



Children in the States

FLORIDA

September 2015

Child Population

4,053,584 children lived in Florida in 2014; 56 percent were children of color.

- 44 percent were White
- 29 percent were Hispanic
- 20 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 4 (23.8 percent) of Florida's children were poor in 2014, a total of 968,465 children.¹

- Florida ranked 37th in child poverty among states.²
- More than 1 in 10 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. More than 1 in 4 children under age 6 were poor; more than 2 in 5 of the poor children were extremely poor.

Children of color in Florida are disproportionately poor.

- Nearly 2 in 5 Black children, nearly 3 in 10 Hispanic children, and more than 1 in 4 American Indian/Alaska Native children were poor in 2014, compared to more than 1 in 7 White children.

Child Hunger and Homelessness

Child poverty in Florida leads to unacceptable child homelessness and hunger.

- Nearly 70,000 Florida 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 Florida and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- Nearly 27 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 28 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Florida ranked 43rd of 50 states in child food security and 13th in percent of children overweight and obese.
- More than 33 percent of Florida children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- Nearly 85 percent of Florida children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Florida 26th of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

Child Health

Although the majority of Florida'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, 84.7 percent of eligible children participated in Medicaid or KidCare, Florida's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 2,119,324 Florida children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medicaid, and 473,415 in KidCare.
- More than 445,000 Florida children ages 0-17 (11.1 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 5th highest rate of uninsured children among states.

¹ 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.

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

- In 2012, 270,000 children ages 0-18 were eligible for Medicaid or KidCare 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 \$8,376 – 32.2 percent more than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Florida.
- Florida had 37,867 children on a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 49 percent of Florida’s 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 41 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Florida’s state-funded preschool program met 3 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 61 percent of Florida’s fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 59 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.
 - 64 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 64 percent could not compute.
- 75 percent of Florida public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Florida 43rd among states. 66 percent of Black students and 78 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 77 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 19 percent of Florida public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Florida 48th among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 31 percent and 19 percent, respectively.

Children Facing Special Risks

Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.

- In Florida, 48,457 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 12 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 18,076 Florida children in foster care.

Too many Florida children are involved in the juvenile justice system.

- 3,744 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 56 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 5 percent were Hispanic, and 38 percent were White.
- 144 Florida children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Florida spent 1.9 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

Florida ranked 19th out of 41 states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.

- A total of 138 children and teens were killed by guns in Florida in 2013 – a rate of 3.1 out of 100,000 children and teens.

For sources please visit www.childrensdefense.org/cits