

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS



*North Dakota
KIDS COUNT
seeks to
examine critical
issues for
North Dakota
children and
families.*



DEMOGRAPHICS

For three years in a row, North Dakota has had the fastest growing population among states in the nation, growing 2 percent in the last year – three times the national average in 2014¹.

¹U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. *Annual Estimates of the Population for the U.S., Regions, States, and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014*. Available online at <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/state/totals/2014/index.html>.

²National Vital Statistics System, National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Births: Final Data for 2013*. Available online at http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr64/nvsr64_01.pdf.

³The Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Race for Results: Building a Path to Opportunity for All Children*. Available online at <http://www.aecf.org/resources/race-for-results>.



SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Population

Energy development activity in western North Dakota continues to impact population trends in the state. Shifting migration patterns and an increase in total births have resulted in significant population growth for the state over the past decade. For three years in a row, North Dakota has had the fastest growing population among states in the nation. According to the 2014 population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, North Dakota has 739,482 residents, a record high¹. This also represents a 2 percent growth from 2013, a rate which is three times the national average.

In 2013, children ages 0 through 17 comprised 23 percent of the total population in North Dakota (i.e., 162,688 children). After nearly two decades of continuous loss, the number of children has grown consistently since 2008, by approximately 3 percent annually through 2013.

The majority of North Dakota counties (41 of 53) had an increase in the number of children from 2012 to 2013, with the fastest growth located in northwestern North Dakota (McKenzie 19%, Williams 14%, and Divide 12%).

Total Births

The number of young children ages 0 through 5 began increasing in 2003, which parallels the upswing in total births. After decades of decline, total births began to increase in 2002 when there were 7,755 births. By 2013, there were 10,591 births recorded statewide by the North Dakota Department of Health.

Births to teenagers in North Dakota totaled 557 in 2013, which is 5 percent of all births statewide. The teen birth rate in North Dakota decreased 17 percent over the past few years, from 29 births per 1,000 female teens in 2010 to a rate of 24 in 2013. Nationally, there were 27 teen births per 1,000 female teens in 2013².

Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity have important implications for culture, identity, and overall well-being. Children of different races and ethnicities often show large variation in well-being including health, mortality, school performance and attainment, and access to family and community resources³.

While minority children continue to represent a relatively small percentage of North Dakota's youth overall, the state is becoming more racially diverse. Comprising 14 percent of North Dakota's children in 2013, the number of Black, Asian, and American Indian children combined grew twice as fast as White children from 2010 to 2013. The number of Hispanic youth (of any race) grew six times faster than the number of White children. Estimates suggest that at a national level, there will be no race-ethnic majority among children by 2018 (i.e., White, Non-Hispanic youth will comprise less than 50 percent of all youth nationwide)³.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Living Arrangements

While the majority of all North Dakota children ages 0 through 17 live with their parent/s, the composition of families continues to change. In 2013, 71 percent of North Dakota children lived with both parents. This percentage is down from 82 percent in 1990. During the same period of time, the percentage of children living with a single parent has increased. In 1990, 14 percent of children lived with a single parent. This percentage increased to 23 percent in 2013. Also on the rise is the number of children living with their grandparents. In 2013, 4 percent of North Dakota children lived with a grandparent (5,932 children), which is up from 2 percent in 1990 (2,628 children).

Approximately 1 percent of North Dakota children received foster care services in 2014 (2,183 children). The majority of children in foster care are in a family home (80%). Approximately one in five children in foster care are in a group home or institution (19%).

While most North Dakota babies are born to married mothers, one-third of births in 2013 were to unmarried women (32%). The percentage of births to unmarried women was 23 percent in 1994 and grew an average of 3 percent per year through 2005 where it has remained relatively unchanged through 2013. Approximately 15 percent of births to unmarried women in 2013 were to teenagers. Births to unmarried teens ages 12 through 19 totaled 502 in 2013, which is 5 percent of all births statewide.

Working Parents

Most North Dakota children live with their mothers (whether they are married or single) and most North Dakota mothers work. In 2013, 87 percent of all North Dakota children lived with their mother, which is the third largest percentage in the nation (behind Utah and Minnesota). In addition, 81 percent of North Dakota mothers were in the labor force in 2013, the fourth highest percentage nationwide (behind South Dakota, Iowa, and Minnesota). Nationally, 73 percent of mothers with children ages 0 through 17 were in the labor force in 2013.

