



# Children in the States

# PENNSYLVANIA

July 2015

## Child Population

**2,700,893 children lived in Pennsylvania in 2014; 31 percent were children of color.**

- 69 percent were White
- 11 percent were Hispanic
- 13 percent were Black
- 3 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 5 (19.4 percent) of Pennsylvania's children were poor in 2013, a total of 516,390 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Pennsylvania ranked 24<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 11 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. Nearly 1 in 4 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

- Nearly 2 in 5 Black children, more than 2 in 5 Hispanic children, and nearly 1 in 4 American Indian/Native Alaskan children were poor in 2013, compared to 1 in 8 White children.

## Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- More than 19,000 Pennsylvania 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 Pennsylvania and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- More than 20 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. More than 26 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Pennsylvania ranked 15<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 7<sup>th</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- More than 25 percent of Pennsylvania children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- More than 80 percent of Pennsylvania children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Pennsylvania 11<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

## Child Health

**Although the majority of Pennsylvania'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, 90.3 percent of eligible children participated in Medical Assistance or CHIP, Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 1,309,862 Pennsylvania children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medical Assistance, and 267,073 in CHIP.

<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.

- More than 147,000 Pennsylvania children ages 0-17 (5.4 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 16<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of uninsured children among states.
- In 2012, 115,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Medical Assistance or CHIP 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 \$10,470 – 18.2 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Pennsylvania.
- Pennsylvania had 2,651 children on a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 47 percent of Pennsylvania'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.
- Pennsylvania's state-funded preschool programs met an average of 6.5 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 60 percent of Pennsylvania's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 56 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 80 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 81 percent could not compute.
  - 81 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 76 percent could not compute.
- 88 percent of Pennsylvania public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Pennsylvania 7<sup>th</sup> among states. 75 percent of Black students and 76 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 92 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 8 percent of Pennsylvania public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Pennsylvania 14<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 24 percent and 16 percent, respectively.

## Children Facing Special Risks

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

- In Pennsylvania, 3,260 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 1.2 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 14,766 Pennsylvania children in foster care.

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

- 70,191 children were arrested in Pennsylvania in 2012 – a rate of 5,531 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 3,075 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 54 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 12 percent were Hispanic, and 31 percent were White.
- 28 Pennsylvania children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Pennsylvania spent 2.6 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### Pennsylvania ranked 24<sup>th</sup> out of 41 ranked states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.

- A total of 104 children and teens were killed by guns in Pennsylvania in 2013 – a rate of 3.4 out of 100,000 children and teens.

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