



# Children in the States

## IOWA

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### Child Population

**725,954 children lived in Iowa in 2014; 21 percent were children of color.**

- 79 percent were White
- 10 percent were Hispanic
- 5 percent were Black
- 2 percent were Asian
- 4 percent were two or more races
- <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

### Child Poverty

**Nearly 1 in 6 (16.2 percent) of Iowa's children were poor in 2013, a total of 115,194 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Iowa ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- More than 1 in 14 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. More than 1 in 6 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

- More than 2 in 5 Black children, nearly 3 in 10 Hispanic children, and nearly 1 in 6 American Indian/Native Alaskan children were poor in 2013, compared to nearly 1 in 8 White children.

### Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- Nearly 7,000 Iowa public school students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year.
- In 2014, nearly 2 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in Iowa and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- Nearly 20 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. More than 28 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Iowa ranked 11<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 15<sup>th</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- 25 percent of Iowa children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- More than 88 percent of Iowa children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Iowa 34<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

### Child Health

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

- In 2013, 89.1 percent of eligible children participated in Iowa Medicaid Enterprise or Hawk-I, Iowa's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 318,377 Iowa children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Iowa Medicaid Enterprise, and 83,670 in Hawk-I.
- Nearly 30,000 Iowa children ages 0-17 (4.1 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 7<sup>th</sup> lowest 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, 27,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Iowa Medicaid Enterprise or Hawk-I 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 \$9,185 – 17.1 percent more than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college.
- Iowa did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 47 percent of Iowa's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 42 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Iowa's state-funded preschool programs met an average of 6.9 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 62 percent of Iowa's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 52 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 85 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 84 percent could not compute.
  - 77 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 70 percent could not compute.
- 89 percent of Iowa public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Iowa 5<sup>th</sup> among states. 64 percent of Black students and 88 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 90 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 6 percent of Iowa public school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Iowa 4<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 25 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

## **Children Facing Special Risks**

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

- In Iowa, 11,345 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 15.7 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 6,381 Iowa children in foster care.

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

- 15,897 children were arrested in Iowa in 2012– a rate of 4,913 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 729 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 22 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 10 percent were Hispanic, and 61 percent were White.
- 15 Iowa children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Iowa spent 2.8 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### **Iowa ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of 41 ranked states in child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 18 children and teens were killed by guns in Iowa in 2013—a rate of 2.2\* out of 100,000 children and teens.

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

\*Rate is unreliable because it is based on fewer than 20 deaths.