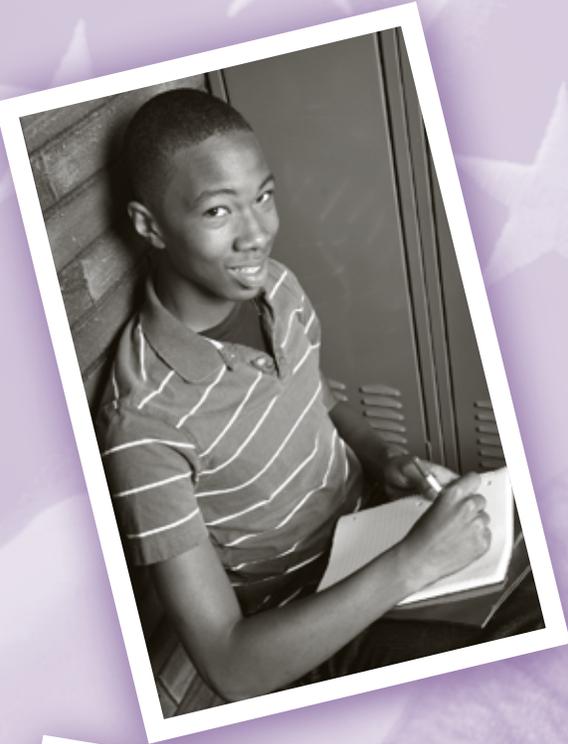


# America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009





# America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009



# Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics

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The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics was founded in 1994. Executive Order No. 13045 formally established the Forum in April 1997 to foster coordination and collaboration in the collection and reporting of Federal data on children and families. Agencies that are members of the Forum as of Spring 2009 are listed below.

## **Department of Agriculture**

Economic Research Service  
<http://www.ers.usda.gov>

## **Department of Commerce**

U.S. Census Bureau  
<http://www.census.gov>

## **Department of Defense**

Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense,  
Military Community and Family Policy  
<http://www.defenselink.mil/prhome/mcftp.html>

## **Department of Education**

National Center for Education Statistics  
<http://nces.ed.gov>

## **Department of Health and Human Services**

Administration for Children and Families  
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov>

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality  
<http://www.ahrq.gov>

Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child  
Health and Human Development  
<http://www.nichd.nih.gov>

Maternal and Child Health Bureau  
<http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov>

National Center for Health Statistics  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>

National Institute of Mental Health  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov>

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and  
Evaluation  
<http://aspe.hhs.gov>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services  
Administration  
<http://www.samhsa.gov>

## **Department of Housing and Urban Development**

Office of Policy Development and Research  
<http://www.huduser.org>

## **Department of Justice**

Bureau of Justice Statistics  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs>

National Institute of Justice  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov>

## **Department of Labor**

Bureau of Labor Statistics  
<http://www.bls.gov>

Women's Bureau  
<http://www.dol.gov/wb>

## **Department of Transportation**

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

## **Environmental Protection Agency**

Office of Children's Health Protection and  
Environmental Education  
<http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf>

## **National Science Foundation**

Division of Science Resources Statistics  
<http://www.nsf.gov/statistics>

## **Office of Management and Budget**

Statistical and Science Policy Office  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg\\_statpolicy](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg_statpolicy)

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Recommended citation: Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This report was printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office in cooperation with the National Center for Health Statistics, July 2009.

Single copies are available through the Health Resources and Services Administration Information Center while supplies last: P.O. Box 2910, Merrifield, VA 22116; Toll-Free Lines: 1-888-Ask-HRSA, TTY: 1-877-4TY-HRSA; Fax: 703-821-2098; E-mail: [ask@hrsa.gov](mailto:ask@hrsa.gov). This report is also available on the World Wide Web: <http://childstats.gov>.

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## Foreword

**I**n 1994, the Office of Management and Budget joined with six other Federal agencies to create the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. Formally established in April 1997 through Executive Order No. 13045, the Forum is charged with developing priorities for collecting enhanced data on children and youth, improving the reporting and dissemination of information on the status of children to the policy community and the general public, and producing more complete data on children at the state and local levels. The Forum, which now has participants from 22 Federal agencies as well as partners in private research organizations, fosters coordination, collaboration, and integration of Federal efforts to collect and report data on conditions and trends for children and families and calls attention to needs for new data about them.

*America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009* is a compendium of indicators illustrating both the promises and the difficulties confronting our Nation's young people. The report presents 40 key indicators on important aspects of children's lives. These indicators are drawn from our most reliable statistics, easily understood by broad audiences, objectively based on substantial research, balanced so that no single area of children's lives dominates the report, measured regularly so that they can be updated to show trends over time, and representative of large segments of the population rather than one particular group.

This year's report continues to present key indicators grouped by the seven sections identified in the restructured 10th anniversary report (2007): family and social environment, economic circumstances, health care, physical environment and safety, behavior, education, and health. The report incorporates several modifications that reflect the Forum's ongoing efforts to improve its quality and comprehensiveness: updates to data sources and substantive expansions or clarifications have been made for several indicators; a regular indicator on adolescent depression has been added, addressing an ongoing data gap on the mental health of children; and a special feature, Children with Special Health Care Needs, has been included.