A major contributor to financial stability and well-being of children is secure parental employment¹. In 2013, 77 percent of children ages 0 through 13 in North Dakota lived in situations where all parents were in the labor force, which is the third highest percentage among states (behind South Dakota and Iowa). Nationally, 68 percent of children live with parents who are all in the labor force.

Employed Youth

Employment can provide valuable experience for youth. In moderation, work experience can help youth build skills and can open up valuable opportunities as youth prepare for work and a career². In North Dakota, nearly half of teens ages 16 through 19 were employed in 2013 (45%), which is the second largest percentage among states (behind South Dakota). Among young adults ages 20 through 24 in North Dakota, 74 percent were employed (largest percentage among states).

Three in four North Dakota young adults ages 20 through 24 were employed in 2013 - which is the largest proportion in the nation.

¹Child Trends (2013). *Secure parental employment*. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=secure-parental-employment>.

²The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2012). *Youth and Work: Restoring Teen and Young Adult Connections to Opportunity*. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/>.



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Approximately one in three North Dakota children lives in low-income families (i.e., families with incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level).

¹U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015). *Unemployment Rates for States*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>.

²U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2015). *Regional Economic Accounts*. Retrieved from <http://www.bea.gov/regional/index.htm>.

³National Center for Children in Poverty. (2009). *Budgeting for Basic Needs: A Struggle for Working Families*. Retrieved from <http://www.nccp.org>.



SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Income and Poverty

Experiencing a thriving economy, North Dakota continues to be a leader with regard to low unemployment¹, growth in GDP², and growth in personal income². In addition, the median household income for families with children grew to \$70,530 in 2013. Despite this economic growth, child poverty has been only moderately affected by the state's prosperity. Approximately one out of every seven children living in North Dakota is considered impoverished (14% in 2013, or 21,403 children).

The poverty threshold for a family of four in 2013 was \$23,834. Research shows that families need an income of approximately twice the official poverty threshold to cover the entire cost of basic expenses for housing, food, transportation, health care and child care³. In North Dakota, 33 percent of children live in families earning less than twice the poverty threshold (i.e., incomes less than 200% of poverty).

Younger children (i.e., ages 0 through 4) in the state had a higher poverty rate than older children (i.e., ages 5 through 17) in 2013 (17% compared to 13%, respectively); in five of North Dakota's 53 counties, at least one in three young children was living in poverty. Children living on American Indian reservations tend to have the highest child poverty rates in North Dakota. Data from 2013 indicate that about half of all children in Sioux, Benson, and Rolette counties were impoverished (52%, 52%, and 47%, respectively).

Public Assistance

Public benefit programs are available to help low-income families and children in North Dakota. The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (i.e., SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) helped provide food to 36,967 North Dakota children ages 0 through 18 in 2014 (21% of children statewide). The free or reduced price lunch program served 34,731 North Dakota school children in 2014 (31% of total school enrollment). In five of North Dakota's 53 counties, at least half of students received free or reduced price lunches in 2014 (Sioux, Rolette, Benson, Sheridan, and Mountrail).

The Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program (TANF), designed to help families in need achieve self-sufficiency, provided assistance to 5,358 North Dakota children ages 0 through 19 in 2014, which is down 8 percent from 2013.

In an effort to allow parents to work or attain the education necessary to become employed and self-sufficient, 5,988 children benefited from the North Dakota Child Care Assistance program in 2014 (5% of all children ages 0 through 13 statewide).

EDUCATION AND EARLY CARE

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Enrollment

North Dakota's public schools averaged 103,841 students daily during the 2013-14 academic year. After several years of continued decreases in enrollments, North Dakota's average daily enrollment in public schools has increased an average of 2 percent per year since 2008-09. Seven counties, all located within western energy development areas, had the fastest growth in average daily enrollment in 2013-14, at least 10 percent each (Slope, McKenzie, Burke, Williams, Stark, Billings, and Dunn). Nearly half of North Dakota's counties (24 of 53) reported a loss in average daily enrollment in 2013-14. Overall expenditures in North Dakota public schools averaged \$10,964 per student in 2013-14, which is a 4.2 percent increase from 2012-13.

Effective and appropriate education is an important resource for improving long-term outcomes for children and youth with special needs. In 2014, 13,675 North Dakota children were enrolled in special education (13% of public school enrollment), of which 31 percent had a specific learning disability, 21 percent had a speech impairment, 6 percent were emotionally disturbed, 6 percent had an intellectual disability, and 7 percent had autism.

