

The State of America's Children® in ARKANSAS

2017 Factsheet



Child Population

- **705,053** children lived in Arkansas in 2016.
- **36 percent** were children of color: 18 percent were Black; 12 percent were Hispanic; 2 percent were Asian; and <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native.

Child Poverty

- **24 percent** of Arkansas's children were poor in 2016—a total of **165,100** children—and children of color were disproportionately poor.
- **40 percent** of Black, **34 percent** of Hispanic and **17 percent** of White children were poor.
- **10 percent** of children were extremely poor (their family had income at less than half the poverty level).
- **27 percent** of children under 6 were poor.

Income and Wealth Inequality

- **\$61,200** was the median income for White families with children compared with **\$27,000** for Black and **\$35,500** for Hispanic families in 2015.

Housing and Homelessness

- **10,756** homeless children were enrolled in public schools during 2014-2015.
- **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 2016.

Child Hunger and Nutrition

- **25 percent** of children lived in food-insecure households in 2015.
- **34 percent** of children 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2016.
- **27 percent** relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in FY2015.
- **88 percent** of children receiving free or reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2016.

Child Health

- **25,543** children 0-17 were uninsured in 2016.
- **533,192** children 0-18 were enrolled in ARKids First (Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs).

Early Childhood

- **\$6,074** was the average annual cost for an infant in center-based child care in 2015.
- **32 percent** of 4-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded preschool during 2015-2016.

Education

- **83 percent** of Black, **77 percent** of Hispanic and **63 percent** of White 4th grade public school students could not read at grade level in 2015.
- **92 percent** of Black, **79 percent** of Hispanic and **67 percent** of White 8th grade public school students could not read at grade level in 2015.
- **78 percent** of Black, **85 percent** of Hispanic and **87 percent** of White students graduated high school on time during 2014-2015.
- **26 percent** of Black, **9 percent** of Hispanic and **7 percent** of White public secondary students had at least one out-of-school suspension in 2011-2012.

Child Welfare

- **9,204** children were abused or neglected in 2015.
- **4,880** children were in foster care on the last day of FY2016.

Juvenile Justice

- **555** children were in residential placement in 2015. **57 percent** were Black; **6 percent** were Hispanic; and **36 percent** were White.
- **15** children were in adult jails or prisons in 2015.

Gun Violence

- **36** children and teens (4.6 per 100,000) were killed with a gun in 2015.

Note: All numbers in this factsheet are included in the Children's Defense Fund's *The State of America's Children*® 2017 report, and most have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Facts for states and the District of Columbia were omitted when data were not available. Citations for all data may be found in *The State of America's Children*® 2017.