Child Maltreatment

In 2020, Puerto Rico had 15,237 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 6,999 were referred for investigation.\textsuperscript{1}

There were 3,572 child victims of abuse or neglect in Puerto Rico in 2020, at a rate of 6.5 children per 1,000. This translates to an 37.6% decrease since 2017.\textsuperscript{ii}

Of the 3,572 children, 3,359 were first time victims.\textsuperscript{iii}

The largest age group of victims were 7-year-old children representing 251 of the 3,572 cases.\textsuperscript{iv}

Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2020

- 79% of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2020 were parents of the child. 21% were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.\textsuperscript{vi}

- 49% of Puerto Rico’s child victims in 2020 were female while 51% were male.\textsuperscript{vii}

Plans of Safe Care

- In 2020, Puerto Rico reported 11 infants who were screened-in with prenatal substance abuse exposure.\textsuperscript{ix}

- Puerto Rico reported 11 plans of safe care for screened-in infants.\textsuperscript{x}
Puerto Rico’s Children 2022

- Child fatalities remained the same, five in 2019 and five in 2020.\(^{xi}\)
- Puerto Rico reported one total child victim of sex trafficking.\(^{xii}\)
- 3,343 victims received post-response services while 3,260 non-victims received post-response services as well.\(^{xiii}\)

Foster Care and Adoptions

- 2,761 total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2020.
- 2,259 were in care on the day of September 30\(^{th}\), 2020.
- 590 children entered care during the 2020 FY while 502 exited during the same year.
- 87 of Puerto Rico’s children were adopted while 488 were waiting to be adopted.\(^{xv}\)

There was a 14.3% decrease in the number of children in care between 2019 and 2020. Adoptions from the system also decreased 28% from 2019.\(^{xvi}\)

10 children in Puerto Rico aged out and exited foster care in 2019. This is an increase from 1 in 2018 and represents an 900% increase.\(^{xvii}\)

- Children in foster care in 2020 spent an average of 40.5 months in care.\(^{xviii}\)
- The average length of stay in Puerto Rico for children waiting to be adopted from foster care in 56.9 months.\(^{xix}\)
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2020 was 8.3 years old.\(^{xx}\)
- The average age of adopted children was 6.0 years old.\(^{xvi}\)
Data from 2019 shows that 787 children in foster care within Puerto Rico were living with non-relatives while 612 stayed with a relative (See Pie Chart).\textsuperscript{xxii}

1,079 children were staying in group homes while 14 children were classified as runaways.\textsuperscript{xxiii}

3\% of households in Puerto Rico in 2020 had a grandparent living with a grandchild.\textsuperscript{xxiv}

The average length of time a child in care spent living with their current relative foster family was 21.7 months.\textsuperscript{xxv}

\textbf{Child Poverty}

Puerto Rico had 300,000 children in 2019 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 52\% of all children.\textsuperscript{xxvi} xxvii

\textbf{Where are Children in Foster Care Staying?}

- Foster Family-non-relative: 32\%
- Foster Family-relative: 43\%
- Group Home or Institution: 24\%
- Runaway: 1\%

\textbf{Child Poverty Over Time}

- Poverty, Children under 5: 2018 - 64\%, 2019 - 63\%
- Poverty, Children Aged 6-17: 2018 - 54\%, 2019 - 55\%
- Poverty, Children under 18: 2018 - 57\%, 2019 - 57\%

\textbf{Child Poverty Over Time} [Graph]

29\% of Puerto Rico’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden.\textsuperscript{xxviii}

The average number of individuals receiving TANF decreased from 13,101 in 2019 to 11,628 in 2020. This represents a 11.2\% decrease.\textsuperscript{xxix} xxx

The state spent $111,649,620 on WIC in 2021, serving 99,043 people. This represents a 0.9\% decrease in total participants and a 4.0\% decrease in spending.\textsuperscript{xxxi}

41.8\% of households received SNAP benefits in Puerto Rico in 2018.\textsuperscript{xxxii}

57\% of children in Puerto Rico lived in families that received public assistance in 2019.\textsuperscript{xxxiii}
**Health**

Puerto Rico had **2,054** low birth-weight babies born in 2019 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to **10.1%** of infants born in Puerto Rico in 2019.\(^{xxxiv}\)

Puerto Rico had a total of **2,397** preterm births in 2019, meaning less than 37 completed weeks of gestation. **11.7%** of all white babies were born premature while **11.8%** of Hispanic babies arrived prematurely in 2019. The total premature birth rate was **11.7%**.\(^{xxxv}\)

There were **1,882** births to mothers aged 15-19 in Puerto Rico in 2019, representing a rate of **19** in every 1,000 teen girls.\(^{xxxvi}\)

**133** infants under 1 died in Puerto Rico in 2019, representing an infant mortality rate of **6.5** per 1,000.\(^{xxxvii}\)

\(^{xxxiv}\) 4.0% of Puerto Rico’s children had no health insurance in 2019. This represents **24,000** children. Puerto Rico is a Medicaid expansion state.\(^{xxxix}\)

\(^{xxxv}\) 37,000 children in Puerto Rico were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP in 2018. This represents **6.8%** decrease from 2017.\(^{xli}\)

\(^{xxxvi}\) 18,000 children in Puerto Rico had both public and private coverage in 2018. This represents an **5.2%** decrease from 2017.\(^{xlii}\)
Teens & Youth
- 21,000 (12%) of Puerto Rico's youth (16-19 years old) were both not in school and not working in 2019.\textsuperscript{xlii}
- In 2017, 17.1% of children in Puerto Rico grades 9\textsuperscript{th} - 12\textsuperscript{th} seriously considered suicide.\textsuperscript{xliii}
- 72 children died between the ages of 15 and 19 either by accident, homicide or suicide in Puerto Rico in 2017.\textsuperscript{xliv}

Child Welfare Services Funding
- Puerto Rico spent $22,150,340 on child welfare services in 2016. Child welfare services are all of the direct and administrative services that state agencies provide to children and families.
- $14,919,711 were allocated from the federal government and $7,230,629 came from state and local funds.\textsuperscript{xlv}

Federal Funding Sources
- The breakdown of the $14,919,711 in federal funding received in Puerto Rico in 2016:
  - $3,740,865 as part of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program.
  - $1,031,280 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.\textsuperscript{xlvii}
  - Puerto Rico's sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2017 was $15,342,629\textsuperscript{xlviii}


xvi Based on Calculations from the CWLA


xx Ibid.

xxi

xxii


xxiv Ibid.

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xxvii Ibid.

xxviii Ibid.


xxx Ibid.


xxix Ibid.

xxxii Ibid.