Each volume of *America's Children* has also highlighted critical data gaps and challenged Federal statistical agencies to do better. Forum agencies are meeting that challenge by working to provide more comprehensive and consistent information on the condition and progress of our Nation's children. Since the last full report (*America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2007*), Forum agencies have continued efforts to strengthen some indicators and to close critical data gaps, particularly in areas such as disability, the mental health of children, and environmental quality. In addition, the Forum has established a new Research and Innovation Committee charged with developing innovative ways of addressing existing gaps in our systems of collecting, reporting, and disseminating information on the status of children and families. This committee made valuable contributions to the identification of "indicators needed" in this year's report. The Forum is confident that, over time, the committee's work will facilitate an even more well-rounded portrait of America's children.

The value of the *America's Children* reports and the extraordinary cooperation they represent reflect the Forum's determination to advance our understanding of where our children are today and what may be needed to bring them a better tomorrow. The Forum agencies should be congratulated once again for joining together to address their common goals: developing a truly comprehensive set of indicators on the well-being of America's children and ensuring that this information is readily accessible in both content and format. Their accomplishments reflect the dedication of the Forum agency staff members who coordinate the assessment of data needs, evaluate strategies to make data presentations more consistent, and work together to produce important publications and provide these products on the Forum's website. Last but not least, none of this work would be possible without the continued cooperation of millions of American citizens who willingly provide the data that are summarized and analyzed by staff in the Federal agencies. We invite you to suggest ways in which we can enhance this annual portrait of the Nation's most valuable resource: its children. I applaud the Forum's collaborative efforts in producing this report and hope that our compendium will continue to be useful in your work.

**Katherine K. Wallman**

*Chief Statistician*

*Office of Management and Budget*

## Acknowledgments

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**T**his report reflects the commitment of the members of the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. The report was written by the staff of the Forum, including Dara Blachman, Forum Coordinator; Lynda Laughlin, U.S. Census Bureau; Susan Lukacs, Patricia Pastor, and LaJeana Howie, National Center for Health Statistics; William Sonnenberg, National Center for Education Statistics; Daniel Axelrad, Environmental Protection Agency; Barry Steffen, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Katrina Baum, Bureau of Justice Statistics; Marsha Lopez, National Institute on Drug Abuse; Susan Jekielek, Administration for Children and Families; Mark Nord, Economic Research Service; Teri Morisi, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Shelli Avenevoli, National Institute of Mental Health; James Singleton, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Lisa Colpe, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Thomas Fungwe, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion; and Reem Ghandour, Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

In addition to the report authors, active members of the Reporting Committee who guided development of the report included Laura Chadwick and Annette Rogers, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Health and Human Services; Shelly Wilkie Martinez, Office of Management and Budget; Gregory Miller, Environmental Protection Agency; Carrie Mulford, National Institute of Justice; Robert Kominski and Jane Dye, U.S. Census Bureau; Jeffrey Evans, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; Ingrid Goldstrom, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Janet Chiancone, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and Syreta Sharp, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Members of the Research and Innovation Committee who provided valuable input for the Indicators Needed sections of the report include Dara Blachman, Forum Coordinator; Patricia Pastor, National Center for Health Statistics; Jeffrey Evans, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; Ingrid Goldstrom, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Susan Jekielek, Administration for Children and Families; Michael Planty, National Center for Education Statistics; and Margaret Zahn, National Institute of Justice.

Other staff members of the Forum agencies provided data, developed indicators, or wrote parts of the report. They include Stephen Provasnik, National Center for Education Statistics; David Johnson, Hyon Shin, Rose Kreider, Lea Auman, and Bernadette Proctor, U.S. Census Bureau; Hector Rodriguez and Shalom Williams, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Patricia Guenther and WenYen Juan, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion; Margaret Warner, Debra Brody, Li-Hui Chen, Robin Cohen, Cathy Duran, Donna Hoyert, Joyce Martin, T.J. Mathews, Cynthia Ogden, Stephanie Ventura, and Stephen Blumberg, National Center for Health Statistics; Cindy Knighton, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Michael Kogan and Bonnie Strickland, Maternal and Child Health Bureau; Beth Han, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Lance McCluney and Jade Lee-Freeman, Environmental Protection Agency; and Kristen Kracke, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

In addition, Mary Ann Fox, Kristen Darling-Churchill, Lauren Drake, Katie Ferguson, Bo Chen, Kevin Bianco, and Tom Nachazel with the American Institutes for Research and Richard Devens with First XV Communications assisted Forum staff in producing the report.

## About This Report

The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics' primary mission is to enhance the practice of and improve consistency in data collection and reporting on children and families. *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009* continues to follow the restructured format of the 10th anniversary edition (2007), providing the Nation with a summary of national indicators of children's well-being and monitoring changes in these indicators. The purposes of the report are to improve Federal data on children and families and make these data available in an easy-to-use, non-technical format, as well as to stimulate discussions among policymakers and the public and spur exchanges between data providers and policy communities.

### Conceptual Framework for *America's Children*

There are many interrelated aspects of children's well-being, and only selected facets can be included in this report. This report draws on various overarching frameworks to identify seven major domains that characterize the well-being of a child and that influence the likelihood that a child will grow to be a well-educated, economically secure, productive, and healthy adult. The seven domains are family and social environment, economic circumstances, health care, physical environment and safety, behavior, education, and health. These domains are interrelated and can have synergistic effects on well-being.

As described below, each section of the report corresponds to one of the seven domains and includes a set of key indicators. These indicators either characterize an aspect of well-being or an influence on well-being. The report does not distinguish between these two types of indicators, nor does it address the relationships between them. Yet all the indicators are important if we are to assess the well-being of children.

