Child Maltreatment

In 2020, Alabama had 27,019 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 26,667 were referred for investigation.¹

There were 11,663 child victims of abuse or neglect in Alabama in 2020, at a rate of 10.7 children per 1,000. This translates to an 14.8% increase since 2016.²

Of the 11,663 children, 9,391 were first time victims.³

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 1,925 of the 11,663 cases.⁴

Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2020

- 4, 0% Medical Neglect
- 21, 0% Neglect
- 2212, 17% Other
- 5,800, 44% Physical Abuse
- 5,033, 38% Psychological Maltreatment
- 212, 17% Sexual Abuse
- 21, 0% Sex Trafficking
- 1, 0% Unknown

Plans of Safe Care

- In 2020, Alabama reported 597 infants who were screened-in with prenatal substance abuse exposure.⁵
- Alabama reported 299 plans of safe care for screened-in infants.⁶

Child Victims by Race or Ethnicity, 2020

- 62% African American
- 29% American Indian or Alaska Native
- 5% Asian
- 3% Hispanic
- 0% Multiple Race
- 0% Pacific Islander
- 0% White
- 5% Unknown

- 70% of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2020 were parents of the child. 30% were non-parents or had an unknown relationship. vi
- 55% of Alabama’s child victims in 2020 were female while 45% were male. vii
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- Child fatalities increased in 2020 from 34 in 2019 to 47 in 2020.\textsuperscript{xii}

- Alabama reported 4 total child victims of sex trafficking.\textsuperscript{xii}

- 6,761 victims received post-response services while 4,697 non-victims received post-response services as well.\textsuperscript{xiii}

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**Foster Care and Adoptions**

- 9,175 total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2020.
- 5,573 were in care on the day of September 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2020.
- 3,504 children entered care during the 2020 FY while 3,603 exited during the same year.
- 816 of Alabama’s children were adopted while 1,761 were waiting to be adopted.\textsuperscript{xv}

There was a 3.63\% decrease in the number of children in care between 2019 and 2020. Adoptions from the system also increased 10.6\% from 2019.\textsuperscript{xvi}

351 children in Alabama aged out and exited foster care in 2019. This is an increase from 317 in 2018 and represents an 10.7\% increase.\textsuperscript{xvii}

- Children in foster care in 2020 spent an average of 18.6 months in care.\textsuperscript{xviii}
- The average length of stay in Alabama for children waiting to be adopted from foster care is 28.7 months.\textsuperscript{xxi}
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2020 was 7.9 years old.\textsuperscript{xx}
- The average age of adopted children was 6.4 years old.\textsuperscript{xxi}
Data from 2019 shows that 3,667 children in foster care within Alabama were living with non-relatives while 838 stayed with a relative.

869 children were staying in group homes while 59 children were classified as runaways. xxii

4% of households in Alabama in 2019 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 7.4 months. xxiv

Child Poverty
Alabama had 332,000 children in 2021 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 31% of all children. xxv

24% of Alabama’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden. xxvi

The average number of individuals receiving TANF fell from 16,740 in 2020 to 13,684 in 2021. This represents a 18.26% decrease. xxvii xxviii

The state spent $48,813,794 on WIC in 2021, serving 111,741 people. This represents a 3.7% decrease in total participants and a 9.3% decrease in spending. xxix

788,250 people in Alabama were food insecure in 2019, including 226,310 children who struggled with hunger. xxx

47.6% of households receiving SNAP benefits in Alabama in 2019 had children. xxxi
Health
Alabama had 6,136 low birth-weight babies born in 2019 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 10.5% of infants born in Alabama in 2019.xxxii

Alabama had a total of 7,311 preterm births in 2019, meaning less than 37 completed weeks of gestation. 10.83% of all white babies were born premature while 16.46% of black babies arrived prematurely in 2019. The total premature birth rate was 12.48%.xxxiii

There were 3,955 births to mothers aged 15-19 in Alabama in 2019, representing a rate of 26 in every 1,000 teen girls. xxxiv

449 infants under 1 died in Alabama in 2017, representing an infant mortality rate of 7.7 per 1,000. xxxv

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2020

- Medicaid: 27%
- CHIP: 68%
- Uninsured: 5%

3.5% of Alabama’s children had no health insurance in 2019.xxxvii

541,234 children in Alabama were enrolled in Medicaid in 2020. This represents 1.2% increase from 2019. xxxviii

210,081 children in Alabama were in the state Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2020. This represents an 4.5% decrease from 2019. xxxix
Juvenile Justice System

- There were 103 total arrests for children under 18 in Alabama in 2019.
- Zero of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 70 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 9 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.
- 798 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in Alabama in 2019. This is a decrease from 804 kids in 2017, representing a 0.75% decline.

Teens & Youth

- 18,000 (7%) of Alabama’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2019.
- In 2020, there were zero reports of children in Alabama aged 10-14 committing suicide, and 96 reports of suicide among children aged 15-24.
- 96 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in Alabama in 2020.

Child Welfare Services Funding

- Alabama spent $328,862,115 on child welfare services in 2018. Child welfare services are all of the direct and administrative services that state agencies provide to children and families.
- $184,188,490 were allocated from the federal government and $144,673,625 came from state and local funds.

Federal Funding Sources

- Title IV-E: 44%
- Title IV-B: 29%
- TANF: 12%
- SSBG: 9%
- Other Source: 5%

The breakdown of the $184,188,490 in federal funding received in Alabama in 2018:

- $36,030,301.76 as part of the Title IV-E Total Foster Care Program.
- $14,126,334.45 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.
- Alabama’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2020 was $33,108,235.
Alabama’s Children 2022


xx Ibid.

xlii Ibid.


xlv Ibid


xlviii Ibid.

Alabama’s Children 2022


xiii Ibid.


xixs Ibid


