



# Children in the States

## ARIZONA

September 2015

### Child Population

**1,621,692 children lived in Arizona in 2014; 59 percent were children of color.**

- 41 percent were White
- 43 percent were Hispanic
- 4 percent were Black
- 3 percent were Asian
- 4 percent were two or more races
- 5 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

### Child Poverty

**More than 1 in 4 (25.6 percent) of Arizona's children were poor in 2014, a total of 407,695 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Arizona ranked 41<sup>st</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. Nearly 3 in 10 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

- More than 1 in 3 Black children, more than 1 in 3 Hispanic children, and nearly 1 in 2 American Indian/Native Alaskan children were poor in 2014, compared to more than 1 in 8 White children.

### Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- Nearly 31,000 Arizona 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 Arizona and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- 28 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 37 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Arizona ranked 46<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 47<sup>th</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 34 percent of Arizona children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- 88 percent of Arizona children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Arizona 33<sup>rd</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

### Child Health

**Although the majority of Arizona'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 FY2013, 81.2 percent of eligible children participated in Arizona Healthcare Cost Containment System or KidsCare, Arizona's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 913,271 Arizona children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Arizona Healthcare Cost Containment System, and 80,238 in KidsCare.

<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.

- Nearly 192,000 Arizona children ages 0-17 (11.9 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest rate of uninsured children among states.
- In 2012, 136,000 children ages 0-18 were eligible for Arizona Healthcare Cost Containment System or KidsCare 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 \$9,166 – only 9 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Arizona.
- Arizona had 6,366 children on a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 33 percent of Arizona’s 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 25 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Arizona’s state-funded preschool program met 5 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 72 percent of Arizona’s fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 60 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 81 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 76 percent could not compute.
  - 83 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 72 percent could not compute.
- 77 percent of Arizona public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Arizona 39<sup>th</sup> among states. 73 percent of Black students and 72 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 82 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 9 percent of Arizona public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Arizona 22<sup>nd</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 15 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

## **Children Facing Special Risks**

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

- In Arizona, 13,171 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 8.1 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 14,523 Arizona children in foster care.

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

- 38,454 children were arrested in Arizona in 2012 – a rate of 5,323 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 936 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 12 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 46 percent were Hispanic, and 34 percent were White.
- 58 Arizona children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Arizona spent 2.5 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### **Arizona ranked 18<sup>th</sup> out of 41 states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 52 children and teens were killed by guns in Arizona in 2013 – a rate of 2.9 out of 100,000 children and teens.

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