

Children's Defense Fund

Children in Mississippi



November 2008

768,704 children live in Mississippi:

- 4,125 are American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic
- 6,435 are Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic
- 10,176 are two or more races, non-Hispanic
- 20,671 are Hispanic
- 340,105 are Black, non-Hispanic
- 387,192 are White, non-Hispanic

In Mississippi:

- A child is born into poverty every 37 minutes.
- A child is abused or neglected every 1 hour.
- A child dies before his or her first birthday every 18 hours.
- A child or teen is killed by gunfire every 9 days.

Mississippi Ranks:*

- 48th among states in per pupil expenditures.
Best state is New Jersey; worst state is Utah
- 50th among states in its infant mortality rate.
Best state is Utah; worst is the District of Columbia
- 51st among states in percent of babies born at low birthweight.
Best states are Alaska, Oregon, and Washington

[*1st represents the best state for children and 51st represents the worst state for children in the country]

Child Poverty in Mississippi

Number of poor children (and percent poor)	220,446 (29.3%)
Number of children living in extreme poverty (and percent in extreme poverty)	107,094 (14.2%)
Number of adults and children receiving cash assistance from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	21,896
Maximum monthly TANF cash assistance for a family of three	\$170

Child Health in Mississippi

Number of children without health insurance (and percent uninsured)	121,000 (14.9%)
Number of children enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	81,565
CHIP eligibility: 200 percent of federal poverty (\$44,100 for a family of four)	
Number of children enrolled in Medicaid	422,183
Children as a percent of total Medicaid enrollment	54.3%
Medicaid expenditures on children as a percent of total Medicaid expenditures	24.2%
Percent of two-year-olds not fully immunized	22.9%

Child Hunger in Mississippi

Number of children who receive food stamps	207,351
Percent of eligible persons who receive food stamps	60%
Number of children in the School Lunch Program	405,056
Number of children in the Summer Food Service Program	20,325
Number of women and children receiving WIC (Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children)	102,669

Early Childhood Development in Mississippi

Percent of children under age 6 with all parents in the labor force	67.4%
Number of children served by Head Start	26,657
Number of children served by the Child Care Development Fund/CCDBG	39,100
Average annual cost of child care for a four-year-old in a center	\$3,380
Percent of 3-year-olds enrolled in state pre-k, Head Start, or special education programs	27.5%
Percent of 4-year-olds enrolled in state pre-k, Head Start, or special education programs	41.8%

Education in Mississippi

Amount spent per pupil in the public schools	\$6,548
Percent of public school fourth graders reading below grade level	81%
Percent of public school fourth graders below grade level in math	79%

Child Welfare in Mississippi

Number of children who are victims of abuse and neglect	6,272
Number of children in foster care	3,126
Number of children adopted from foster care	248
Number of grandparents raising grandchildren	48,144

Youth at Risk in Mississippi

Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds not enrolled in school and not high school graduates	8.0%
Averaged freshman high school graduation rate	63.5%
Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds unemployed	18.9%
Number of juvenile arrests	11,802
Number of children and teens in juvenile residential facilities	444
Ratio of cost per prisoner to cost per public school pupil	1.8:1
Number of children and teens killed by firearms: 12 homicides; 9 suicides; 7 accidents; and 2 undetermined	30

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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