



# Children in the States

# GEORGIA

July 2015

## Child Population

**2,493,282 children lived in Georgia in 2014; 54 percent were children of color.**

- 46 percent were White
- 14 percent were Hispanic
- 34 percent were Black
- 4 percent were Asian
- 3 percent were two or more races
- <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

## Child Poverty

**More than 1 in 4 (26.5 percent) of Georgia's children were poor in 2013, a total of 650,910 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Georgia ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 8 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. More than 3 in 10 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

**Children of color in Georgia are disproportionately poor.**

- Nearly 2 in 5 Black children, more than 2 in 5 Hispanic children, and more than 1 in 3 American Indian/Alaska Native children were poor in 2013, compared to more than 1 in 7 White children.

## Child Hunger and Homelessness

**Child poverty in Georgia leads to unacceptable child homelessness and hunger.**

- Nearly 37,000 Georgia public school students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year.
- In 2014, more than 2 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in Georgia and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- More than 28 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. 35 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Georgia ranked 47<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 42<sup>nd</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 35 percent of Georgia children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- Nearly 85 percent of Georgia children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Georgia 25<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

## Child Health

**Although the majority of Georgia's children have access to health coverage, that does not guarantee enrollment in coverage or access to care, which can jeopardize their education and their future.**

- In 2013, 85.2 percent of eligible children participated in Medicaid or PeachCare for Kids, Georgia's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 1,162,529 Georgia children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medicaid, and 269,906 in PeachCare for Kids.
- More than 238,000 Georgia children ages 0-17 (9.6 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of uninsured children among states.

<sup>1</sup> A family of four was poor if it was living on less than \$23,834 a year, \$1,986 a month, \$458 a week and \$65 a day, and extremely poor if living on less than \$11,917 a year, \$993 a month, \$229 a week and \$33 a day.

<sup>2</sup> The state ranked 1<sup>st</sup> is the best for children for that outcome and the state ranked 50<sup>th</sup> is the worst for children.

- In 2012, 167,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Medicaid or PeachCare for Kids but not enrolled.

## **Early Childhood and Education**

### **Lack of early childhood investments deprives children of critical supports in the early years and reduces school readiness.**

- In 2013, the average annual cost of center-based child care for an infant was \$7,025 – 10.2 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Georgia.
- Georgia did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 48 percent of Georgia's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 38 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Georgia's state-funded preschool program met 8 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

### **Georgia's schools fail to educate all children, closing off a crucial pathway out of poverty.**

- In 2013, 66 percent of Georgia's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 61 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 80 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 80 percent could not compute.
  - 76 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 67 percent could not compute.
- 70 percent of Georgia public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Georgia 47<sup>th</sup> among states. 62 percent of Black students and 64 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 76 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 13 percent of Georgia public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Georgia 37<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 21 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

## **Children Facing Special Risks**

### **Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.**

- In Georgia, 19,062 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 7.7 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 7,617 Georgia children in foster care.

### **Too many Georgia children are involved in the juvenile justice system.**

- 42,477 children were arrested in Georgia in 2012 – a rate of 3,812 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 1,788 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 73 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 6 percent were Hispanic, and 19 percent were White.
- 92 Georgia children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Georgia spent 1.9 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### **Georgia ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> out of 41 states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 91 children and teens were killed by guns in Georgia in 2013 – a rate of 3.3 out of 100,000 children and teens.

For sources please visit [www.childrensdefense.org/cits](http://www.childrensdefense.org/cits)