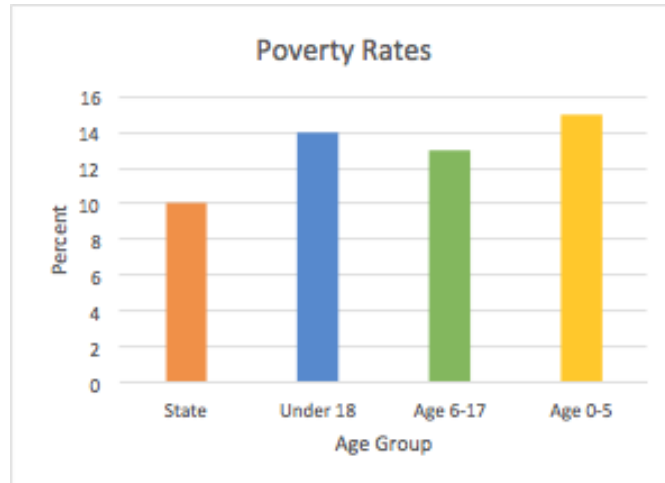


# NEW JERSEY'S CHILDREN 2019

State Population: 9,006,000 | Population of Children Under 18: 1,979,018

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

- Of the 4,196 children exiting out-of-home care in 2017 in New Jersey, 53% were reunited with their parents or primary caretakers.<sup>15</sup>
- 1,106 children were legally adopted through a public child welfare agency in New Jersey in 2017, a decrease of 6.7% from 1,185 in 2016.<sup>16</sup>
- Of the 5,946 children in out-of-home care in 2017, there were 2,479 or 41.7% waiting to be adopted.<sup>17</sup>
- In 2017, approximately 49,236 grandparents in New Jersey had the primary responsibility of caring for their grandchildren.<sup>18</sup>
- 2,339 of the children in out-of-home care in 2016 were living with relatives while in care.<sup>19</sup>



## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2017, New Jersey had 57,026 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 57,026 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2017, there were 6,698 victims of abuse or neglect in New Jersey, a rate of 3.4 per 1,000 children, a decrease of 30.9% from 2016. Of these children, 79.9% were neglected, 13.7% were physically abused, and 10.7% were sexually abused.<sup>9</sup>
- The number of child victims has decreased 30.9% in comparison to the number of victims in 2016.<sup>10</sup>

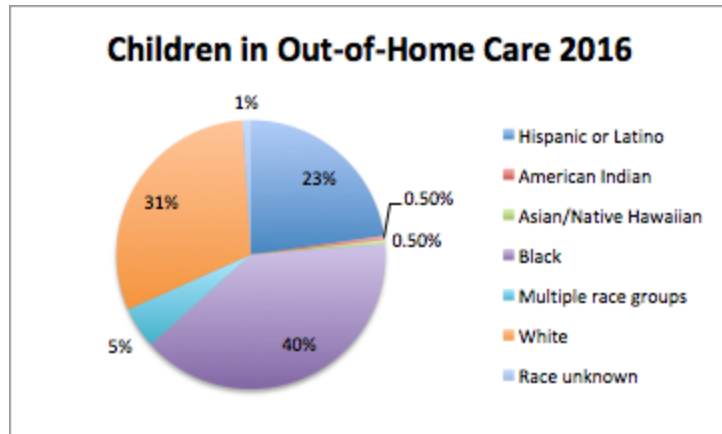


## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2016, New Jersey had a monthly average of 43,300 children served by subsidized child care. An average of 48,000 children received subsidized child care per month in 2015 and 44,800 were recipients in 2014.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2018, to be eligible for subsidized child care in New Jersey, a family of three could make no more than \$40,840 at application, which is equivalent to 44% of the state's median income.<sup>29</sup>
- As of early 2018, New Jersey had no waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2017, Head Start served 17,229 children in New Jersey, an increase of 7.5% from 2015.<sup>31</sup>
- Through federal grants from the Home Visiting Program, in fiscal year 2017, home visitors in New Jersey made 75,137 home visits to 12,748 participants in 7,041 households.<sup>64</sup>

- In 2017, there were 13 child deaths resulting from abuse or neglect reported in New Jersey.<sup>11</sup>

- 6,527 children in New Jersey lived apart from their families in out-of-home care in 2016, compared with 6,874 children in 2015.<sup>12</sup>



- The number of children living apart from their families in out-of-home care has decreased 5.1% in comparison to the number of children in out-of-home care in 2015.<sup>13</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The monthly average number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in New Jersey decreased from 41,756 in 2016 to 26,300 in 2018, a 37% change. There was a 11,582 monthly average of families receiving TANF in 2018, a decrease of 36.5% from 2016.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2017, for every 100 poor families with children, only 19 received TANF cash assistance.<sup>21</sup>
- \$1,400,000,000 was spent in 2017 on TANF assistance in New Jersey, including 7% on basic assistance.<sup>22</sup>

