



# Children in the States

## MAINE

July 2015

### Child Population

**258,977 children lived in Maine in 2014; 11 percent were children of color.**

- 89 percent were White
- 3 percent were Hispanic
- 3 percent were Black
- 1 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 6 (17.7 percent) of Maine's children were poor in 2013, a total of 45,159 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Maine ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- 1 in 14 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. Nearly 1 in 5 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

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

### Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- More than 2,000 Maine 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 Maine and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- Nearly 23 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 3 in 10 children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Maine ranked 31<sup>st</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 21<sup>st</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 33 percent of Maine children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- More than 78 percent of Maine children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Maine 7<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

### Child Health

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

- In 2013, 94 percent of eligible children participated in MaineCare, Maine's combined Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 175,128 Maine children ages 0-18 were enrolled in MaineCare due to Medicaid funding, and an additional 29,712 thanks to CHIP funding.
- More than 15,000 Maine children ages 0-17 (5.9 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 24<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, 7,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for MaineCare 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 a 4-year-old was \$9,360– 30 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college.
- Maine did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 42 percent of Maine’s 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 36 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Maine’s state-funded preschool program only met 5 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 63 percent of Maine’s fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 53 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 89 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 75 percent could not compute.
- 87 percent of Maine public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Maine 9<sup>th</sup> among states. 83 percent of Black students and 97 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 86 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 7 percent of Maine public school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Maine 8<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 12 percent and 7 percent, respectively.

## **Children Facing Special Risks**

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

- In Maine, 3,820 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 14.6 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 1,821 Maine children in foster care.

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

- 5,492 children were arrested in Maine in 2012– a rate of 4,365 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 165 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 11 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 4 percent were Hispanic, and 82 percent were White.
- No Maine children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Maine spent 3.2 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### **Fewer than 10 children and teens were killed by guns in Maine in 2013.**

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