- *Family and Social Environment* includes indicators that characterize or are related to children's family and social environment.
- *Economic Circumstances* includes indicators that characterize or are related to children's basic material needs.
- *Health Care* includes indicators that characterize determinants of, or use of, health services among children.
- *Physical Environment and Safety* includes indicators that characterize children's environmental conditions or are related to children's safety.

- *Behavior* includes indicators that characterize personal behaviors and their effects.
- *Education* includes indicators that characterize or are related to how children learn and progress in school.
- *Health* includes indicators that characterize or are related to physical, mental, and social aspects of children's health.

### Structure of the Report

*America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009* presents a set of key indicators that measure important aspects of children's lives and are collected regularly, reliably, and rigorously by Federal agencies. The Forum chose these indicators through careful examination of available data. In determining this list of key indicators, the Forum sought input from the Federal policymaking community, foundations, academic researchers, and state and local children's service providers. These indicators were chosen because they meet the following criteria:

- *Easy to understand* by broad audiences;
- *Objectively based* on substantial research connecting them to child well-being and easily estimated using reliable data;
- *Balanced*, so that no single area of children's lives dominates the report;
- *Measured regularly*, so that they can be updated and show trends over time; and
- *Representative* of large segments of the population, rather than one particular group.

*America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009* is designed as a gateway to complement other, more technical or comprehensive reports produced by several Forum agencies. The report not only provides indicators covering seven domains of child well-being, but also includes supplementary information. Appendix A, Detailed Tables, presents tabulated data for each measure and additional details not discussed in the main body of the report. Appendix B, Data Source Descriptions, describes the sources and surveys used to generate the demographic background measures and the indicators.

In addition, this year's report contains a special feature section which offers an opportunity to present additional measures that either are not available with sufficient frequency to be considered as regular key indicators, are new regular measures that the Forum believes merit special attention when first introduced, or provide more detailed information about a particular indicator or topic. The Special Feature for *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2009* is Children with Special Health Care Needs.

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## Changes to This Year's Report

Wherever possible, we have updated indicators with the latest available data for *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009*. In addition, this year's report includes a new, regular indicator on adolescent depression, which fills a long-identified gap in the area of children's mental health. The indicator on diet quality has been updated to reflect changes to the USDA's Healthy Eating Index and was moved to the Health section to better reflect its relation to healthy behavior generally and overweight in particular. The Forum has also worked to enhance the report by revising certain indicators to reflect improvements in the availability of data sources, substantive expansion of the indicator, or clarification of the concept being measured. Specifically, the indoor air quality indicator's data source was updated, the low birthweight indicator now also reports preterm birth, childhood immunization trends are shown for the most recent vaccine series recommendation, finer age breakdowns are provided for child maltreatment, and the measure of lead in the blood of children has been restructured to better reflect available data and trends.

The Forum continues to strive to demonstrate greater consistency and standardization in the presentation of information in this report.

## Data on Race and Ethnicity and Poverty Status

Most indicators in *America's Children* include data tabulated by race and ethnicity. In 1997, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued revised standards for data on race and ethnicity (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997standards.html>). These revised standards included two changes that had a direct effect on many of the indicators in this report, particularly with respect to trend analyses. First, racial categories expanded from four (White, Black, American Indian or Alaskan Native, or Asian or Pacific Islander) to five (White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander). Second, respondents were given the opportunity to select multiple races.

The data collection systems used in this report implemented these revised standards at different times, and some indicators have more detailed data on race and ethnicity than others. Yet, where feasible, we utilize the 1997 OMB standards for race and ethnicity in this report. Detailed information on data collection methods for race and ethnicity is provided in footnotes at the end of each table, and additional information can be found in the

Data Source Descriptions section. The Forum strives to consistently report racial and ethnic data across indicators for clarity and continuity.

Many indicators in this report also include data tabulated by family income and poverty status. All poverty calculations in this report are based on the OMB's Statistical Policy Directive 14, which is the official poverty measurement standard for the United States. A family is considered to be living below the poverty level if its before-tax cash income is below a defined level of need, called a poverty threshold. Poverty thresholds are updated annually and vary based on family size and composition. Detailed information about children's poverty status can be found in the Child Poverty and Family Income indicator (ECON1). In addition, where feasible, other indicators present data by poverty status, utilizing the following categories: families with incomes less than 100 percent of the poverty line (poor), families with incomes between 100 and 199 percent of the poverty line (near-poor), and families with incomes 200 percent or more of the poverty line (non-poor). The Forum continues to work on reporting consistent data on family income and poverty status across indicators for clarity and continuity.

## Indicators Needed

The Forum recently formed a Research and Innovation Committee to improve the monitoring of important areas of children's lives and to improve the timeliness with which information is made available to policymakers and the public. This committee is tasked with identifying critical gaps in the data available on children and families and developing innovative ways to address those gaps.

With assistance from this committee, the Forum presents a list describing child well-being data in need of development at the end of each section of the report. The lists include many important aspects of children's lives for which regular indicators are lacking or are in development, such as early childhood development, long-term poverty, disability, and social connections and engagement.

In some areas, the Forum is exploring ways to collect new measures and improve existing ones. In others, Forum agencies have successfully fielded surveys incorporating some new measures, but data are not yet available on a regular basis for monitoring purposes.

## For Further Information

There are several useful places to obtain additional information on each of the indicators found in this report, including the tables, data source descriptions, and the website.

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## ***Tables***

For many of the indicators, Appendix A, Detailed Tables, contains additional details not discussed in the main body of the report. When available and feasible to report, tables show data by the following categories: gender, age, race and Hispanic origin, poverty status, parental education, region of the country, and family structure.

