

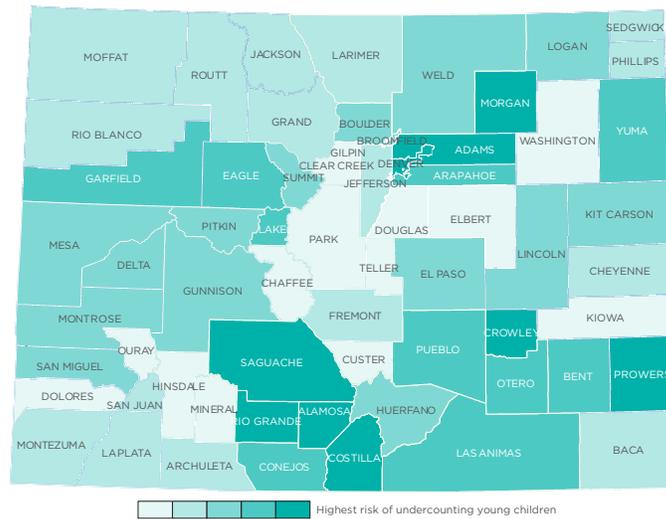
10 TRENDS IN CHILD WELL-BEING



The 2020 Census is less than two months away, and kids under 5 are at high risk of being undercounted. Experts estimate that the 2010 Census undercounted young kids in Colorado by up to 18,000 children. When we fail to count young kids in the census, Colorado risks losing hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding for programs that help kids and families succeed.

The map below shows which counties are at the highest risk of an undercount of young kids based on a set of risk factors correlated with the undercount of young children.

ESTIMATED RISK OF UNDERCOUNTING CHILDREN UNDER 5 IN THE 2020 CENSUS



Counties at the highest risk of a young child undercount in 2020:

Costilla	Rio Grande	Adams
Alamosa	Morgan	Prowers
Denver	Crowley	Saguache

Source: Colorado Children's Campaign analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-Year Estimates.

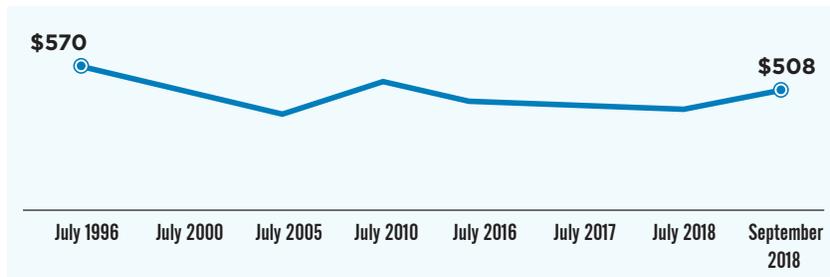


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The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF) serves Colorado families facing some of the greatest barriers to economic security by providing basic cash assistance and services that help support families' participation in the workforce. Since the program's inception in 1996, however, the basic cash assistance benefit has eroded as it has failed to keep pace with inflation. The value of the basic cash assistance benefit for a single-parent family of three in Colorado fell by nearly 19 percent between 1996 and 2018.

Monthly TANF Benefit Levels for Single Parent Family of 3 in 2018 Dollars



Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2019). TANF benefits remain low despite recent increases in some states.

Making sure TANF cash benefits keep up with the cost of living is important. Research shows that boosting a family's cash income has long-term benefits for kids.

One study found that **boosting the income** of families with young children by **\$3,000 per year** was associated with better outcomes in adulthood—including a 17% increase in adult earnings and more hours worked.



Source: Duncan, G., & Magnuson, K. (2011). *The long reach of early childhood poverty.*

This data walk explores how kids are doing in Colorado. You'll note positive trends in some areas, and where we need to do better—urgently. These trends highlight ways our policy decisions, supported by solid research and community voices, have an impact on how kids grow, learn and thrive. For more information, please visit us at www.coloradokids.org.



