



Children in the States

MISSOURI

September 2015

Child Population

1,392,623 children lived in Missouri in 2014; 26 percent were children of color.

- 74 percent were White
- 6 percent were Hispanic
- 14 percent were Black
- 2 percent were Asian
- 4 percent were two or more races
- <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

Child Poverty

More than 1 in 5 (21.1 percent) of Missouri's children were poor in 2014, a total of 287,081 children.¹

- Missouri ranked 28th in child poverty among states.²
- Nearly 1 in 10 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. Nearly 1 in 4 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

Children of color in Missouri are disproportionately poor.

- More than 2 in 5 Black children and more than 3 in 10 Hispanic children were poor in 2014, compared to nearly 1 in 6 White children.

Child Hunger and Homelessness

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

- Nearly 27,000 Missouri public school students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year.
- In 2014, nearly 2 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in Missouri and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- Nearly 22 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. More than 28 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. Missouri ranked 23rd of 50 states in child food security and 17th in percent of children overweight and obese.
- More than 29 percent of Missouri 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 Missouri children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking Missouri 39th of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

Child Health

Although the majority of Missouri'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, 85.5 percent of eligible children participated in MO HealthNet or HealthNet for Kids, Missouri's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 559,265 Missouri children ages 0-18 were enrolled in MO HealthNet, and 92,918 in HealthNet for Kids.
- Nearly 98,000 Missouri children ages 0-17 (7 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 17th highest rate of uninsured children among states.

¹ 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.

² The state ranked 1st is the best for children for that outcome and the state ranked 50th is the worst for children.

- In 2012, 88,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for MO HealthNet or HealthNet for Kids 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 \$8,736 – 7.9 percent more than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in Missouri.
- Missouri did not have a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 44 percent of Missouri's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 36 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- Missouri's state-funded preschool program met 7 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

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

- In 2013, 65 percent of Missouri's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 61 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
 - 87 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 87 percent could not compute.
 - 70 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 71 percent could not compute.
- 86 percent of Missouri public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing Missouri 12th among states. 73 percent of Black students and 92 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 87 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 10 percent of Missouri public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing Missouri 29th among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 27 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

Children Facing Special Risks

Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.

- In Missouri, 1,827 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 1.3 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 10,691 Missouri children in foster care.

Too many Missouri children are involved in the juvenile justice system.

- 32,300 children were arrested in Missouri in 2012 – a rate of 5,104 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 1,122 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 35 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 4 percent were Hispanic, and 57 percent were White.
- 13 Missouri children were in adult jails in 2013.
- Missouri spent 1.9 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

Missouri ranked 28th out of 41 ranked states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.

- A total of 58 children and teens were killed by guns in Missouri in 2013 – a rate of 3.7 out of 100,000 children and teens.

For sources please visit www.childrensdefense.org/cits