## ***Data Source Descriptions***

Appendix B, Data Source Descriptions, contains information on and descriptions of the sources and surveys used to generate the indicators, as well as information on how to contact the agency responsible for collecting the data or administering the relevant survey.

It is also important to note that numerous publications of the Federal statistical agencies provide additional details

about indicators in this report and on other areas of child well-being. Two such reports include *The Condition of Education*, published annually by the National Center for Education Statistics, and *Health, United States*, published annually by the National Center for Health Statistics.

## ***Website***

Finally, the Forum's website, <http://childstats.gov>, contains data tables, links to previous reports, links for ordering reports, and additional information about the Forum. The website provides downloadable tables (in Microsoft Excel® format) when available, along with additional years of data that cannot all be shown in the printed report. The website also provides links to previous *America's Children* reports (from 1997 to 2008), which are available in PDF format.

## Highlights

**A**merica's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2009 continues a series of annual reports to the Nation on conditions affecting children in the United States.

Three demographic background measures and 40 selected indicators describe the population of children and depict child well-being in the areas of family and social environment, economic circumstances, health care, physical environment and safety, behavior, education, and health. This year's report has a special feature on children with special health care needs. Highlights from each section follow.

### Demographic Background

- In 2008, there were 73.9 million children ages 0–17 in the United States (or 24 percent of the population) down from a peak of 36 percent at the end of the “baby boom” (1964). Children are projected to remain a fairly stable percentage of the total population through 2021, when they are projected to compose 24 percent of the population.
- Racial and ethnic diversity in the United States continues to increase over time. In 2008, 56 percent of U.S. children were White, non-Hispanic; 22 percent were Hispanic; 15 percent were Black; 4 percent were Asian; and 5 percent were of other races. The percentage of children who are Hispanic has increased faster than that of any other racial or ethnic group, growing from 9 percent of the child population in 1980 to 22 percent in 2008.

### Family and Social Environment

- In 2008, 67 percent of children ages 0–17 lived with two married parents, down from 77 percent in 1980.
- The nonmarital birth rate in 2007 was 53 births per 1,000 unmarried women ages 15–44 years. The nonmarital birth rate has increased annually since 2000–2002, when it was relatively stable at 44 births per 1,000. In 2007, 40 percent of all births were to unmarried women, the highest percentage ever reported. This percentage has increased from 34 percent in 2002.
- In 2008, 19 percent of children were native children with at least one foreign-born parent, and 3 percent were foreign-born children with at least one foreign-born parent. Overall, the percentage of all children living in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent rose from 15 percent in 1994 to 22 percent in 2008.
- In 2007, 21 percent of school-age children spoke a language other than English at home and 5 percent of school-age children both spoke a language other than English at home and had difficulty speaking English.

- In 2007, the adolescent birth rate was 22.2 per 1,000 young women ages 15–17, up from the 2006 rate of 22.0 per 1,000. This was the second consecutive year of increase in this rate after dropping by almost half from 1991 to 2005.

### Economic Circumstances

- In 2007, 18 percent of all children ages 0–17 lived in poverty, an increase from 17 percent in 2006. Among children living in families, the poverty rate was also 18 percent in 2007.
- The percentage of children who had at least one parent working year round, full time was 77 percent in 2007, down from 78 percent in 2006.
- The percentage of children living in households with very low food security among children increased from 0.6 percent in 2006 to 0.9 percent in 2007. In these households, eating patterns of one or more children were disrupted and food intake was reduced below a level considered adequate by caregivers.

### Health Care

- In 2007, 89 percent of children had health insurance coverage at some point during the year, up from 88 percent in 2006. The number of children without health insurance at any time during 2007 was 8.1 million (11 percent of all children).
- In 2007, 77 percent of children ages 19–35 months had received the recommended combined six-vaccine series. Reporting for this combined six-vaccine series began in 2002, and percentages have steadily increased from 66 percent.
- In 2007, 77 percent of children ages 2–17 had a dental visit in the past year. In 2003–2004, 25 percent of children ages 2–17 had untreated dental caries (cavities), an increase from 21 percent in 1999–2002.

### Physical Environment and Safety

- In 2007, 66 percent of children lived in counties in which one or more air pollutants were above allowable levels. Ozone is the pollutant that is most often above the allowable levels as defined by the Primary National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
- Children's exposure to secondhand smoke, as indicated by blood cotinine levels, dropped between 1988–1994 and 2005–2006. Overall, 51 percent of children ages 4–11 had cotinine in their blood in 2005–2006, down from 88 percent in 1988–1994. In 2005, 8 percent of children ages 0–6 lived in homes where someone smoked regularly, down from 27 percent in 1994.

- In 2007, 43 percent of households with children had one or more of three housing problems: physical inadequacy, crowding, or a cost burden of more than 30 percent of income. This percentage increased from 30 percent in 1978. The percentage of households with children with severe cost burdens—where more than half of income is spent for housing—rose from 6 percent to 16 percent over the same period.
- In 2005–2006, the leading causes of initial injury-related emergency department (ED) visits among adolescents ages 15–19 were being struck by or against an object or person (26 visits per 1,000); motor vehicle traffic crashes (24 visits per 1,000); and falls (22 visits per 1,000), altogether accounting for about half of all injury-related ED visits for this age group.

## Behavior

- Heavy drinking declined from the most recent peaks of 13 percent in 1996 to 8 percent in 2008 for 8th-grade students, from 24 percent in 2000 to 16 percent in 2008 for 10th-grade students, and from 32 percent in 1998 to 25 percent in 2008 for 12th-grade students.