According to decades of research, the best way to ensure successful students and productive adults in the future is to invest in early childhood development¹. In North Dakota, approximately one-third of children ages 3 and 4 were enrolled in preschool programs in 2013 (i.e., programs offering educational experiences for children during the years preceding kindergarten - including Head Start).

Achievement

Most teenagers in North Dakota are engaged in school or work (98% in 2013) and most high school students graduate on time (88% in 2013)². In 2013-14, about 3 percent of North Dakota high school students dropped out of school. Of those students who graduate, many go on for higher levels of education. In Fall 2012, approximately two-thirds of recent high school graduates were enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions (66% or 4,751 students)³. In preparation for college, most North Dakota students take the ACT which is a national college admissions examination.

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 four benchmark areas, 62 percent of the 2014 ACT-tested North Dakota high school graduates were ready for college English, 41 percent were ready for college math, 42 percent were ready for college reading, and 34 percent were ready for college science. Approximately one in four (23%) were ready for all four courses.

Average daily enrollment in North Dakota public schools has increased an average of 2 percent per year since 2008-09.

¹The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2013). *The First Eight Years: Giving Kids a Foundation for Lifetime Success*. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/>.

²North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (2015). *Graduation Rate Data. Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, On-Time and Extended (2007-08 to 2013-14)*. Retrieved from <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/data/gradrate/>.

³U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2015). *2014 Digest of Education Statistics*. Table 309.20. Retrieved from <http://1.usa.gov/1W3CFdR>.



EDUCATION AND EARLY CARE (CONT.)

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Nearly every North Dakota parent is in the labor force (90 percent in 2011), the largest percentage among states².

¹U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015). *Unemployment Rates for States*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>.

²Institute for Child, Youth, and Family Policy. (2015). *The Heller School*. Brandeis University. Retrieved from <http://www.diversitydatakids.org/>.

³The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2006). *Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care*. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/>.

⁴Child Care Aware of North Dakota (2010). *2010 Activity Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.ndchildcare.org/data-pub/>.

⁵Child Care Aware of North Dakota (2014). *Child Care Profile*. September 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.ndchildcare.org/data-pub/>.



Child Care

As indicated in the Economic Well-Being section, North Dakota's economy is thriving. With one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation¹, almost all North Dakota parents are working. In 2011, 90 percent of North Dakota parents were in the labor force, which is the largest percentage among states². This suggests that most children in the state are in need of quality early care and education opportunities. As noted in the Family and Community section, 77 percent of North Dakota children ages 0 through 13 live in families where all the parents are in the labor force (i.e., 89,784 children statewide) - which is the third largest percentage among states in 2013.

Reliable and affordable child care helps children, families, and communities prosper. With dependable child care, parents can be productive at work and school. In addition, high-quality child care nurtures, stimulates, and supports children as they build the confidence and critical capacities they need to thrive in school and in life³.

As of February 2015, North Dakota reported 1,567 licensed child care programs with the capacity to care for 38,654 children. This means that licensed child care programs in the state have the ability to meet 43 percent of potential need. According to Child Care Aware of North Dakota, national child care standards recommend that licensed care should meet at least 50 percent of potential need⁴. Currently, three counties in North Dakota (i.e., Ramsey, Ward, and Cass) meet this recommended minimum.

Unlicensed Child Care

Legally recognized yet unlicensed child care providers in the state included 238 self-certified and in-home providers, 22 registered tribal child care providers, and 324 approved relatives in February 2015. Combined, these providers had the capacity to care for 1,993 children.

Informal networks of relatives, friends, and neighbors provide care for many North Dakota children. These situations are difficult to track and the number of providers and quality of care are not monitored. Yet these providers play an important role in helping North Dakota children begin school ready to learn and succeed.

Child Care Costs and Assistance

Child care has become part of the daily routine for thousands of North Dakota families, many of whom are struggling financially. According to 2014 data from Child Care Aware of North Dakota, care for one infant in a licensed center averages \$8,211 annually⁵.

As mentioned in the Economic Well-Being component of this report, the Child Care Assistance Program helped low-income families in North Dakota pay child care bills for 5,988 children in 2014, or 5 percent of all children ages 0 through 13 statewide.

