Child Maltreatment
In 2020, Louisiana had 46,310 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 17,232 were referred for investigation.1

There were 6,859 child victims of abuse or neglect in Louisiana in 2020, at a rate of 6.3 children per 1,000. This translates to a 39.2% decrease since 2016.2

Of the 6,859 children, 5,437 were first time victims.3

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 2,406 of the 6,859 cases.4

Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2020
- 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 2020 were female while 49% were male.6

Plans of Safe Care
- In 2020, Louisiana reported 1,956 infants who were screened-in with prenatal substance abuse exposure.7
- Louisiana reported 1,019 plans of safe care for screened-in infants.8
**Foster Care and Adoptions**

- 6,294 total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2020.
- 3,542 were in care on the day of September 30th, 2020.
- 2,414 children entered care during the 2020 FY while 2,752 exited during the same year.
- 749 of Louisiana’s children were adopted while 1,164 were waiting to be adopted.

There was a 9.6% decrease in the number of children in care between 2019 and 2020. Adoptions from the system decreased 16.3% from 2019.

152 children in Louisiana aged out and exited foster care in 2019. This is an increase from 150 in 2018 and represents an 1.3% increase.

- Children in foster care in 2020 spent an average of 17.5 months in care.
- The average length of stay in Louisiana for children waiting to be adopted from foster care is 30.4 months.
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2020 was 7.5 years old.
- The average age of adopted children was 5.6 years old.
Data from 2019 shows that 2,063 children in foster care within Louisiana were living with non-relatives while 1,248 stayed with a relative (See Pie Chart). xxii

302 children were staying in group homes while 17 children were classified as runaways. xxiii

4% of households in Louisiana in 2020 had a grandparent living with a grandchild. xxiv

The average length of time a child in care spent living with their current relative foster family was 7.1 months. xxv

**Child Poverty**

Louisiana had 356,000 children in 2019 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 33% of all children. xxvi

29% of Louisiana’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden. xxvii

The average number of individuals receiving TANF fell from 11,888 in 2019 to 8,607 in 2020. This represents a 27.6% decrease. xxviii

The state spent $40,363,819 on WIC in 2021, serving 88,415 people. This represents an 6.0% decrease in total participants and a 5.3% decrease in spending. xxix

718,360 people in Louisiana were food insecure in 2019, including 249,670 children who struggled with hunger. xxxi

44.9% of households receiving SNAP benefits in Louisiana in 2019 had children. xxxii
Health

Louisiana had 6,348 low birth-weight babies born in 2019 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 10.8% of infants born in Louisiana in 2019.xxxiv

Louisiana had a total of 7,726 preterm births in 2019, meaning less than 37 completed weeks of gestation. 10.96% of all white babies were born premature while 16.75% of black babies arrived prematurely in 2019. The total premature birth rate was 13.12%.xxxv

There were 4,007 births to mothers aged 15-19 in Louisiana in 2019, representing a rate of 28 in every 1,000 teen girls. xxxvi

468 infants under one died in Louisiana in 2017, representing an infant mortality rate of 7.9 per 1,000. xxxvii

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2020

4.4% of Louisiana’s children had no health insurance in 2019. This represents 7,000 children. Louisiana is a Medicaid expansion state.xxxix

695,689 children in Louisiana were enrolled in Medicaid in 2020. This represents 0.24% decrease from 2019. xi

176,621 children in Louisiana were in the state Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2020. This represents a 4.35% decrease from 2019. xii
Juvenile Justice System
- There were 12,267 total arrests for children under 18 in Louisiana in 2019.
- 1,573 of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 2,546 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 921 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.
- 693 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in Louisiana in 2019. This is a decrease from 762 kids in 2017, representing a 9.1% decline.

Teens & Youth
- 23,000 (9%) of Louisiana’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2019.
- In 2020, there were 10 reports of children in Louisiana aged 10-14 committing suicide, and 31 reports of suicide among children aged 15-19.
- 150 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in Louisiana in 2020.

Child Welfare Services Funding
- Louisiana spent $238,996,764 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.
- $161,268,928 were allocated from the federal government and $74,632,850 came from state and local funds.

Federal Funding Sources
- Title IV-E: 44%
- Title IV-B: 22%
- TANF: 28%
- SSBG: 0%
- Medicaid: 2%
- Other Sources: 2%

The breakdown of the $161,268,928 in federal funding received in Louisiana in 2018:
- $37,133,268 as part of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program.
- $19,950,791 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.
- Louisiana’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2020 was $31,216,203.
Louisiana’s Children 2022


xvi Based on Calculations from the CWLA


xxiii Ibid.


