Child Maltreatment

In 2020, Montana had 14,386 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 10,120 were referred for investigation.¹

There were 3,777 child victims of abuse or neglect in Montana in 2020, at a rate of 16.4 children per 1,000. This translates to a 21.2% increase since 2016.²

Of the 3,777 children, 3,009 were first time victims.³

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 448 of the 3,777 cases.⁴

Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2020

- Medical Neglect
- Neglect
- Other
- Physical Abuse
- Psychological Maltreatment
- Sexual Abuse
- Sex Trafficking
- Unknown

- 88% of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2020 were parents of the child. 12% were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.⁶

- 49% of Montana’s child victims in 2020 were female while 51% were male.⁷

Plans of Safe Care

- In 2020, zero infants were screened-in with prenatal substance abuse exposure.⁹

- Montana reported zero of safe care for screened-in infants.¹⁰
Child fatalities increased in 2020 from two in 2019 to five in 2020.\textsuperscript{xi}

Montana had one report of child victims of sex trafficking.\textsuperscript{xii}

2,019 victims received post-response services while 1,276 non-victims received post-response services as well.\textsuperscript{xiii}

Foster Care and Adoptions

- 5,641 total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2020.
- 3,406 were in care on the day of September 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2020.
- 2,022 children entered care during the 2020 FY while 2,235 exited during the same year.
- 432 of Montana’s children were adopted while 816 were waiting to be adopted.\textsuperscript{xv}

There was a 7.87\% decrease in the number of children in care between 2019 and 2020. Adoptions from the system also decreased 10.4\% from 2020.\textsuperscript{xvi}

79 children in Montana aged out and exited foster care in 2019. This is a decrease from 89 in 2018 and represents a 11.2\% decrease.\textsuperscript{xvii}

- Children in foster care in 2020 spent an average of 21.6 months in care.\textsuperscript{xviii}
- The average length of stay in Montana for children waiting to be adopted from foster care is 37.7 months.\textsuperscript{xix}
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2020 was 8.3 years old.\textsuperscript{xx}
- The average age of adopted children was 6.0 years old.\textsuperscript{xxi}
Data from 2019 shows that 1,096 children in foster care within Montana were living with non-relatives while 1,617 stayed with a relative (See Pie Chart).xxii

285 children were staying in group homes while 20 children were classified as runaways.xxiii

3% of households in Montana 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 11.1 months.xxv

Child Poverty
Montana had 64,000 children in 2019 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 28% of all children.xxvi xxvii

23% of Montana’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden.xxviii

The average number of individuals receiving TANF fell from 8,292 in 2019 to 7,198 in 2020. This represents a 13.2% decrease.xxix xxx

The state spent $4,709,288 on WIC in 2021, serving 14,185 people. This represents a 5.4% decrease in total participants and a 7.6% decrease in spending. xxxi

111,080 people in Montana were food insecure in 2019, including 35,500 children who struggled with hunger.xxxii

38.5% of households receiving SNAP benefits in Montana in 2019 had children.xxxiii
Health
Montana had 804 low birth-weight babies born in 2019 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 7.3% of infants born in Montana in 2019.\textsuperscript{xxxiv}

Montana had a total of 1,064 preterm births in 2019, meaning less than 37 completed weeks of gestation. 8.91% of all white babies were born premature while there was no reported percentage of black babies that arrived prematurely in 2019. The total premature birth rate was 9.61%.\textsuperscript{xxv}

There were 502 births to mothers aged 15-19 in Montana in 2019, representing a rate of 16 in every 1,000 teen girls.\textsuperscript{xxxvi}

54 infants under one died in Montana in 2019, representing an infant mortality rate of 4.9 per 1,000.\textsuperscript{xxxvii}

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2020

\begin{itemize}
  \item Medicaid: 21%
  \item CHIP: 8%
  \item Uninsured: 71%
\end{itemize}

6.2% of Montana’s children had no health insurance in 2019. This represents 15,000 children.\textsuperscript{xxxix}

136,470 children in Montana were enrolled in Medicaid in 2020. This represents a 3.8% decrease from 2019.\textsuperscript{xl}

40,927 children in Montana were in the state Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2020. This represents a 4.1% decrease from 2019.\textsuperscript{xii}
Juvenile Justice System
- There were 4,355 total arrests for children under 18 in Montana in 2019.
- 413 of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 658 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 324 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.
- 138 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in Montana in 2019. This is a decrease from 183 kids in 2017, representing a 24.6% decline.

Teens & Youth
- 4,000 (7%) of Montana’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2019.
- In 2020, there were zero reports of children in Montana aged 10-14 committing suicide, and 13 reports of suicide among children aged 15-19.
- 14 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in Montana in 2020.

Child Welfare Services Funding
- Montana spent $96,615,467 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.
- $37,176,565 were allocated from the federal government and $57,764,997 came from state and local funds.

Federal Funding Sources
- 72% Title IV-E
- 16% Title IV-B
- 5% TANF
- 4% Social Services Block Grant
- 3% Medicaid

The breakdown of the $37,176,565 in federal funding received in Montana in 2018:
- $12,548,327 as part of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program.
- $8,207,707 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.
- Montana’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2020 was $5,907,488.


Based on Calculations from the CWLA


Ibid.


Ibid.


Ibid.


Montana’s Children 2022


xxxix Ibid.


xxxxvii Ibid.