## Education

- In 2007, 55 percent of children ages 3–5 who were not yet in kindergarten were read to daily by a family member. This rate is slightly higher than the rate in 1993 (53 percent), but the rate fluctuated in intervening years.
- In 2007, 89 percent of young adults ages 18–24 had completed high school with a diploma or an alternative credential such as a General Education Development (GED) certificate. The high school completion rate has increased slightly since 1980, when it was 84 percent.
- In 2007, 67 percent of high school completers enrolled immediately in a 2-year or 4-year college. Between 1980 and 2007, the rate of immediate college enrollment has trended upward from 49 percent to 67 percent; however, the rate has fluctuated from year to year.

## Health

- After several decades of steady increases, the percentage of infants born preterm and the percentage born with low birthweight declined slightly in 2007. The percentage of infants born preterm in 2007 was 12.7, down from 12.8 percent in 2006. The percentage of infants born with low birthweight in 2007 was 8.2, down from 8.3 percent in 2006.
- In 2007, 8 percent of youth ages 12–17 had a Major Depressive Episode (MDE) in the past year, down from 9 percent in 2004. The percentage of youth with MDE receiving treatment for depression in the past year remained stable from 2004 to 2007 (40 percent in 2004 and 39 percent in 2007).
- In 2003–2004, on average, the quality of the diets of younger children was better when compared with that of older children with regard to fruit, milk, and extra calories. The quality of the diets of older children was better with regard to meat, oils, and saturated fat.
- In 2007, about 9 percent of children were reported to currently have asthma, and about 5 percent of children had one or more asthma attacks in the previous year. The prevalence of asthma was particularly high among Black, non-Hispanic children and Puerto Rican children (15 percent in each group).

## Children With Special Health Care Needs

- In 2005–2006, an estimated 14 percent of children ages 0–17 had a special health care need, as measured by parents' reports that their child had a health problem expected to last at least 12 months and which required prescription medication, more services than most children, special therapies, or which limited his or her ability to do things most children can do.

# America's Children at a Glance

	Previous Value (Year)	Most Recent Value (Year)	Change Between Years
<b>Demographic Background</b>			
<b>Child population*</b>			
Children ages 0–17 in the United States	73.9 million (2007)	73.9 million (2008)	NS
<b>Children as a percentage of the population*</b>			
Children ages 0–17 in the United States	24.5% (2007)	24.3% (2008)	↓
<b>Racial and ethnic composition*</b>			
Children ages 0–17 by race and Hispanic origin			
White	76.0% (2007)	75.9% (2008)	↓
White, Non-Hispanic	56.8% (2007)	56.2% (2008)	↓
Black	15.2% (2007)	15.2% (2008)	NS
Asian	4.1% (2007)	4.2% (2008)	↑
All other races	4.7% (2007)	4.8% (2008)	↑
Hispanic (of any race)	21.2% (2007)	21.8% (2008)	↑
<b>Family and Social Environment</b>			
<b>Family structure and children's living arrangements</b>			
Children ages 0–17 living with two married parents	68% (2007)	67% (2008)	↓
<b>Births to unmarried women</b>			
Births to unmarried women ages 15–44	51 per 1,000 (2006)	53 per 1,000 (2007)	↑
All births that are to unmarried women	38% (2006)	40% (2007)	↑
<b>Child care</b>			
Children ages 0–4, with employed mothers, whose primary child care arrangement is with a relative	Summary statistics excluded due to lack of comparability of data across the previous and most recent years. Please refer to the indicator text for more details.		
Children ages 0–6, not yet in kindergarten, who received some form of nonparental child care on a regular basis	61% (2001)	61% (2005)	NS
<b>Children of at least one foreign-born parent</b>			
Children ages 0–17 living with at least one foreign-born parent	22% (2007)	22% (2008)	NS
<b>Language spoken at home and difficulty speaking English</b>			
Children ages 5–17 who speak a language other than English at home	20.3% (2006)	20.5% (2007)	↑
Children ages 5–17 who speak a language other than English at home and who have difficulty speaking English	5% (2006)	5% (2007)	NS
<b>Adolescent births</b>			
Births to females ages 15–17	22.0 per 1,000 (2006)	22.2 per 1,000 (2007)	↑
<b>Child maltreatment</b>			
Substantiated reports of maltreatment of children ages 0–17	Summary statistics excluded due to lack of comparability of data across the previous and most recent years. Please refer to the indicator text for more details.		

\* Population estimates are not sample derived and therefore not subject to statistical testing. Change between years identifies differences in the proportionate size of these estimates as rounded. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Legend: NS = No statistically significant change    ↑ = Statistically significant increase    ↓ = Statistically significant decrease

