Children in the States 2019
ARKANSAS

Child Population
- 37 percent were children of color: 18 percent were Black; 12 percent were Hispanic; 2 percent were Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander; and <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native.

Child Poverty
- 22 percent of Arkansas’s children were poor in 2017—a total of 156,427 children—and children of color were disproportionately poor.
- 36 percent of Black, 32 percent of Hispanic and 17 percent of White children were poor.
- 10 percent of children were extremely poor (their family had income below half the poverty level).
- 24 percent of children under 6 were poor.

Income and Wealth Inequality
- $64,300 was the median income for White families with children compared with $31,700 for Black and $36,700 for Hispanic families in 2017.

Housing and Homelessness
- 13,104 homeless children were enrolled in public schools during 2016-2017.
- 1.6 full-time jobs at minimum wage were needed for a family to afford a two-bedroom rental unit at fair market rent in 2018.

Child Hunger and Nutrition
- 23 percent of children lived in food-insecure households in 2016.
- 27 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2017.
- 89 percent of children receiving free or reduced-price lunch during the 2016-2017 school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2017.

Child Health
- 33,400 children ages 0-18 (4 percent) were uninsured in 2017.
- 602,852 children ages 0-18 were enrolled in ARKids First (Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Programs) in FY2017.

Early Childhood
- $6,726 was the average annual cost for an infant in center-based child care in 2017.
- 32 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded preschool during 2017-2018.

Education
- 86 percent of Black, 78 percent of Hispanic and 61 percent of White 4th grade public school students could not read at grade level in 2017.
- 88 percent of Black, 77 percent of Hispanic and 66 percent of White 8th grade public school students could not read at grade level in 2017.
- 82 percent of Black, 86 percent of Hispanic and 89 percent of White students graduated high school on time during 2015-2016.
- 18 percent of Black, 4 percent of Hispanic and 4 percent of White public secondary students had at least one out-of-school suspension in 2013-2014.

Child Welfare
- 9,334 children were abused or neglected in 2017.
- 4,776 children were in foster care on the last day of FY2017.

Juvenile Justice
- 555 children were in residential placement in 2015. 57 percent were Black; 6 percent were Hispanic; and 36 percent were White.
- 17 children were in adult jails or prisons in 2016.

Gun Violence
- 58 children and teens were killed with guns in 2017.

Note: All figures represent the latest data as of April 30, 2019. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. For all states and DC, facts were omitted when data were unavailable. For citations and additional information, visit www.childrensdefense.org/children-in-the-states.