

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS



*Examining
critical issues for
North Dakota
children and
families*



DEMOGRAPHICS

From 2000 to 2007, five North Dakota counties saw at least a 40 percent loss in the number of youth ages 0 to 17.

- U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division



SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

- In 2007, children ages 0 to 17 comprised 22.3 percent of North Dakota's total population, compared to 25.0 percent in 2000 and 27.5 percent in 1990. Statewide, these children numbered 142,809 in 2007, an 11.2 percent decline from 160,849 in 2000 and an 18.6 percent decline from 175,385 in 1990.
- The proportion of North Dakota children ages 0 to 17 in 2007 ranged from a low of 14.6 percent in Sheridan County to a high of 35.2 percent in Sioux County. From 1990 through 2000, five of North Dakota's 53 counties saw growth in the number of children (Cass, Burleigh, Rolette, Sioux, and Benson); from 2000 to 2007, only one county, Cass, showed growth.
- Among all states, North Dakota had the 8th lowest percentage of children ages 0 to 17 in 2007 at 22.3 percent. The percentage of children ranged from a low of 21.1 percent in Vermont to a high of 30.9 percent in Utah.
- Due to a consistent increase in births during the past few years, the number of children ages 0 to 5 in North Dakota has grown modestly since 2003. Conversely, the number of children ages 6 and older continues to decrease.
- The number of births in North Dakota declined consistently throughout the 1980s and 1990s, reaching a low of 7,635 in 1999. After a few years of little change, the number of births in North Dakota increased an average of 2.4 percent per year from 2001 through 2007, rising to 8,818.
- Births to North Dakota teenagers ages 12 to 19 totaled 699 in 2007, which is 7.9 percent of all births statewide. This proportion is down from 9.8 percent in 1998.
- Though white children comprised the majority of children ages 0 to 18 statewide in 2007 (87.3 percent), their numbers declined 11.6 percent from 2000 to 2007 (150,812 to 133,334). During the same time, the number of American Indian children, North Dakota's largest minority group, grew 3.1 percent (13,522 to 13,939). The state's smallest minority groups saw much larger percentage gains. From 2000 to 2007, the number of Hispanic children (of any race) increased 30.7 percent (3,377 to 4,414), the number of Asian children increased 35.7 percent (1,311 to 1,779), and the number of African American children increased 63.6 percent (2,248 to 3,678).

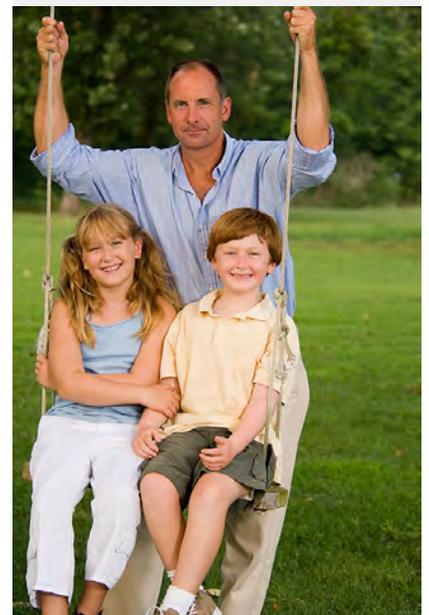
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