# America's Children at a Glance

	Previous Value (Year)	Most Recent Value (Year)	Change Between Years
<b>Economic Circumstances</b>			
<b>Child poverty and family income</b>			
Related children ages 0–17 in poverty	17% (2006)	18% (2007)	↑
<b>Secure parental employment</b>			
Children ages 0–17 living with at least one parent employed year round, full time	78% (2006)	77% (2007)	↓
<b>Food security</b>			
Children ages 0–17 in households classified by USDA as “food insecure”	17% (2006)	17% (2007)	NS
<b>Health Care</b>			
<b>Health insurance coverage</b>			
Children ages 0–17 covered by health insurance at some time during the year	88% (2006)	89% (2007)	↑
<b>Usual source of health care</b>			
Children ages 0–17 with no usual source of health care	6% (2006)	6% (2007)	NS
<b>Childhood immunization</b>			
Children ages 19–35 months with the 4:3:1:3:3:1 combined series of vaccinations	77% (2006)	77% (2007)	NS
<b>Oral health</b>			
Children ages 2–17 with a dental visit in the past year	76% (2006)	77% (2007)	NS
<b>Physical Environment and Safety</b>			
<b>Outdoor and indoor air quality</b>			
Children ages 0–17 living in counties in which levels of one or more air pollutants were above allowable levels	66% (2006)	66% (2007)	NS
<b>Drinking water quality</b>			
Children served by community water systems that did not meet all applicable health-based drinking water standards	9% (2006)	8% (2007)	NS
<b>Lead in the blood of children</b>			
Children ages 1–5 with blood lead greater than or equal to 10 µg/dL	2% (1999–2002)	* (2003–2006)	NS
<b>Housing problems</b>			
Households with children ages 0–17 reporting shelter cost burden, crowding, and/or physically inadequate housing	40% (2005)	43% (2007)	↑
<b>Youth victims of serious violent crimes</b>			
Serious violent crime victimization of youth ages 12–17	14 per 1,000 (2005)	10 per 1,000 (2007)	NS
<b>Child injury and mortality</b>			
Injury deaths of children ages 1–4	13 per 100,000 (2005)	12 per 100,000 (2006)	NS
Injury deaths of children ages 5–14	8 per 100,000 (2005)	7 per 100,000 (2006)	↓
<b>Adolescent injury and mortality</b>			
Injury deaths of adolescents ages 15–19	50 per 100,000 (2005)	50 per 100,000 (2006)	NS

\* Percentage is not shown because sample is too small to provide a statistically reliable estimate.

Legend: NS = No statistically significant change    ↑ = Statistically significant increase    ↓ = Statistically significant decrease

# America's Children at a Glance

	Previous Value (Year)	Most Recent Value (Year)	Change Between Years
<b>Behavior</b>			
<b>Regular cigarette smoking</b>			
Students who reported smoking daily in the past 30 days			
8th grade	3% (2007)	3% (2008)	NS
10th grade	7% (2007)	6% (2008)	↓
12th grade	12% (2007)	11% (2008)	NS
<b>Alcohol use</b>			
Students who reported having five or more alcoholic beverages in a row in the past 2 weeks			
8th grade	8% (2007)	8% (2008)	NS
10th grade	20% (2007)	16% (2008)	↓
12th grade	26% (2007)	25% (2008)	NS
<b>Illicit drug use</b>			
Students who reported using illicit drugs in the past 30 days			
8th grade	7% (2007)	8% (2008)	NS
10th grade	17% (2007)	16% (2008)	NS
12th grade	22% (2007)	22% (2008)	NS
<b>Sexual activity</b>			
High school students who reported ever having had sexual intercourse	47% (2005)	48% (2007)	NS
<b>Youth perpetrators of serious violent crimes</b>			
Youth offenders ages 12–17 involved in serious violent crimes	17 per 1,000 (2005)	11 per 1,000 (2007)	↓
<b>Education</b>			
<b>Family reading to young children</b>			
Children ages 3–5 who were read to every day in the last week by a family member	60% (2005)	55% (2007)	↓
<b>Mathematics and reading achievement</b>			
Average mathematics scale score of			
4th-graders (0–500 scale)	238 (2005)	240 (2007)	↑
8th-graders (0–500 scale)	279 (2005)	281 (2007)	↑
12th-graders (0–300 scale)	—	150 (2005)	N/A
Average reading scale score of			
4th-graders (0–500 scale)	219 (2005)	221 (2007)	↑
8th-graders (0–500 scale)	262 (2005)	263 (2007)	↑
12th-graders (0–500 scale)	287 (2002)	286 (2005)	NS

**Legend:** NS = No statistically significant change    ↑ = Statistically significant increase    ↓ = Statistically significant decrease  
 — = Not available    N/A = Not applicable

# America's Children at a Glance

	Previous Value (Year)	Most Recent Value (Year)	Change Between Years
<b>Education — continued</b>			
<b>High school academic coursetaking</b>			
High school graduates who completed advanced coursework in			
Mathematics	45% (2000)	49% (2005)	↑
Science	63% (2000)	63% (2005)	NS
English	34% (2000)	31% (2005)	NS
Foreign language	30% (2000)	33% (2005)	↑
<b>High school completion</b>			
Young adults ages 18–24 who have completed high school	88% (2006)	89% (2007)	↑
<b>Youth neither enrolled in school* nor working</b>			
Youth ages 16–19 who are neither enrolled in school nor working	8% (2007)	8% (2008)	NS
<b>College enrollment</b>			
Recent high school completers enrolled in college the October immediately after completing high school	66% (2006)	67% (2007)	NS
<b>Health</b>			
<b>Preterm birth and low birthweight</b>			
Infants less than 37 completed weeks of gestation at birth	12.8% (2006)	12.7% (2007)	↓
Infants weighing less than 5 lb. 8 oz. at birth	8.3% (2006)	8.2% (2007)	↓
<b>Infant mortality</b>			
Deaths before first birthday	6.9 per 1,000 (2005)	6.7 per 1,000 (2006)	↓
<b>Emotional and behavioral difficulties</b>			
Children ages 4–17 reported by a parent to have serious difficulties with emotions, concentration, behavior, or getting along with other people			
	5% (2006)	5% (2007)	NS
<b>Adolescent depression</b>			
Youth ages 12–17 with past year Major Depressive Episode	8% (2006)	8% (2007)	NS
<b>Activity limitation</b>			
Children ages 5–17 with activity limitation resulting from one or more chronic health conditions			
	9% (2006)	8% (2007)	NS
<b>Diet quality</b>			
Average diet scores for children ages 2–17	Summary statistics excluded due to lack of comparability of data across the previous and most recent years. Please refer to the indicator text for more details.		
<b>Overweight</b>			
Children ages 6–17 who are overweight	18% (2003–2004)	17% (2005–2006)	NS
<b>Asthma</b>			
Children ages 0–17 who currently have asthma	9% (2006)	9% (2007)	NS

