

Children's Defense Fund

Children in Tennessee



November 2008

1,471,486 children live in Tennessee:
 3,474 are American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic
 20,598 are Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic
 27,586 are two or more races, non-Hispanic
 80,150 are Hispanic
 307,396 are Black, non-Hispanic
 1,032,282 are White, non-Hispanic

In Tennessee:

A child is born into poverty every 23 minutes.
 A child is abused or neglected every 27 minutes.
 A child dies before his or her first birthday every 12 hours.
 A child or teen is killed by gunfire every 5 days.

Tennessee Ranks:*

43rd among states in percent of babies born at low birthweight.
 Best states are Alaska, Oregon, and Washington; worst state is Mississippi
 45th among states in per pupil expenditures.
 Best state is New Jersey; worst state is Utah
 45th among states in its infant mortality rate.
 Best state is Utah; worst is the District of Columbia

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

Child Poverty in Tennessee

Number of poor children (and percent poor)	331,269 (23.0%)
Number of children living in extreme poverty (and percent in extreme poverty)	148,229 (10.3%)
Number of adults and children receiving cash assistance from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	131,024
Maximum monthly TANF cash assistance for a family of three	\$185

Child Health in Tennessee

Number of children without health insurance (and percent uninsured)	132,000 (8.5%)
Number of children enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	41,363
CHIP eligibility: 250 percent of federal poverty (\$55,125 for a family of four)	
Number of children enrolled in Medicaid	649,356
Children as a percent of total Medicaid enrollment	41.4%
Medicaid expenditures on children as a percent of total Medicaid expenditures	16.9%
Percent of two-year-olds not fully immunized	21.3%

Child Hunger in Tennessee

Number of children who receive food stamps	374,945
Percent of eligible persons who receive food stamps	88%
Number of children in the School Lunch Program	696,175
Number of children in the Summer Food Service Program	25,707
Number of women and children receiving WIC (Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children)	160,058

Early Childhood Development in Tennessee

Percent of children under age 6 with all parents in the labor force	62.6%
Number of children served by Head Start	16,397
Number of children served by the Child Care Development Fund/CCDBG	42,500
Average annual cost of child care for a four-year-old in a center	\$5,436
Percent of 3-year-olds enrolled in state pre-k, Head Start, or special education programs	11.0%
Percent of 4-year-olds enrolled in state pre-k, Head Start, or special education programs	32.9%

Education in Tennessee

Amount spent per pupil in the public schools	\$6,850
Percent of public school fourth graders reading below grade level	73%
Percent of public school fourth graders below grade level in math	71%

Child Welfare in Tennessee

Number of children who are victims of abuse and neglect	19,182
Number of children in foster care	8,818
Number of children adopted from foster care	994
Number of grandparents raising grandchildren	71,802

Youth at Risk in Tennessee

Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds not enrolled in school and not high school graduates	6.9%
Averaged freshman high school graduation rate	71.8%
Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds unemployed	17.0%
Number of juvenile arrests	35,228
Number of children and teens in juvenile residential facilities	1,419
Ratio of cost per prisoner to cost per public school pupil	2.2:1
Number of children and teens killed by firearms: 48 homicides; 22 suicides; 7 accidents; and 0 undetermined	77

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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