In 2020, Arkansas had 54,351 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 31,429 were referred for investigation. There were 9,241 child victims of abuse or neglect in Arkansas in 2020, at a rate of 13.2 children per 1,000. This translates to an 10% increase since 2016.

Of the 9,241 children, 7,705 were first time victims.

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 2,029 of the 9,241 cases.

• 68% of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2020 were parents of the child. 32% were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.

• 55% of Arkansas’s child victims in 2020 were female while 45% were male.

Plans of Safe Care

• In 2020, Arkansas reported 512 infants who were screened-in with prenatal substance abuse exposure.

• Arkansas reported 468 plans of safe care for screened-in infants.
Foster Care and Adoptions

- 7,159 total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2020.
- 4,280 were in care on the day of September 30th, 2020.
- 3,106 children entered care during the 2020 FY while 2,882 exited during the same year.
- 777 of Arkansas’s children were adopted while 1,142 were waiting to be adopted.\textsuperscript{ xv}

There was a 3.7\% increase in the number of children in care between 2019 and 2020. Adoptions from the system decreased 21\% from 2019.\textsuperscript{xvi}

232 children in Arkansas aged out and exited foster care in 2019. This is an increase from 219 in 2018 and represents an 15.8\% increase.\textsuperscript{xvii}

- Children in foster care in 2020 spent an average of 16.2 months in care. \textsuperscript{xviii}
- The average length of stay in Arkansas for children waiting to be adopted from foster care is 34.0 months.\textsuperscript{xix}
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2020 was 9.1 years old.\textsuperscript{xx}
- The average age of adopted children was 6.4 years old.\textsuperscript{xxi}
Data from 2019 shows that 2,255 children in foster care within Arkansas were living with non-relatives while 1,146 stayed with a relative.

835 children were staying in group homes while 29 children were classified as runaways. xxii

4% of households in Arkansas 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 5.2 months. xxiv

Child Poverty
Arkansas had 206,000 children in 2019 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 20% of all children. xxv

22% of Arkansas’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden. xxvi

The average number of individuals receiving TANF fell from 4,522 in 2020 to 3,702 in 2021. This represents a 18.1% decrease. xxvii xxviii

The state spent $26,751,526 on WIC in 2021, serving 50,751 people. This represents an 13.3% decrease in total participants and a 8.0% decrease in spending. xxix

499,950 people in Arkansas were food insecure in 2019, including 149,670 children who struggled with hunger. xxx

48.3% of households receiving SNAP benefits in Arkansas in 2019 had children. xxxi
Health
Arkansas had 3,380 low birth-weight babies born in 2019 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 9.2% of infants born in Arkansas in 2019.xxxii

Arkansas had a total of 4,362 preterm births in 2019, meaning less than 37 completed weeks of gestation. 11.09% of all white babies were born premature while 15.60% of black babies arrived prematurely in 2019. The total premature birth rate was 11.93%.xxxiii

There were 28 births to mothers aged 15-19 in Arkansas in 2019, representing an unknown rate in every 1,000 teen girls.xxxiv

251 infants under 1 died in Arkansas in 2019, representing an infant mortality rate of 6.9 per 1,000.xxxv

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2020

- Medicaid: 35%
- CHIP: 52%
- Uninsured: 13%

9.1% of Arkansas’s children had no health insurance in 2019. Arkansas is a Medicaid expansion state.xxxvii

401,436 children in Arkansas were enrolled in Medicaid in 2020. This represents 2.0% decrease from 2019.xxxviii

104,865 children in Arkansas were in the state Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2020. This represents an 0.8% increase from 2019.xxxix
Juvenile Justice System
- There were 7,809 total arrests for children under 18 in Arkansas in 2019.
- 690 of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 1,425 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 823 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.
- 465 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in Arkansas in 2019. This is an increase from 585 kids in 2017, representing a 20.5% decrease.

Teens & Youth
- 11,000 (7%) of Arkansas’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2021.
- In 2020, there were zero reports of children in Arkansas aged 10-14 committing suicide, and 78 reports of suicide among children aged 15-24.
- 77 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in Arkansas in 2020.

Child Welfare Services Funding
- Arkansas spent $162,419,450.16 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.
- $105,184,431 were allocated from the federal government and $55,861,186 came from state and local funds.

Federal Funding Sources
- Title IV-E
- Title IV-B
- TANF
- SSBG
- Medicaid
- Other Sources

The breakdown of the $32,992,366 in federal funding received in Arkansas in 2018:
- $7,685,062 as part of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program.
- $25,307,304 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.
- Arkansas’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2020 was $12,379,388.


xvi Based on Calculations from the CWLA


xx Ibid.

xii Ibid.


xiv Ibid


xvi Ibid.


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xxi Ibid.


xxix Ibid


