

GEORGIA'S CHILDREN 2011

Georgia's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	9,829,211
Population, Children Under 18 ²	2,502,286
State Poverty Rate ³	18.4%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	23.3%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 ⁵	20.7%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	26.0%

All "At a Glance" statistics are for 2008.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- Georgia had 39,835 total referrals for child abuse and neglect in 2009. Of those, 28,095 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2009, 15,341 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Georgia. These children experience varied—sometimes multiple—forms of maltreatment; 69% were neglected, 13% were physically abused, and 5% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2009, 60 Georgia children died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2009, 8,020 children in Georgia lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 8,098 children in 2008. In 2009, 3,788 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 1,335 were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Georgia children in out-of-home care in 2009, 3,265 were white, 3,804 black, 554 Hispanic, 1 American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 355 of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 7,770 children exiting out-of-home care in Georgia in 2008, 3,209 were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2009, 1,270 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Georgia, a 6% decrease from 1,357 in 2008.¹³
- Of the 8,020 children in out-of-home care in 2009, 1,791 or 22.3% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2009, approximately 110,881 Georgia grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 8,020 children in out-of-home care in 2009, 1,205 were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Georgia children in kinship care in 2009, 515 were white, 594 were black, 40 were Hispanic, 0 were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 56 were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Georgia decreased from 38,486 in September 2009 to 37,345 in September 2010, a 3.1% decrease. The number of families receiving TANF in September 2010 was 20,133, a 4% increase from September 2009.¹⁸
- In 2006, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Georgia was at 41% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2009, Georgia spent \$348,118,951 in TANF funds, including 16% on basic assistance, 6% on child care, 4% on transportation, and 83% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2010, Georgia spent \$193,650,707 on the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), serving 311,993 participants.²¹
- In 2009, Georgia collected and distributed \$588,950,868 in child support funds, a 0.7% decrease from 2007.²²



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- In 2010, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Georgia was \$789 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$15.18 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2009, Georgia had a monthly average of 53,600 children served by subsidized child care; 54,000 children received subsidized child care in 2008, and 54,700 in 2007.²⁴
- In 2010, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Georgia, a family of three could make no more than \$35,200, which is equivalent to 61% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2010, Georgia had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2009, Head Start served 23,359 Georgia children, a 4.6% decrease from 2007.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2007, 983,800 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia—58.4% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2008, 36,234 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Georgia on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- Of these 36,234 children, 14,304 received Targeted Case Management services, and 0 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2008, Georgia had 198,951 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 13.3% decrease from 2007, when 225,497 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2009, Georgia had 217,000 uninsured children, representing 8.0% of its child population.³²
- In 2008, 13,975 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Georgia a rank of 46 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2007, 1,206 infants under age 1 died in Georgia, giving it a rank of 42 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2008, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Georgia was 27 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 93. This reflects a total rate of 52 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2009, 39,207 adults and adolescents, as well as 253 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Georgia.³⁶
- In 2008, an estimated 67,000 children ages 12–17, and 311,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Georgia.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2009, 728 children aged out of out-of-home care in Georgia.³⁸
- In 2009, 45,000 Georgia teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2009, 12% of Georgia teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2009, 203,000 people ages 18–24 in Georgia were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2008, approximately 31,000 children ages 12–17 in Georgia needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2008, approximately 34,000 children ages 12–17 in Georgia needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2007, 44 Georgia children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.5 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2007, 62 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Georgia, a 31% increase from 43 in 2006.⁴⁵
- In 2009, 42,572 children younger than 18 were arrested in Georgia, a 9.7% increase from 38,807 arrests in 2008. Of the arrests in 2009, 2,167 were for violent crimes and 1,060 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶
- A 2007 census of juvenile offenders showed 2,736 children in juvenile correction facilities in Georgia.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR GEORGIA'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Georgia spent \$819,687,496 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 66% was from federal funds, 33% from state funds, and 1.4% from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$537,857,317 in federal funds received for child welfare, 19% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 4% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 35% was from Medicaid, 5% came from Social Services Block Grant, 36% was from TANF, and 1% came from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 8,020 children in out-of-home care in Georgia in 2009, only 3,580, or 44.6%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰

GEORGIA'S CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

- A 2003 General Accounting Office (GAO) report documented that staff shortages, high caseloads, high worker turnover and low salaries impinge on delivering services to achieve safety, permanence, and well being for children.⁵¹
- The federal Child and Family Service Reviews have clearly demonstrated that the more time a caseworker spends with a child and family, the better the outcomes for those children and families.⁵²
- According to the 2003 GAO report, the average caseload for child welfare/foster care caseworkers is 24–31 children; these high caseloads contribute to high worker turnover and insufficient services being provided to children and families. CWLA recommends that foster care caseworkers have caseloads of 12–15 children.⁵³
- In 2009, the median annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Georgia was \$34,420; the median income for a family of four in Georgia was \$68,122.⁵⁴

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