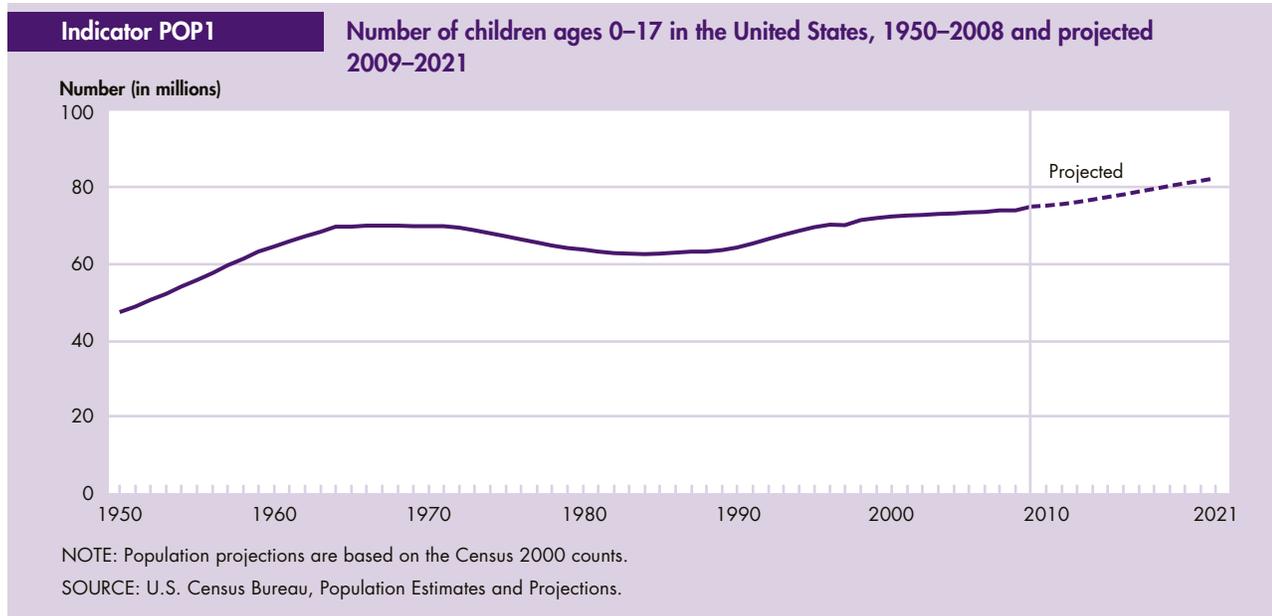
\* School refers to high school and college.

Legend: NS = No statistically significant change    ↑ = Statistically significant increase    ↓ = Statistically significant decrease