- The majority of all North Dakota children ages 0 to 17 live with at least one of their parents. According to Census 2000, 75.8 percent of North Dakota children live with both parents and 19.1 percent live with a single parent. The remaining 5.1 percent live with other relatives (e.g., grandparent), non-relatives (e.g., foster parents), by themselves or with a spouse/unmarried partner, or in a group facility. Current state-level 2007 data suggest that the proportion of North Dakota children living by themselves or with someone other than their parent has grown to 7.5 percent (to be 90 percent certain, this amount could be +/-0.8) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table B090006, <http://factfinder.census.gov>).
- The number of North Dakota children living in foster care totaled 2,134 in 2008. These children represent 1.4 percent of all children ages 0 to 18 statewide, a proportion that has changed little over the past seven years.
- Most North Dakota children live with their mothers (whether she is married or single), and most North Dakota mothers work. In 2000, 90.1 percent of all North Dakota children lived with both parents or with a single mother, the largest proportion in the nation. In addition, the proportion of North Dakota mothers (with children ages 0 to 17) in the labor force was 81.2 percent in 2000, the 2nd highest proportion nationwide. The proportion of working mothers is slightly smaller for mothers with young children ages 0 to 5 (76.1 percent), but rises to 84.9 percent for mothers with older children (ages 6 to 17). Nationally, 69.1 percent of mothers with children ages 0 to 17 were in the labor force in 2000. Current national and state-level 2007 data indicate that these proportions have changed little since 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table B23003, <http://factfinder.census.gov>).
- Nearly one-third of all North Dakota births in 2007 were to unmarried women (32.5 percent). This proportion has risen consistently over the past several years, up from 22.9 percent in 1994.
- Most of the births to unmarried women in 2007 were to women ages 20 or older; 21.6 percent were to teenagers. Births to unmarried teens ages 12 to 19 in North Dakota totaled 618 in 2007, 7.0 percent of all births statewide. This proportion has changed little since the early 1990s.

Approximately one in five births to unmarried women in North Dakota were to teenagers in 2007 (21.6 percent).

*- North Dakota
Department of Health,
Vital Records*



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

In 2007, 14 percent of North Dakota children lived in poverty, a rate unchanged in the last eight years.

-U.S. Census Bureau; Census 2000 and the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program



- Income and poverty are issues that affect individual North Dakotans differently. As a whole, numbers for the state are encouraging. North Dakota families with children ages 0 to 17 earned a median income of \$44,640 in 2000. Current 2007 state-level data indicate that this median has risen to \$58,023 (to be 90 percent certain, this amount could be +/- \$1,690), a value similar to the national median of \$58,028 (+/- \$133) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table B19125, <http://factfinder.census.gov>).
- Even with the increase in median family income statewide from 2000 to 2007, child poverty numbers did not change during this time. In 2000, 14.0 percent of North Dakota children ages 0 to 17 lived in poverty (22,163 children). An additional 10.9 percent (17,225 children) were living near poverty levels (with incomes from 100 to 149 percent of poverty). In 14 of North Dakota's 53 counties, at least one in five children was impoverished. Current 2007 data suggest that, overall, there has been no change in North Dakota's child poverty rate since 2000, with 14.0 percent of children still living in poverty.
- While there were fewer counties with child poverty rates higher than 20.0 percent in 2007 than in 2000, only four counties had child poverty rates less than 10.0 percent in 2007. Child poverty rates were slightly smaller for older children in North Dakota. In 2007, 11.7 percent of North Dakota children ages 5 to 17 lived in poverty compared to 18.1 percent of children ages 0 to 4.
- Financial assistance programs are available to help low-income families and children in North Dakota. The Food Stamp Program (now referred to as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP) provided help to 31,380 children ages 0 to 18 in 2007 (20.6 percent of children statewide). In addition, 32,445 North Dakota children received free or reduced price lunches in school (32.1 percent of total school enrollment). In 12 of North Dakota's 53 counties, at least 40 percent of students received free or reduced price lunches in 2008.
- The Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program (TANF), provided assistance to 7,532 North Dakota children ages 0 to 19 in 2008, down 8.9 percent per year, on average, since 2004. In addition, North Dakota helped low-income families pay child-care bills for 8,300 children ages 0 to 13 in 2007, or 7.7 percent of all children ages 0 to 13 statewide.

