

Children's Defense Fund

Children in Arkansas



November 2008

700,537 children live in Arkansas:

- 5,906 are American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic
- 8,648 are Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic
- 15,020 are two or more races, non-Hispanic
- 59,396 are Hispanic
- 138,278 are Black, non-Hispanic
- 473,289 are White, non-Hispanic

In Arkansas:

- A child is born into poverty every 47 minutes.
- A child is abused or neglected every 57 minutes.
- A child dies before his or her first birthday every 1 day.
- A child or teen is killed by gunfire every 2 weeks.

Arkansas Ranks:*

- 37th among states in per pupil expenditures.
Best state is New Jersey; worst state is Utah
 - 37th among states in its infant mortality rate.
Best state is Utah; worst is the District of Columbia
 - 38th among states in percent of babies born at low birthweight.
Best states are Alaska, Oregon, and Washington; worst state is Mississippi
- [*1st represents the best state for children and 51st represents the worst state for children in the country]

Child Poverty in Arkansas

Number of poor children (and percent poor)	177,805 (25.8%)
Number of children living in extreme poverty (and percent in extreme poverty)	8,749 (10.0%)
Number of adults and children receiving cash assistance from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	18,965
Maximum monthly TANF cash assistance for a family of three	\$204

Child Health in Arkansas

Number of children without health insurance (and percent uninsured)	70,000 (9.5%)
Number of children enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	89,642
CHIP eligibility: 200 percent of federal poverty (\$44,100 for a family of four)	
Number of children enrolled in Medicaid	420,293
Children as a percent of total Medicaid enrollment	57.2%
Medicaid expenditures on children as a percent of total Medicaid expenditures	35.8%
Percent of two-year-olds not fully immunized	27.7%

Child Hunger in Arkansas

Number of children who receive food stamps	176,187
Percent of eligible persons who receive food stamps	76%
Number of children in the School Lunch Program	347,040
Number of children in the Summer Food Service Program	13,882
Number of women and children receiving WIC (Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children)	84,457

Early Childhood Development in Arkansas

Percent of children under age 6 with all parents in the labor force	63.7%
Number of children served by Head Start	10,778
Number of children served by the Child Care Development Fund/CCDBG	5,600
Average annual cost of child care for a four-year-old in a center	\$4,475
Percent of 3-year-olds enrolled in state pre-k, Head Start, or special education programs	31.3%
Percent of 4-year-olds enrolled in state pre-k, Head Start, or special education programs	48.7%

Education in Arkansas

Amount spent per pupil in the public schools	\$7,659
Percent of public school fourth graders reading below grade level	71%
Percent of public school fourth graders below grade level in math	63%

Child Welfare in Arkansas

Number of children who are victims of abuse and neglect	9,180
Number of children in foster care	3,434
Number of children adopted from foster care	395
Number of grandparents raising grandchildren	40,348

Youth at Risk in Arkansas

Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds not enrolled in school and not high school graduates	6.7%
Averaged freshman high school graduation rate	80.4%
Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds unemployed	16.8%
Number of juvenile arrests	11,389
Number of children and teens in juvenile residential facilities	813
Ratio of cost per prisoner to cost per public school pupil	2.5:1
Number of children and teens killed by firearms: 17 homicides; 23 suicides; 5 accidents; and 1 undetermined	46

Compiled from the most up-to-date data available as of November 2008.

For more information on the state of America's children contact:

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