpatient care).<sup>29</sup>
- Among adolescents with mental health disorders, only an estimated 33% will receive treatment services. Adolescents with behavior disorders are most likely to receive services.<sup>30</sup>

#### FOSTER CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Instability in placement among children in foster care increases the likelihood of a child being diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder.<sup>31</sup>
- About 30% of foster care youth are reported to have severe behavioral, emotional, or developmental problems.
- A Michigan Foster Care Alumni Study revealed that among surveyed adults who had been placed in foster care as children, more than half (50.8%) had experienced at least one mental health problem in the last 12 months. 73.8% experienced at least one mental health problem at some point in their lives.<sup>33</sup> A similar study in Texas revealed 39.0% with a mental health problem in the past 12 months and 68.0% experienced a mental health problem at one point in their lives.<sup>34</sup>

• In the child welfare system, it's estimated that 70-85% of children in need of mental health services do not receive such services, with children under 3 even less likely than older children.<sup>35</sup>

#### **FOSTER CARE AND MEDICAID**

- Children who are in foster care represent 3% of the children served by Medicaid, however, they account for 15% of children utilizing behavioral health services and 29% of behavioral health spending.<sup>36</sup>
- Expenses for behavioral health services for children in foster care are estimated to be two times greater than expenses for physical health services annually.<sup>37</sup>
- Children in residential or therapeutic group homes make up less than 4% of children receiving Medicaid services but account for 19% of total behavioral health costs.<sup>38</sup>
- The proportion of children with health insurance coverage for any part of the year has increased modestly, from 89% in 2000 to 94% in 2014. However, the share of children with private insurance decreased from 71% to 61%, while the proportion of children covered under Medicaid increased from 21 to 40%.<sup>39</sup>

#### SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH

#### CHILD SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- An estimated 330,000 adolescents in 2016 had a co-occurring substance use disorder and a major depressive episode in the past year. This number represents 1.4 percent of all adolescents in the United States.<sup>40</sup>
- There were 28,000 adolescents aged 12 to 17 who were current users of cocaine in 2016.41
- In 2016, 6.5 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 were current users of marijuana. 42

#### PARENTAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Children of parents who abuse alcohol or drugs are at an increased risk of abuse or neglect.<sup>43</sup>
- It is estimated that 61% of infants and 41% of older children in out-of-home care are from families with active substance abuse.<sup>44</sup>

• Children Affected by Methamphetamines is a grant program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration to provide services to children and their families who were affected by methamphetamine use. The program focuses on providing grants to Family Treatment Courts to provide services to children as well as parents, caregivers, and families.
Services provided health with trauma related intervention, parent education, behavioral interventions, as well as other relevant areas. Their 2016 report found:

- ◆ Grantees provided services to approximately 2,500 families. The total population served included approximately 3,200 adults and 5,100 children<sup>45</sup>.
- ◆ Around 85% of children exiting out-of-home care were reunified with their family<sup>46</sup>.
- ◆ Children in CAM were less likely to re-enter care than children in standard services. For example, 5.4% of CAM children in Santa Barbara re-entered foster care whereas 11.9% of children in the jurisdiction's child welfare service programs re-entered foster care after 12 months<sup>47</sup>.

#### **OPIOIDS AND CHILDREN**

- In 2016, 34% of children who entered foster care were removed from their homes due to a parent's drug abuse.
- In 2016, around 3,000 adolescents (12-17) were current users of heroin.<sup>49</sup>
- In 2016, about 891,000 adolescents aged 12-17 misused opioids in the past year.<sup>50</sup>
- A 2012 study found that 28% of surveyed pregnant women were prescribed at least one opioid prescription during their pregnancy. Opioid use during pregnancy can lead to neonatal abstinence syndrome that causes the child to be experience withdrawal once born.<sup>51</sup>
- Youth with parents or guardians with substance abuse disorders are at greater risk of developing psycho-behavioral issues or other grave medical conditions.<sup>52</sup>

### SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

- In 2014, Social Services Block Grant funds went towards:
  - o Child foster care services, 16%
  - o Child protective services, 12%
  - o Child day care services, 11%
  - o Special services for individuals with disabilities, 10%53

#### HOME VISITING PROGRAMS

- In FY 2016, states reported serving approximately 160,000 parents and children in 893 counties in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five territories through the Federal Home Visiting Program.<sup>54</sup>
- In FY 2016, the Federal Home Visiting Program funded services in 35 percent of all urban counties, and 23 percent of all rural counties.<sup>55</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2015, an estimated monthly average of 1,397,000 of the nation's children received subsidized child care. This compares to 2014 when 1,406,300 children were served, 1,449,800 children served in 2013, and 1,502,600 children served in 2012.<sup>56</sup>
- In 2016, Head Start served 1,100,000 children ages birth to 5 and pregnant women.
- In FY 2016, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) was funded at \$5.678 billion, and the amount of TANF funds used for child care in FY 2016 was \$2.615 billion, for a total of \$8.293 billion. Even after adjustment for inflation, the amount of TANF and CCDBG funds used for child care in FY 2016 remains below its high of \$11.16 billion in FY 2001 inflation adjusted dollars.<sup>58</sup>
- In over 37 states the income eligibility limit for obtaining child care assistance remained below 200% of poverty (poverty level in 2016 is \$20,160 a year for a family of three). In the majority of communities across the country, a family needs an income equal to at least 200% of poverty to meet basic needs, including housing, food, child care, transportation, health care, and other necessities.<sup>59</sup>

• In 2016, 20 states had waiting lists or frozen intake for child care assistance, compared to 18 states in 2014 and 21 states in 2001.60