EDUCATION AND EARLY CARE

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

- North Dakota's public schools averaged 95,459 students daily during the 2007-08 academic year. As daily enrollments continue to decrease throughout the state (2.1 percent per year, on average, since 1996-97), expenditures continue to rise. Since 1996-97, per student expenditures have increased 7.0 percent per year on average, totaling \$8,096 per student in 2007-08.
- North Dakota students continue to rank relatively well nationally in terms of academic achievement; however, room exists for improvement. Composite scores for 2008 North Dakota public high school graduates taking the ACT averaged 21.5 out of a possible 36, slightly higher than the national average of 21.1. Beyond the overall composite ACT score, ACT, Inc. has developed benchmarks in the areas of English, math, reading, and science to measure what it takes to be successful in standard first-year college courses. Based on these benchmarks, 71.0 percent of the 2008 ACT-tested North Dakota high school graduates were ready for college English, 48.3 percent were ready for college math, 56.3 percent were ready for college reading, and 30.7 percent were ready for college science. However, 23.7 percent were ready for all four courses, a proportion that has changed little over the past several years.
- Despite less than half of high school graduates in North Dakota being ready for college math, only 14 percent of North Dakota 8th graders scored below the math proficiency level in 2007, the lowest rate in the nation (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT, <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>).
- Various measures exist for determining high school dropout rates. According to the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, the number of high school students (in grades 9 through 12) who were enrolled in school and then dropped out in 2008 totaled 791 (2.4 percent of high school enrollment). The national KIDS COUNT program publishes the proportion of teens ages 16 to 19 who are not in school and have not graduated. Using this measure, North Dakota has the lowest dropout rate in the nation (2 percent in 2007).
- In 2008, 13,278 North Dakota children ages 3 to 21 were enrolled in special education (14.0 percent of total public school enrollment). Statewide, 31.8 percent of students enrolled in special education had a specific learning disability, 27.4 percent had a speech impairment, 7.5 percent were emotionally disturbed, and 6.5 percent were mentally handicapped in 2008.

North Dakota had the lowest high school dropout rate in the nation at 2% in 2007.

-The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT



EDUCATION AND EARLY CARE (CONT.)

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Legally recognized child-care providers in North Dakota numbered 3,432 in February 2009 and had the capacity to care for 43,193 children (approximately 55% of all children ages 0 to 13 with working parents).

- U.S. Census Bureau, ACS PUMS and North Dakota Department of Human Services



- In North Dakota, it is estimated that 32,089 children ages 0 to 5 and 46,303 children ages 6 to 13 had working parents in 2007 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year PUMS, <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/PUMS/>). Legally recognized child-care providers in North Dakota numbered 3,432 in February 2009 and had the combined capacity to care for 43,193 children. Legally recognized child-care providers include those who are licensed, self-certified, in-home providers, approved relatives, and registered tribal providers. Informal networks of relatives, friends, and neighbors, while difficult to track, also provide care for many North Dakota children.
- As of February 2009, North Dakota reported 1,663 licensed child-care programs. Licensed child care in North Dakota is state-approved and reviewed yearly, with licenses being granted by county social services. The majority of licensed child care in North Dakota takes place in a home setting. Family providers (25.1 percent) together with group child-care homes (50.6 percent) comprised 75.6 percent of all licensed providers in 2009. Large centers and group child-care facilities comprised 13.4 percent of licensed providers in the state. Other licensed providers consist of facilities holding multiple licenses, preschools, public approval programs, and school-age programs; together, they comprised 10.9 percent of all licensed providers in 2009.
- Legally recognized yet unlicensed child-care providers in the state included 902 self-certified and in-home providers, 164 registered tribal child-care providers, and 703 approved relatives in February 2009.
- Child care has become part of the daily routine for thousands of North Dakota families, many of whom are struggling. As mentioned in the Economic Well-Being component, the Child Care Assistance Program helped low-income families in North Dakota pay child-care bills for 8,300 children ages 0 to 13 in 2007, or 7.7 percent of all children ages 0 to 13 statewide.
- In addition to finding affordable child care, parents are also faced with finding a quality program they can trust and depend on. Quality child care is critical for providing safe and nurturing environments for children. To that end, the North Dakota Child Care Resource and Referral agency provides comprehensive training and consultation to improve the quality of programs caring for infants and toddlers (<http://www.ndchildcare.org/>).