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Housing costs have skyrocketed across Colorado in recent years, leaving many families struggling to find an affordable place to call home:

Nearly **1 in 3** Colorado kids lives in a household with a high housing cost burden, defined as spending more than 30 percent of income on housing.

Colorado school districts identified **22,369** students experiencing homelessness in the 2017-2018 school year—**up 42 percent** from 2008-2009.

1 in 15 Coloradans report worrying about where they will live in the next two months.

Sources: Population Reference Bureau analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey; Colorado Department of Education; Colorado Health Institute's 2019 Colorado Health Access Survey.

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The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) is Colorado's state-funded, voluntary preschool program for 3- and 4-year-old children, as well as 5-year-olds not currently in kindergarten. The positive effects of CPP participation continue long past the preschool year and last throughout a child's educational experience.

Compared to their peers with similar risk factors who did NOT participate in CPP, CPP graduates are:

Half

as likely to be held back a grade during the K-3 years

7%

less likely to be identified as having a significant reading deficiency

23%

more likely to graduate from high school within four years

Despite the program's effectiveness, it is only able to serve a fraction of the children who are eligible for it due to limited funding. In the 2018-2019 school year, an estimated 76,000 Colorado 3- and 4-year-olds qualified for CPP, but the program had only 29,360 half-day slots.

Source: Colorado Department of Education.

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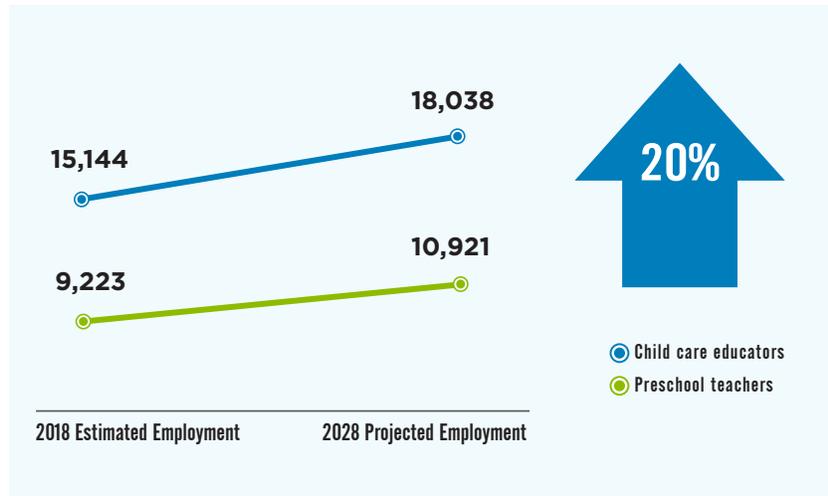


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Educators are the backbone of our state's early childhood system. Demand for early childhood educators and directors is expected to increase by nearly 20 percent during the next decade.

Growing Demand for Early Childhood Educators in Colorado



Despite anticipated increases in demand, Colorado is already facing a shortage of early childhood educators. Approximately 70 percent of child care center directors in Colorado report difficulty finding teachers to fill vacant positions. It takes an average of 2.5 months to fill a vacant position.

Sources: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment; Early Milestones Colorado, University of Colorado Denver and NORC at the University of Chicago.

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Colorado's rate of uninsured children plummeted during the past decade—falling by about two thirds—but progress has stagnated since 2015.

Children Under 19 Without Health Coverage



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Health Insurance Historical Tables, 2008 to 2018.

Public insurance programs are an important source of health coverage for Colorado's kids, covering hundreds of thousands of kids each year. In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, 52 percent of kids—more than half of our state's children—were covered by Medicaid or the Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) at some point during the year.

Despite our state's progress in this area, in 2018 there were still 62,000 uninsured kids. Hispanic/Latino children and American Indian/Alaska Native children are more likely than other children to be uninsured. Health insurance coverage is critically important for children and families. It improves access to vital health services, improves mental health, reduces infant, child and maternal mortality, and provides necessary financial protection for families.

