

# Children in the States 2019

## ARKANSAS



### Child Population

- **705,540** children lived in Arkansas in 2017.
- **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.
- **22 percent** of children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in FY2017.
- **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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.childrensdefense.org/children-in-the-states).