• In 2016, only one state paid child care providers at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates, slightly lower than the three states in 2013, and a sharp decline from 22 states paying at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of market rates in 2001. 61

## **VULNERABLE YOUTH**

- In FY 2016, over 25,000 children left out-of-home care without a permanent family.62
- In 2017, a point-in-time survey identified 4,789 unaccompanied homeless youth on a single night in January.<sup>63</sup>
- A 2016 survey of the nation's youth found the following regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students:
  - o Compared to non-LGBTQ participants, LGBTQ youth were more likely to feel nervous, hopeless, depressed, and worthless in the past month.
  - o Of the LGBTQ youth who responded, more than 25% were personally bullied or harassed, compared to 14% of non-LGBTQ youth.
  - o Approximately half of transgender youth reported feeling hopeless or worthless most or all of the time, and 40% reported feeling depressed most or all of the time.<sup>64</sup>
- In 2016, there were about 707,000 teens between the ages of 16 and 19 who were not in school and had not graduated from high school. There were 1,176,000 teens between the ages of 16 and 19 who were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>65</sup>
- In 2016, one quarter of all children in the United States had a parent who was foreign born.
   Children who have difficulty speaking English may face greater challenges progressing in school and in the labor market.<sup>66</sup>

### JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PROGRAM

- In 2016, U.S. law enforcement agencies arrested an estimated 681,701 persons younger than age 18, a 0.5% decrease from 2015.67
- A study found 46% of homeless youth had been in a correctional facility in 2015.68

• In 2015, 65% of minors in detention had a parent or relative with who they could live with, and 48% of minors in detention were homeless or experienced housing instability before entering detention.<sup>69</sup>

## FUNDING FOR CHILDREN AND CHILD WELFARE

- In FY 2016, the federal government had a total budget of \$3.9 trillion. The sum of federal outlays and tax expenditures on children (\$485.9 billion) made up about 10 percent of total federal outlays and tax expenditures in 2015, consistent with years prior.<sup>70</sup>
- Federal spending on children fell from 3.2% in FY 2010 to 2.1% of GDP in FY 2016.

  Spending on children is projected to continue to decline in the future.<sup>71</sup>
- The ten programs that spent the most on children in the FY 2016 federal budget were:
  - o Medicaid (\$89 billion)
  - o Earned Income Tax Credit (\$61 billion)
  - o Child Tax Credit (\$50 billion)
  - o Dependency Exemption (\$41 billion)
  - o Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (\$31 billion)
  - o Child Nutrition (\$22 billion)
  - o Employer Sponsored Insurance (\$21 billion)
  - o Social Security (\$21 billion)
  - o Title I/Education for the Disadvantaged (\$16 billion)
  - o Children's Health Insurance Program (\$14 billion)<sup>72</sup>
- In FY 2014, \$29.1 billion federal dollars was spent for child welfare. Of this, 55% was from Title IV-E, 5% was from Title IV-B, 8% was from Medicaid, 10% was from the Social Services Block Grant, 20% was from TANF, and 3% was from other federal sources, including SSI and Survivors Benefits. 73

## CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

• Average turnover rates for child welfare agencies range from 20% to 40%<sup>73</sup>. Turnover rates at around 10% are optimal within any agency<sup>74</sup>.

• Caseworker turnover has negative outcomes for children in the child welfare system, including placement disruptions and increased time in out-of-home care.<sup>75</sup>

- According to the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being II baseline report,
   75% of caseworkers earned an annual salary between \$30,000 and \$49,999. Approximately
   20% of caseworkers had salaries over \$50,000.
- The majority of caseworkers hold a bachelor's degree (52.3%) or a bachelor of social work degree (21.9%). Only 25% of caseworkers hold a master's degree.<sup>77</sup>
- A workload model in Colorado found that approximately 574 additional caseworkers were needed in their state to adequately provide child welfare services, due to estimated time requirements for meaningful services. This number represents a 49% increase that is needed on top of hours already spent on case related tasks.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2016). ACS demographic and housing estimates: United States. Retrieved January 16, 2018 from <a href="https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?">https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?</a>
<a href="pid=ACS">pid=ACS</a> 15 5YR B09001&prodType=table.

Note: Number is a CWLA calculation.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2016). *Children characteristics: United States*. Retrieved January 16, 2018 from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\_15\_1YR\_S0901&prodType=table.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Note: Percentage is a CWLA calculation.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

6 Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2018). *Child maltreatment 2016*. Retrieved February 6, 2018 from <a href="https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2016.pdf">https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2016.pdf</a>

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2017). *AFCARS report #24*. Retrieved January 16, 2018 from <a href="https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport24.pdf">https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport24.pdf</a>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

12 Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2016). *Poverty status in the past 12 months: United States*. Retrieved January 16, 2018 from <a href="https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?">https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?</a>
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<sup>14</sup> KIDS COUNT Data Center (2017). *Children below 200 percent poverty*. Retrieved February 6, 2018 from http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/47-children-below-200-percent-poverty#detailed/1/any/false/870,573,869,36,868/any/329,330

Note: Number is a CWLA calculation.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2018). *Child maltreatment 2016*. Retrieved February 6, 2018 from <a href="https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2016.pdf">https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2016.pdf</a>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2017). *AFCARS report #24*. Retrieved January 16, 2018 from <a href="https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport24.pdf">https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport24.pdf</a>.

<sup>19</sup> Hamilton, B.E., Martin, J.A., Osterman, M.K.J, et al. (2017). Births: Final Data for 2016. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, *67*(1). Retrieved February 1, 2018 from <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67\_01.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67\_01.pdf</a>.

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