

# The State of America's Children® in ARKANSAS

## 2023 Factsheet



### Child Population

- 703,389 children lived in Arkansas in 2021.
- 38% were children of color: 18% were Black; 13% were Hispanic; 8% were Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander; and <1% were American Indian/Alaska Native.

### Child Poverty

- 22% of Arkansas' children were poor in 2021—a total of 154,527 children—and children of color were disproportionately poor.
- 40% of Black; 30% of Hispanic; and 17% of White children were poor.
- 10% of children were extremely poor (their family had income below half the poverty level).
- 27% of children under 6 were poor.

### Income and Wealth Inequality

- \$75,000 was the median income for White families with children compared with \$35,400 for Black families and \$44,200 for Hispanic families in 2021.

### Housing and Homelessness

- 11,871 unhoused children were enrolled in public schools during 2020-2021.
- 1.4 full-time jobs at minimum wage were needed for a family to afford a two-bedroom rental unit at fair market rent in FY2022.

### Child Hunger and Nutrition

- 20% of children lived in food-insecure households in 2020.
- 20% of children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in FY2020.
- 86% of children receiving free or reduced price lunch during the 2020-2021 school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2021.

### Child Health

- 42,924 children ages 0-18 (6%) were uninsured in 2021.
- 418,053 children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) and All Kids (Children's Health Insurance Program) in 2022.

### Early Childhood

- \$7,431 was the average annual cost for an infant in center-based child care in 2021.
- 27% of 4-year-olds were enrolled in state funded preschool during 2020-2021.

### Education

- 88% of Black; 79% of Hispanic; and 63% of White 4th grade public school students were not proficient in reading in 2022.
- 90% of Black; 76% of Hispanic; and 69% of White 8th grade public school students were not proficient in reading in 2022.
- 84% of Black; 86% of Hispanic; and 91% of White students graduated high school on time during 2019-2020.
- 14% of Black; 8% of Hispanic; and 4% of White public secondary students had at least one out-of-school suspension in 2017-2018.

### Child Welfare

- 9,616 children were abused or neglected in 2021.
- 4,500 children were in foster care on the last day of FY2021.

### Youth Justice

- 465 children were in residential placement in 2019; 39% were Black; 11% were Hispanic; and 43% were White.
- 5 children were in adult jails or prisons in 2021.

### Gun Violence

- 66 children and teens were killed with guns in 2021.

**Note:** All numbers in this factsheet are included in the Children's Defense Fund's *The State of America's Children® 2023 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® 2023*.