



# Children in the States

# MISSISSIPPI

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## Child Population

**731,269 children lived in Mississippi in 2014; 51 percent were children of color.**

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

## Child Poverty

**Nearly 3 in 10 (29.4 percent) of Mississippi's children were poor in 2014, a total of 211,726 children.<sup>1</sup>**

- Mississippi ranked 49<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- More than 1 in 7 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. More than 3 in 10 children under age 6 were poor; more than half of the poor children were extremely poor.

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

- Nearly 1 in 2 Black children and more than 1 in 4 Hispanic children were poor in 2014, compared to more than 1 in 7 White children.

## Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- More than 12,845 Mississippi 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 Mississippi and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- 29 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 40 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Mississippi ranked 50<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 49<sup>th</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 40 percent of Mississippi children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- Nearly 92 percent of Mississippi children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Mississippi 45<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

## Child Health

**Although the majority of Mississippi'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, 89.2 percent of eligible children participated in Mississippi Medicaid or CHIP, Mississippi's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 467,918 Mississippi children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Mississippi Medicaid, and 93,120 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 56,000 Mississippi children ages 0-17 (7.6 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 15<sup>th</sup> highest rate of uninsured children among states.
- In 2012, 41,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Mississippi Medicaid 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 \$5,496 – 16.2 percent less than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Mississippi.
- Mississippi did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 48 percent of Mississippi's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 46 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.

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

- In 2013, 79 percent of Mississippi's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 74 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 89 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 89 percent could not compute.
  - 84 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 73 percent could not compute.
- 68 percent of Mississippi public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Mississippi 48<sup>th</sup> among states. 63 percent of Black students and 68 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 72 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 16 percent of Mississippi public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Mississippi 45<sup>th</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 23 percent and 7 percent, respectively.

## **Children Facing Special Risks**

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

- In Mississippi, 7,415 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 10.1 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 4,085 Mississippi children in foster care.

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

- 258 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 81 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 1 percent were Hispanic, and 17 percent were White.
- 8 Mississippi children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Mississippi spent 2.1 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### **Mississippi ranked 37<sup>th</sup> out of 41 ranked states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.**

- A total of 38 children and teens were killed by guns in Mississippi in 2013 – a rate of 4.6 out of 100,000 children and teens.

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