# Children in the States UTAH



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### **Child Population**

904,115 children lived in Utah in 2014; 25 percent were children of color.

- 75 percent were White
- 17 percent were Hispanic
- 1 percent were Black
- 2 percent were Asian

- 3 percent were two or more races
- 1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- 1 percent were Pacific Islander

### **Child Poverty**

More than 1 in 8 (13.3 percent) of Utah's children were poor in 2014, a total of 118,789 children.<sup>1</sup>

- Utah ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in child poverty among states.<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 19 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. More than 1 in 7 children under age 6 were poor; more than 1 in 3 of the poor children were extremely poor.

### Children of color in Utah are disproportionately poor.

 More than 1 in 4 Black children, more than 3 in 10 Hispanic children, and nearly 1 in 2 American Indian/Native Alaskan children were poor in 2014, compared to more than 1 in 12 White children.

### **Child Hunger and Homelessness**

Child poverty in Utah leads to unacceptable child homelessness and hunger.

- More than 15,000 Utah public school students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year.
- In 2014, more than 2 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in Utah and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- More than 20 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. More than 22 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Utah ranked 15<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in child food security and 1<sup>st</sup> in percent of children overweight and obese.
- More than 14 percent of Utah children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- More than 89 percent of Utah children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Utah 38<sup>th</sup> of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

#### **Child Health**

Although the majority of Utah's children have access to health coverage, that does not guarantee enrollment in coverage or access to care, which can jeopardize their education and their future.

- In 2013, 78.8 percent of eligible children participated in Medicaid or CHIP, Utah's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 283,213 Utah children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medicaid, and 63,001 in CHIP.
- Nearly 85,000 Utah children ages 0-17 (9.5 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 9<sup>th</sup> highest rate of uninsured children among states.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A family of four was poor if it was living on less than \$23,834 a year, \$1,986 a month, \$458 a week and \$65 a day, and extremely poor if living on less than \$11,917 a year, \$993 a month, \$229 a week and \$33 a day.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The state ranked 1<sup>st</sup> is the best for children for that outcome and the state ranked 50<sup>th</sup> is the worst for children.

In 2012, 58,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Medicaid or CHIP but not enrolled.

### **Early Childhood and Education**

## Lack of early childhood investments deprives children of critical supports in the early years and reduces school readiness.

- In 2013, the average annual cost of center-based child care for an infant was \$8,052 36.3 percent more than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Utah.
- Utah did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 40 percent of Utah's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 31 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.

### Utah's schools fail to educate all children, closing off a crucial pathway out of poverty.

- In 2013, 63 percent of Utah's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 56 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
  - 86 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 84 percent could not compute.
- 78 percent of Utah public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Utah 34<sup>th</sup> among states. 60 percent of Black students and 65 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 80 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 4 percent of Utah public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Utah 2<sup>nd</sup> among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 10 percent and 8 percent, respectively.

### **Children Facing Special Risks**

### Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.

- In Utah, 9,306 children were abused or neglected in 2013 10.4 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 2,710 Utah children in foster care.

### Too many Utah children are involved in the juvenile justice system.

- 19,834 children were arrested in Utah in 2012 a rate of 5,313 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 732 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 6 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 32 percent were Hispanic, and 55 percent were White.
- 1 Utah child was in an adult jail in 2013.
- Utah spent 5.3 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

### Utah ranked 15<sup>th</sup> out of 41 ranked states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.

• A total of 27 children and teens were killed by guns in Utah in 2013 – a rate of 2.7 out of 100,000 children and teens.

For sources please visit www.childrensdefense.org/cits