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Vital Records

A healthy mother is important to the health of a child. Prenatal care can improve birth outcomes and is more likely to be effective if begun early in pregnancy¹. Of the 10,591 North Dakota births in 2013, 13 percent were to mothers receiving no prenatal care or care beginning after the first trimester. Mothers who do not receive prenatal care are much more likely to give birth to a low-weight baby¹. In 2013, 681 babies were born with a low birth weight (i.e., less than 5.5 pounds or 2,500 grams), which is 6 percent of all births. North Dakota consistently ranks among states with the lowest percentage of low birth weight babies in the nation².

Problems relating to low birth weight can result in infant death. The death of a child is a tragedy for family and friends, and a loss to the community. In 2013, 59 North Dakota babies died within one year of life. Of all North Dakota deaths in 2013, 50 were children ages 1 through 19.

Hearing Impairment

Hearing loss can affect a child's ability to develop communication, language, and social skills. The earlier that children with a hearing impairment get services, the more likely they are to reach their full potential. In 2014, nearly all resident live births in North Dakota were screened for hearing loss (99%); of those screened, 11 percent did not pass the initial screening and were referred for further testing.

Assistance

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 participants totaled 21,998 in 2014.

To assist North Dakota children needing health care, 53,814 youth received health care assistance through Medicaid (27% of youth ages 0 through 20 statewide) in 2014. To help children from working families that earn too much to qualify for full Medicaid coverage but not enough to afford private insurance, the state's Healthy Steps Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provided premium-free health coverage to 4,076 enrollees in January 2013.

Uninsured Children

Children without health insurance have limited access to health care, which can lead to a greater risk of illness and hospitalization. In addition, a lack of health insurance can have a negative influence on school attendance and participation in extracurricular activities, and increased financial and emotional stress among parents³. While most children in North Dakota are covered by some form of health insurance, 14,549 were uninsured in 2013, which is 9 percent of all children statewide. Nearly half of uninsured children live in families with low to moderate incomes and are potentially eligible for coverage programs such as Medicaid, Healthy Steps, or Caring for Children. In 2013, 6,948 uninsured North Dakota children were living at or below 200 percent of poverty, which is 48 percent of all uninsured children statewide.

Nearly 1 in 10 North Dakota children do not have health care coverage (i.e., 14,549 children in 2013).

¹Child Trends (2014). *Late or no prenatal care*. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=late-or-no-prenatal-care>.

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics (2013). *Vital Statistics Data Online*. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/vitalstatsonline.htm.

³Child Trends (2014). *Health care coverage*. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=health-care-coverage>.



SAFETY AND RISKY BEHAVIOR

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

The rate at which North Dakota children are abused and neglected increased by 31 percent since 2010 (or by 7% per year, on average since 2010).

¹Child Trends (2013). *Juvenile detention*. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=juvenile-detention>.

²Children's Bureau (2015). *Child Maltreatment 2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/child-maltreatment-2013>.

³Child Trends (2015). *Youth neither enrolled in school nor working*. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=youth-neither-enrolled-in-school-nor-working>.



Juvenile Court Referrals

Juvenile delinquency has potentially high stakes for both individuals and society as a whole. Delinquency is linked to higher crime rates in adulthood and other negative outcomes. One estimate suggests that between 50 and 75 percent of adolescents who have spent time in juvenile detention centers are incarcerated later in life¹.

A total of 3,617 North Dakota juveniles ages 10 through 17 were referred to court for delinquent or unruly behavior a total of 6,695 times in 2014. Each time a juvenile is referred to court, he or she may be charged with multiple offenses. In 2014, North Dakota juveniles were charged with a total of 7,007 offenses. While each referral may have charges for multiple offenses, an offense description is available for the major offense only. Major offenses associated with the 6,695 juvenile court referrals in 2014 include: unruly behavior (24%), offenses against property (20%), alcohol offenses (14%), offenses against persons (9%), and others (e.g., disorderly conduct, controlled substance, traffic) (33%).

