Child Maltreatment

In 2020, New Jersey had 52,853 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 52,853 were referred for investigation.¹

There were 3,665 child victims of abuse or neglect in New Jersey in 2020, at a rate of 1.9 children per 1,000. This translates to a 55.8% decrease since 2016.²

Of the 3,665 children, 2,902 were first time victims.³

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 150 of the 3,665 cases.⁴

Child Victims by Race or Ethnicity 2020

- 76% of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2020 were parents of the child. 24% were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.⁶
- 55% of New Jersey’s child victims in 2020 were female while 45% were male.⁷

Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2020

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

Plans of Safe Care

- In 2020, New Jersey reported 444 infants who were screened-in with prenatal substance abuse exposure.⁹
- New Jersey reported no plans of safe care for screened-in infants.²
Foster Care and Adoptions

- **6,202** total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2020.
- **3,788** were in care on the day of September 30th, 2020.
- **1,832** children entered care during the 2020 FY while **2,426** exited during the same year.
- **788** of New Jersey’s children were adopted while **1,588** were waiting to be adopted.

There was a **14.4%** decrease in the number of children in care between 2019 and 2020. Adoptions from the system also decreased **32.1%** from 2019 to 2020.

**234** children in New Jersey aged out and exited foster care in 2019. This is a decrease from **265** in 2018 and represents a **11.7%** decrease.

- Children in foster care in 2020 spent an average of **23.1** months in care.
- The average length of stay in New Jersey for children waiting to be adopted from foster care is **35.3** months.
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2020 was **6.7** years old.
- The average age of adopted children was **5.8** years old.
Data from 2019 shows that 2,547 children in foster care in New Jersey were living with non-relatives, while 1,563 stayed with a relative (See Pie Chart). xxii

254 children were staying in group homes while seven children were classified as runaways. xxiii

4% of households in New Jersey 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 14.1 months. xxv

Child Poverty

New Jersey had 433,000 children in 2019 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 22% of all children. xxvi

34% of New Jersey's children lived in households with a high housing cost burden. xxvii

The average number of individuals receiving TANF increased from 20,988 in 2019 to 22,079 in 2020. This represents a 5.1% increase. xxviii

The state spent $84,515,986 on WIC in 2021, serving 141,741 people. This represents a 7.54% increase in total participants and a 2.94% decrease in spending. xxix

762,530 people in New Jersey were food insecure in 2019, including 192,580 children who struggled with hunger. xxx

In New Jersey, 38% of households receiving SNAP benefits have children in 2019. xxxi
Health
New Jersey had 7,812 low birth-weight babies born in 2019 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 7.9% of infants born in New Jersey in 2019.xxxiv

New Jersey had a total of 9,510 preterm births in 2019, meaning completed less than 37 weeks of gestation. 8.3% of all white babies were born premature while 13.7% of all black babies arrived prematurely in 2019. The total premature birth rate was 9.6%.xxxv

There were 2,697 births to mothers aged 15-19 in New Jersey in 2019, representing a rate of 10 in every 1,000 teen girls.xxxvi

428 infants under one died in New Jersey in 2019, representing an infant mortality rate of 4.3 per 1,000.xxxvii

Percentage of All Preterm Births by Race or Ethnicity, 2019

4.3% of New Jersey’s children had no health insurance in 2019. This represents 88,000 children. New Jersey is not a Medicaid expansion state.xxxix

688,821 children in New Jersey were enrolled in Medicaid in 2020. This represents a 2.1% decrease from 2019.xl

262,080 children in New Jersey were in the state Chip Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2020. This represents a 2.71% decrease from 2019.xli

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2020

Uninsured
Medicaid
CHIP

25% 9%
66%
Juvenile Justice System
- There were 13,360 total arrests for children under 18 in New Jersey in 2019.
- 1,101 of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 2,199 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 2,959 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.
- 513 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in New Jersey in 2019. This is a decrease from 585 kids in 2017, representing a 12.3% decline.

Teens & Youth
- 26,000 (6%) of New Jersey’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2019.
- In 2020, there were no reports of children in New Jersey aged 10-14 committing suicide, and 34 reports of suicide among children aged 15-19.
- 31 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in New Jersey in 2020.

Child Welfare Services Funding
- New Jersey spent $1,084,053,558 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.
- $381,443,535 were allocated from the federal government and $693,366,765 came from state and local funds.

Federal Funding Sources
- Title IV-E: 47%
- Title IV-B: 30%
- Medicaid: 13%
- TANF: 4%
- Social Services Block Grant: 3%
- Other Sources: 3%

The breakdown of the $381,443,535 in federal funding received in New Jersey in 2018 (See Pie Chart):
- $96,895,774 as part of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program.
- $74,253,410 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.

New Jersey’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2020 was $46,609,545.


Based on Calculations from the CWLA


Ibid.

Ibid.


Ibid.


Ibid.


xxiii Ibid.


xii Ibid.