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

- A healthy mother is vital to the health of her child. Prenatal care can improve birth outcomes and is more likely to be effective if begun early in pregnancy. Of the 8,818 North Dakota births in 2007, 478 (5.4 percent) were to mothers receiving late or no prenatal care. This rate is up from 4.7 percent in 2006.
- Throughout North Dakota, 557 babies were born weighing less than 5.5 pounds (or 2,500 grams) in 2007. These low-birthweight babies comprised 6.3 percent of all births in 2007. Nationally, North Dakota had the 5th lowest percentage of low-birthweight births among all states in 2006 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, CDC&P, National Center for Health Statistics, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/vitalstats.htm>).
- Of all North Dakota babies born in 2007, 65 died within a year (0.7 percent). In addition, 64 youth ages 1 to 19 died in 2007 (1.2 percent of all deaths).
- The supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children (WIC) provides nutritious foods, nutrition counseling, and health and social service referrals to eligible participants at no charge. The number of North Dakota WIC program participants totaled 24,289 in 2008.
- To assist North Dakota children needing health care, 41,376 children ages 0 to 20 received health care assistance through Medicaid (23.2 percent of persons ages 0 to 20 statewide) in 2007. To help those children from working families that earn too much to qualify for full Medicaid coverage, but not enough to afford private insurance, the Healthy Steps program provided premium-free health coverage to 3,399 children in January 2009.
- While most children in North Dakota are covered by some form of health insurance, nearly 1 in 10 children (9.0 percent) in North Dakota are uninsured (13,000 children) (2005-2007 Three-Year Average from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hlthins/hlthins.html>).
- The Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE) program was created to develop estimates of health insurance coverage for counties and states. According to these estimates, 5.0 percent of North Dakota children ages 0 to 18 were uninsured and living below 200 percent of poverty in 2005 (7,620 children).

According to Census estimates, 5.0% of North Dakota children ages 0 to 18 were uninsured and living below 200% of poverty in 2005.

- U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE) Program



SAFETY AND RISKY BEHAVIORS

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

North Dakota children requiring immediate services for abuse or neglect comprised 18.4% of all suspected child abuse and neglect victims in 2008. This proportion is down from 20.5% in 2007 and 23.9% in 2004.

*- North Dakota
Department of Human
Services*



- A total of 5,555 North Dakota juveniles ages 10 to 17 were referred to court a total of 10,394 times in 2008. Each time a juvenile is referred to court, he or she may be charged with multiple offenses. In 2008, North Dakota juveniles were charged with a total of 11,253 offenses. Thus, on average, each juvenile offender was charged with approximately two offenses in 2008 - a rate that has remained relatively unchanged in North Dakota since 2003.
- While each juvenile court referral may have several charges for multiple offenses, an offense description is provided for the major offense only. The major offenses associated with the 10,394 North Dakota juvenile court referrals in 2008 were distributed into five categories: alcohol offenses (17.8 percent), unruly behavior (22.9 percent), offenses against person (7.8 percent), offenses against property (24.2 percent), and other offenses not included in the previously mentioned categories (e.g., disorderly conduct, controlled substance, traffic) (27.4 percent).
- North Dakota juveniles referred to court as a proportion of all youth ages 10 to 17 has remained relatively unchanged over the past several years. In 2008, 8.4 percent of all children ages 10 to 17 (5,555 juveniles) were referred to court for various offenses.
- In 2008, there were 6,982 children ages 0 to 17 suspected of being abused or neglected in North Dakota, or 4.9 percent of all children age 0 to 17. Following assessments of these cases by Child Protection Service social workers, it was determined that 1,283 children (18.4 percent of all suspected victims - or 0.9 percent of all children ages 0 to 17) were in high-risk situations requiring immediate services. The proportion of abused and neglected children in North Dakota requiring immediate services in 2008 (18.4 percent) is down from 20.5 percent in 2007 and 23.9 percent in 2004.
- From 2007 to 2008, two in five North Dakota counties (21 out of 53) reported a decline in the proportion of abused and neglected children requiring immediate services.
- North Dakota children ages 16 to 19 who were not in school, not high school graduates, and not in the labor force (referred to as idle teens) comprised 1.7 percent of all children ages 16 to 19 in 2000. Only one state, Vermont, had a lower proportion (1.5 percent). Nationally, 3.9 percent of teens were considered idle. Current national and state-level 2007 data indicate that these proportions have changed little since 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table B14005, <http://factfinder.census.gov>).