**Child Maltreatment**

In 2018, Louisiana had 45,134 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 18,653 were referred for investigation.\(^1\)

There were 9,380 child victims of abuse or neglect in Louisiana in 2018, at a rate of 8.6 children per 1,000. This translates to a 22.2% decrease since 2014.\(^2\)

Of the 9,380 children, 7,155 were first time victims.\(^3\)

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 2,416 of the 9,380 cases.\(^4\)

- **86%** of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2017 were parents of the child. **14%** were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.\(^5\)
- **51%** of Louisiana’s child victims in 2017 were female while **49%** were male.\(^6\)

**Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2018**

- Neglect only
- Physical Abuse Only
- Psychological Maltreatment only
- Sexual Abuse Only
- Multiple Maltreatment Types

- *86%* of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2017 were parents of the child. **14%** were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.\(^5\)
- **51%** of Louisiana’s child victims in 2017 were female while **49%** were male.\(^6\)

**Plans of Safe Care**

- In 2018, Louisiana reported 1,582 infants, 1,536 of whom were screened-in, with prenatal substance exposure.\(^7\)
- Louisiana reported plans of safe care for 46 of the screened-in infants.\(^8\)
Child fatalities remained the same from 25 in 2017 to 25 in 2018.\textsuperscript{xii}

Louisiana reported 1 total child victim of sex trafficking with 1 female victim.\textsuperscript{xii}

5,345 victims received postresponse services while 1,243 non-victims received postresponse services as well.\textsuperscript{xiii}

Foster Care and Adoptions

- 8,020 total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2018.
- 4,562 were in care on the day of September 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2018.
- 3,654 children entered care during the 2018 FY while 3,458 exited during the same year.
- 905 of Louisiana’s children were adopted while 1,395 were waiting to be adopted.\textsuperscript{xv}

There was a 2.2\% increase in the number of children in care between 2017 and 2018. Adoptions from the system also increased 18.1\% from 2017.\textsuperscript{xvi}

179 children in Louisiana aged out and exited foster care in 2017. This is an increase from 145 in 2016 and represents a 23.4\% increase.\textsuperscript{xvii}

- Children in foster care in 2017 spent an average of 16.2 months in care.\textsuperscript{xviii}
- The average length of stay in Louisiana for children waiting to be adopted from foster care in 31.1 months.\textsuperscript{xix}
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2017 was 7.5 years old.\textsuperscript{xx}
- The average age of adopted children was 5.5 years old.\textsuperscript{xxi}
Data from 2017 shows that 2,193 children in foster care within Louisiana were living with non-relatives while 1,553 stayed with a relative.

419 children were staying in group homes while 20 children were classified as runaways.xxii

5% of households in Louisiana in 2017 had a grandparent living with a grandchild.xxiii

The average length of time a child in care spent living with their current relative foster family was 10.5 months.xxiv

Child Poverty
Louisiana had 371,000 children in 2017 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 33% of all children.xxv

30% of Louisiana’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden.xxvi

The average number of individuals receiving TANF rose from 13,452 in 2017 to 14,153 in 2018. This represents a 5.2% increase.xxvii

The state spent $58,442,158 on WIC in 2019, serving 103,170 people. This represents an 8.2% decrease in total participants and a 7.4% decrease in spending.xxviii

773,850 people in Louisiana were food insecure in 2017, including 255,640 children who struggled with hunger.xxix

44.6% of households in Louisiana with children received SNAP benefits in 2017.xxx
Health

Louisiana had 6,519 low birth-weight babies born in 2017 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 10.7% of infants born in Louisiana in 2017.xxxi

Louisiana had a total of 7,743 preterm births in 2018, meaning less than 37 completed weeks of gestation. 10.5% of all white babies were born premature while 16.9% of black babies arrived prematurely in 2018. The total premature birth rate was 12.9%.xxxii

There were 4,269 births to mothers aged 15-19 in Louisiana in 2017, representing a rate of 29 in every 1,000 teen girls. xxxiii

431 infants under 1 died in Louisiana in 2017, representing an infant mortality rate of 7.1 per 1,000. xxxiv

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2018

- 3.4% of Louisiana’s children had no health insurance in 2018. This represents 39,000 children. Louisiana is a Medicaid expansion state.xxxvi
- 701,926 children in Louisiana were enrolled in Medicaid in 2018. This represents a 0.9% decrease from 2017. xxxvii
- 172,934 children in Louisiana were in the state Chip Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2018. This represents an 9.2% increase from 2017. xxxviii
Juvenile Justice System
- There were 16,533 total arrests for children under 18 in Louisiana in 2018.
- 2,076 of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 3,683 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 1,496 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.
- 762 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in Louisiana in 2018. This is a decrease from 831 kids in 2015, representing an 8.3% decrease.

Teens & Youth
- 18,000 (7%) of Louisiana’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2017.
- In 2017, there were 0 reports of children in Louisiana aged 10-14 committing suicide, and 41 reports of suicide among children aged 15-19.
- 121 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in Louisiana in 2017.

Child Welfare Services Funding
- Louisiana spent $206,171,492 on child welfare services in 2016. Child welfare services are all of the direct and administrative services that state agencies provide to children and families.
- $160,326,922 were allocated from the federal government and $45,844,570 came from state and local funds.

Federal Funding Sources
- The breakdown of the $160,326,922 in federal funding received in Louisiana in 2016:
  - $34,745,460 as part of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program
  - $17,259,604 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program
  - Louisiana’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2017 was $22,684,116.
Louisiana’s Children 2020


xxvi Ibid.


xxx Ibid.