North Dakota juveniles referred to court as a proportion of all youth ages 10 through 17 has decreased over the past decade. In 2014, 5 percent of all youth ages 10 through 17 (3,617 juveniles) were referred to court for delinquent or unruly behavior, which is down from 9 percent in 2003.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Providing children with safe and secure environments free from abuse and neglect will improve the likelihood of positive educational, emotional, and social outcomes that extend into adulthood. In 2014, there were 6,397 children suspected of being abused or neglected in North Dakota. When a suspected case of abuse or neglect is investigated by the North Dakota Child Protection Services Program, a determination is made as to whether services are required to provide for the protection and treatment of a child. Following assessments of the 2014 cases by Child Protection Services social workers, it was determined that 1,616 children (25% of all suspected victims) were in high-risk situations requiring immediate services; which is an increase from 18 percent in 2010. Overall, for every 1,000 children in North Dakota, approximately 10 were maltreated in 2014; nationally, the rate was 9 per 1,000 in 2013².

Idle Teens

The transition from youth into independent adulthood involves many challenges. While there are multiple pathways to success, the consequences of unemployment, under-employment, or not acquiring post-secondary education can be damaging and enduring. Males who are neither enrolled in school nor working are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior or illegal activities. Females in this group are more likely to become dependent on welfare³. North Dakota youth who were not in school, not high school graduates, and not in the labor force (referred to as idle teens) comprised 2 percent of all children ages 16 through 19 in 2013, which is just under the national average of 3 percent.

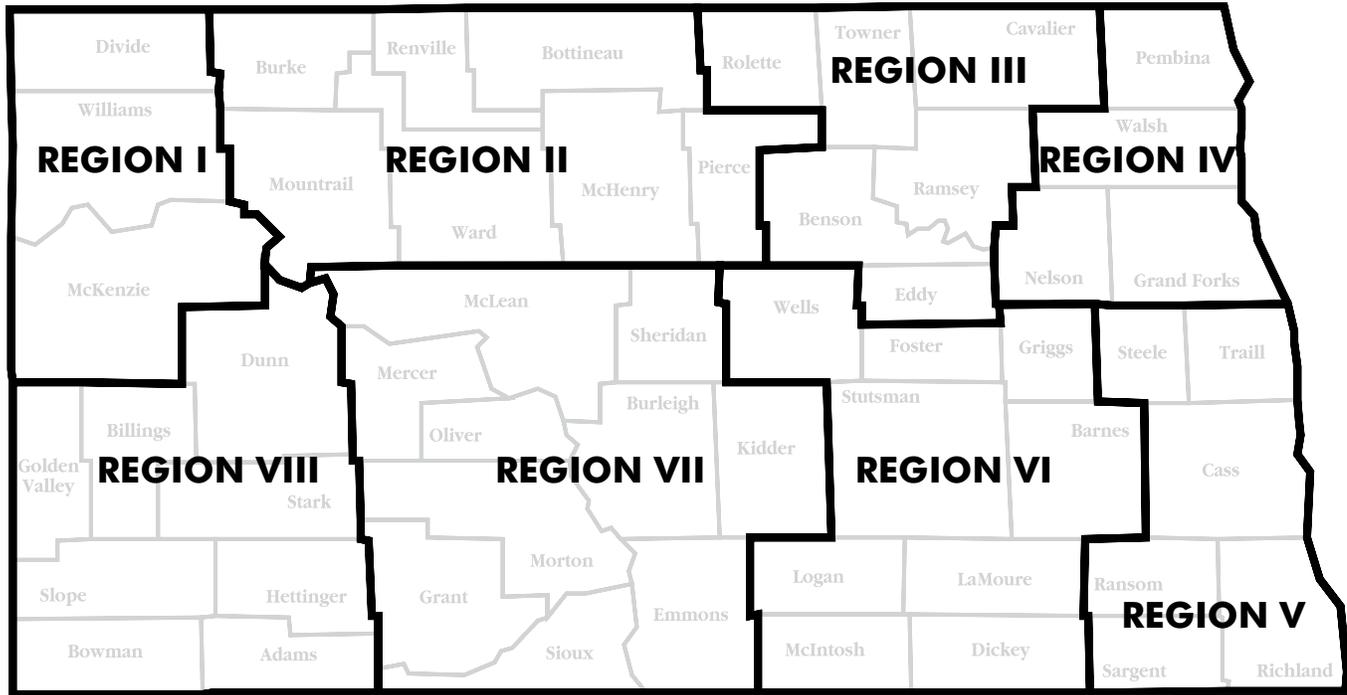
STATE, REGIONAL, AND COUNTY PROFILES



Research indicates that challenges do not affect North Dakota children equally.



