

The State of America's Children® in TENNESSE

2023 Factsheet



Child Population

- 1,540,674 children lived in Tennessee in 2021.
- 36% were children of color: 19% were Black; 11% were Hispanic; 2% were Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander; and >1% were American Indian/Alaska Native.

Child Poverty

- 19% of Tennessee's children were poor in 2021—a total of 272,142 children—and children of color were disproportionately poor.
- 32% of Black; 27% of Hispanic; and 13% of White children were poor.
- 9% of children were extremely poor (their family had income below half the poverty level).
- 19% of children under 6 were poor.

Income and Wealth Inequality

- \$85,700 was the median income for White families with children compared with \$40,600 for Black families and \$50,000 for Hispanic families in 2021.

Housing and Homelessness

- 233,620 unhoused children were enrolled in public schools during 2020-2021.
- 2.5 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

- 16% of children lived in food-insecure households in 2020.
- 24% of children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in FY2020.
- 81% 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

- 80,126 children ages 0-18 (5%) were uninsured in 2021.
- 932,774 children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) and All Kids (Children's Health Insurance Program) in 2022.

Early Childhood

- \$10,780 was the average annual cost for an infant in center-based child care in 2021.
- 18% of 4-year-olds were enrolled in state funded preschool during 2020-2021.

Education

- 87% of Black; 78% of Hispanic; and 63% of White 4th grade public school students were not proficient in reading in 2022.
- 86% of Black; 80% of Hispanic; and 66% of White 8th grade public school students were not proficient in reading in 2022.
- 84% of Black; 83% of Hispanic; and 90% of White students graduated high school on time during 2019-2020.
- 17% of Black; 4% of Hispanic; and 3% of White public secondary students had at least one out-of-school suspension in 2017-2018.

Child Welfare

- 7,739 children were abused or neglected in 2021.
- 9,227 children were in foster care on the last day of FY2021.

Youth Justice

- 345 children were in residential placement in 2019; 50% were Black; 8% were Hispanic; and 37% were White.
- 4 children were in adult jails or prisons in 2021.

Gun Violence

- 151 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*.