- \$94,224,567 was spent in 2018 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) in New Jersey, serving 141,568 participants.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2017, New Jersey distributed \$1,111,861,182 in child support funds, a 3% change from 2014.<sup>24</sup>
- 771,000 children in New Jersey lived in households with a high housing burden in 2016, where more than 30% of monthly income is spent on housing costs.<sup>25</sup>
- In December of 2016, the unemployment rate in New Jersey was 4.7. <sup>26</sup>
- 11% of households in New Jersey were food insecure in 2016, meaning that the family experienced difficulty providing enough food due to lack of resources at some point during the year.<sup>27</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- 739,914 children in New Jersey were enrolled in Medicaid in 2017, a decrease of 2.1% from 2015.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2017, New Jersey had 239,813 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, an increase of 11.4% from 2015, when 215,191 children were enrolled.<sup>33</sup>
- In 2016, New Jersey had 70,000 uninsured children.<sup>34</sup>
- 8,272 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams in New Jersey in 2016.<sup>35</sup>
- 421 infants under age 1 died in New Jersey in 2016.<sup>36</sup>
- In 2016, the birth rate for teens ages 15 to 17 in New Jersey was 5 births per 1,000 girls. The rate was 22 for teens ages 18 to 19. This reflects a total rate of 11 births for girls ages 15 to 19.<sup>37</sup>
- Cumulative through 2016, there were 58,447 adults and adolescents and 810 children younger than 13 reported as having HIV/AIDS in New Jersey.<sup>38</sup>

- In 2015, an estimated 6,000 children ages 12 to 17 were alcohol dependent in the past year and 232,000 adults age 18 and older were dependent on alcohol or used heroin in the past year in New Jersey.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2014, approximately 23,000 children ages 12 to 17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2014, approximately 21,000 children ages 12 to 17 needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2015, health care costs related to opioid abuse in New Jersey reached \$683,667,371.

## YOUTH WHO ARE VULNERABLE

- 298 children in New Jersey aged out of out-of-home care—exited foster care to emancipation—in 2016.<sup>42</sup>
- 90% of high school students in New Jersey graduated on time at the end of the 2015-16 year.<sup>43</sup>
- 24,000 teens ages 16 to 19 in New Jersey were not enrolled in school and not working in 2016.<sup>44</sup>
- 86,000 young adults ages 18 to 24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school in 2016.<sup>45</sup>
- 48.6% of young adults in New Jersey ages 25 to 34 had an associate's degree or higher from 2011 to 2013.<sup>46</sup>
- In 2017, there were 0 reports of children in New Jersey aged 10 to 14 committing suicide, and 37 reports of suicide among children aged 15 to 19.<sup>47</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- 32 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in New Jersey in 2017, compared to 32 in 2015.<sup>48</sup>

- 17,784 children younger than 18 were arrested in New Jersey in 2016. Violent crimes were the reason for 1,409 of the arrests in 2016.<sup>49</sup>
- 636 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in New Jersey in 2015.<sup>50</sup>

## CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

*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>52</sup>

- According to a 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>
- Average turnover rates for child welfare agencies range from 20% to 40%.<sup>54</sup> Turnover rates at around 10% are considered to be optimal in any agency.<sup>55</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>56</sup>

- According to the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being II baseline report, 75% of caseworkers earned a salary between \$30,000 and \$49,999.<sup>57</sup>
- 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>58</sup>

## SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

- In 2016, New Jersey's sum of expenditures for services totaled \$46,912,180. The most utilized service in New Jersey was Case Management totaling \$48,396,151.<sup>60</sup>

## FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NEW JERSEY'S CHILDREN

- In 2016, New Jersey spent \$1,024,507,983 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, \$375,536,970 was from federal funds and \$648,971,013 was from state and local funds.<sup>61</sup>
  - In 2016, of the \$375,536,970 in federal funds received for child welfare, 16% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 1% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 11% was from Medicaid, 5% came from Social Services Block Grant, 1% was from TANF, and 2% came from other federal sources.<sup>62</sup>
  - New Jersey received \$95,666,948 in federal funds for IV-E foster care expenditures in 2016, including \$28,248,381 for maintenance payments and \$67,418,567 for administration, child placement, the statewide automated child welfare information system, and training. <sup>63</sup>
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- Note: The percentage difference is a CWLA calculation. Overlap in the percentages of types of abuse is possible as a child may have experienced more than one type of abuse.
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- 12 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2018). Trends in Foster Care and Adoption, AFCARS State data tables 2007 through 2017. Retrieved February 14, 2019 from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/trends-in-foster-care-and-adoption>
- 13 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2018). Trends in Foster Care and Adoption, AFCARS State data tables 2007 through 2017. Retrieved February 14, 2019 from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/trends-in-foster-care-and-adoption>
- Note: The percent difference is a CWLA calculation.
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- 61 Ibid.
- Note: Examples of direct services include child abuse/neglect investigations, foster care, community-based programs, case management, and all such services required for the safety, permanency, and well-being of children. Examples of administrative services include management information systems, training programs, eligibility determination processes, and all services that provide the infrastructure supports for the public agency. The component funding streams may not equal the total, depending on additional child support and demonstration funds for this state.
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