NORTH DAKOTA PLANNING REGIONS MAP



REGION I p. 23

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Williams County

REGION II p. 26

Bottineau County
Burke County
McHenry County
Mountrail County
Pierce County
Renville County
Ward County

REGION III p. 29

Benson County
Cavalier County
Eddy County
Ramsey County
Rolette County
Towner County

REGION IV p. 32

Grand Forks County
Nelson County
Pembina County
Walsh County

REGION V p. 35

Cass County
Ransom County
Richland County
Sargent County
Steele County
Traill County

REGION VI p. 38

Barnes County
Dickey County
Foster County
Griggs County
LaMoure County
Logan County
McIntosh County
Stutsman County
Wells County

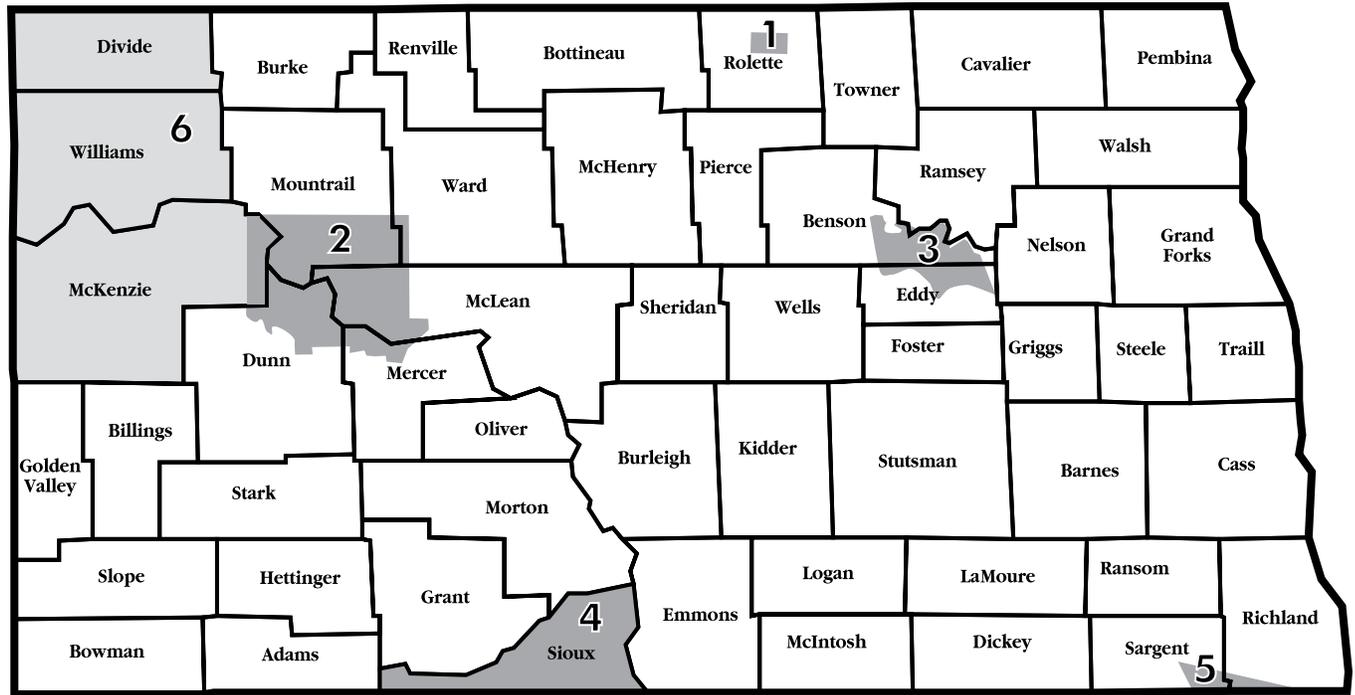
REGION VII p. 41

Burleigh County
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Grant County
Kidder County
McLean County
Mercer County
Morton County
Oliver County
Sheridan County
Sioux County

REGION VIII p. 44

Adams County
Billings County
Bowman County
Dunn County
Golden Valley County
Hettinger County
Slope County
Stark County

COUNTY AND TRIBAL AREAS MAP



COUNTY PROFILES

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AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBAL AREAS

1. Turtle Mountain Reservation
2. Fort Berthold Reservation
3. Spirit Lake Reservation
4. Standing Rock Reservation
5. Lake Traverse Reservation
6. Trenton Indian Service Area