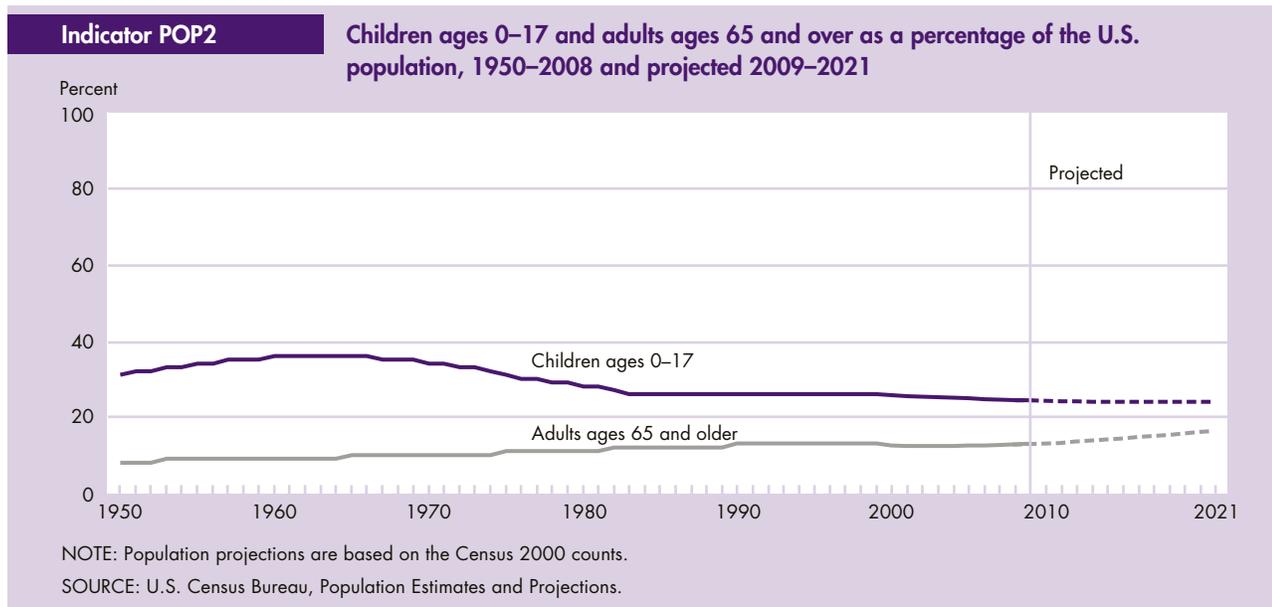
# Demographic Background

**U**nderstanding the changing demographic characteristics of America’s children is critical for shaping social programs and policies. The number of children determines the demand for schools, health care, and other social services that are essential to meet the daily needs of families. While the number of children living in the United States has grown, the ratio of children to adults has decreased. At the same time, the racial and ethnic composition of the Nation’s children continues to change. When combined, these measures provide an important context for understanding the key indicators presented in this report and provide a glimpse of what the future may be like for American families.

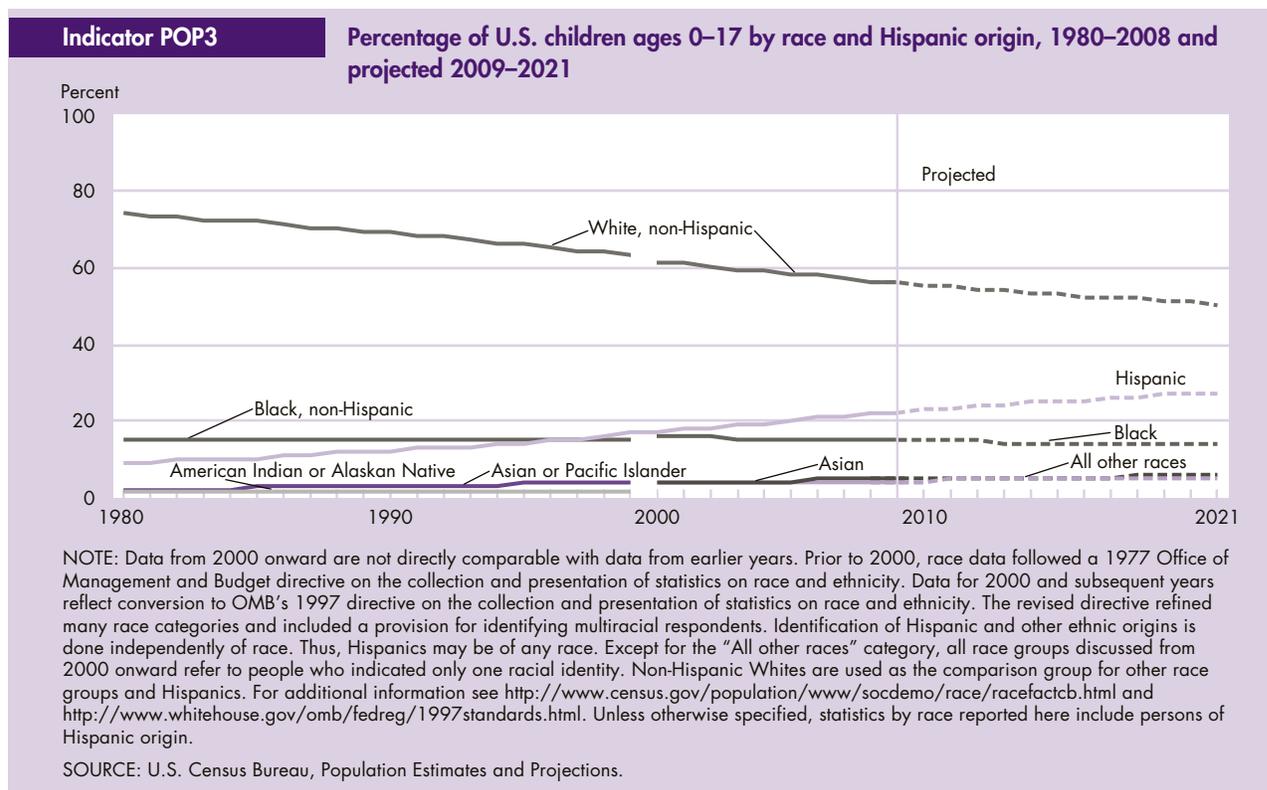
In 2008, there were 73.9 million children in the United States, 1.6 million more than in 2000. This number is projected to increase to 82 million in 2021. In 2008, there were approximately equal numbers of children in three age groups: 0–5 (25 million), 6–11 (24 million), and 12–17 (25 million) years of age.



Since the mid-1960s, children have been decreasing as a proportion of the total U.S. population. In 2008, children made up 24 percent of the population, down from a peak of 36 percent at the end of the “baby boom” (1964). Children are projected to remain a fairly stable percentage of the total population through 2021, when they are projected to compose 24 percent of the population.



Racial and ethnic diversity has grown dramatically in the United States in the last three decades. This increased diversity appeared first among children and later in the older population. The population is projected to become even more diverse in the decades to come. In 2008, 56 percent of U.S. children were White, non-Hispanic; 22 percent were Hispanic; 15 percent were Black; 4 percent were Asian; and 5 percent were “All other races.” The percentage of children who are Hispanic has increased faster than that of any other racial or ethnic group, growing from 9 percent of the child population in 1980 to 22 percent in 2008. By 2021, it is projected that 1 in 4 children in the United States will be of Hispanic origin.



*Data can be found in Tables POP1–POP3 on pages 89–91.*