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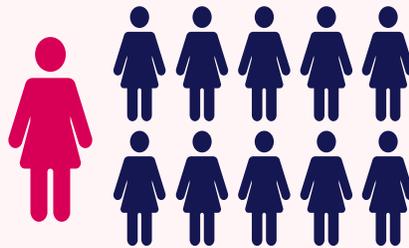


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Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) impact many Colorado women at critical times: during their pregnancy and/or up to one year postpartum.

Nationally, PMADs are the
#1 complication
of pregnancy and childbirth



In Colorado, PMADs affect **1 in 11**
pregnant and postpartum women

Source: Mathematica Policy Research.

Yet PMADs are often undetected, and when left untreated, the conditions can impact the health of both mother and child long-term. Across the U.S., 50 percent of perinatal women who are diagnosed with depression do not get essential treatment. In Colorado, behavioral health conditions, including PMADs, are a leading cause of maternal mortality, and deaths due to these conditions have increased in recent years.

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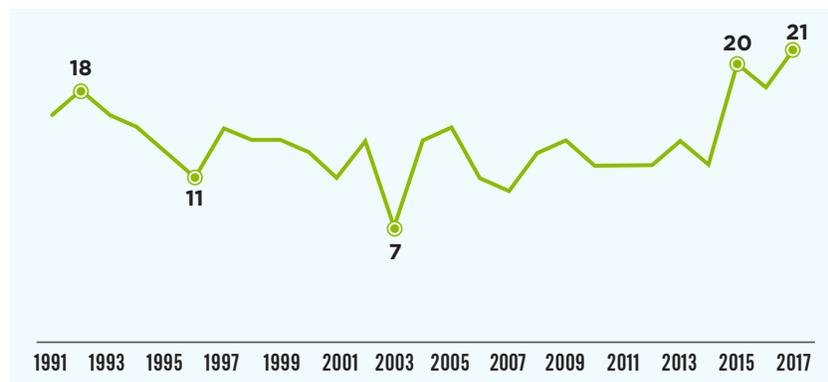


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In 2017, Colorado's teen suicide rate reached its highest level on record: 21 suicide deaths for every 100,000 teens, representing 76 bright futures tragically cut short.

Teen Suicide Rate in Colorado (Deaths by Suicide per 1,000 Teens Ages 15 to 19)



Source: Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment.

Many of our state's young people are telling us they are struggling with their mental health, highlighting an urgent need to develop evidence-based strategies to support them. Results from the 2017 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey revealed that nearly 1 in 3 high school students (31 percent) reported sadness and hopelessness every day, disrupting their normal activities for at least two weeks, a hallmark symptom of clinical depression. Nearly 1 in 5 Colorado high school students (17 percent) reported seriously considering suicide in the past year.

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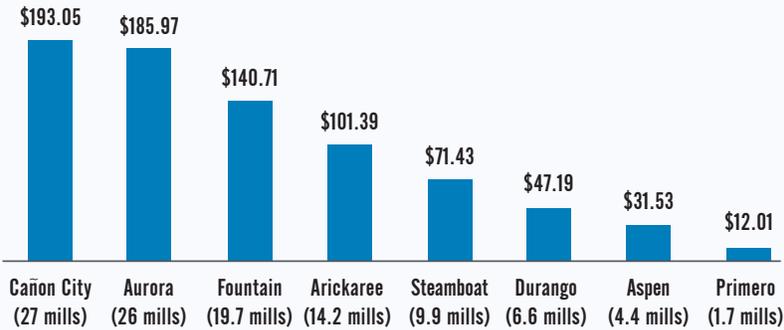


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The number of dollars made available to educate Colorado's children varies dramatically from district to district. This is because local property taxes make up a significant portion of school funding, and property values and tax rates differ across the state. Coloradans in many property-poor districts have to pay property tax rates up to 16 times higher than those in more affluent districts.

Taxpayer Contribution to Total Program per \$100K of Home Value



Note: Prior to 1993, K-12 funding was allocated on a calendar basis.

Source: Colorado Legislative Council.

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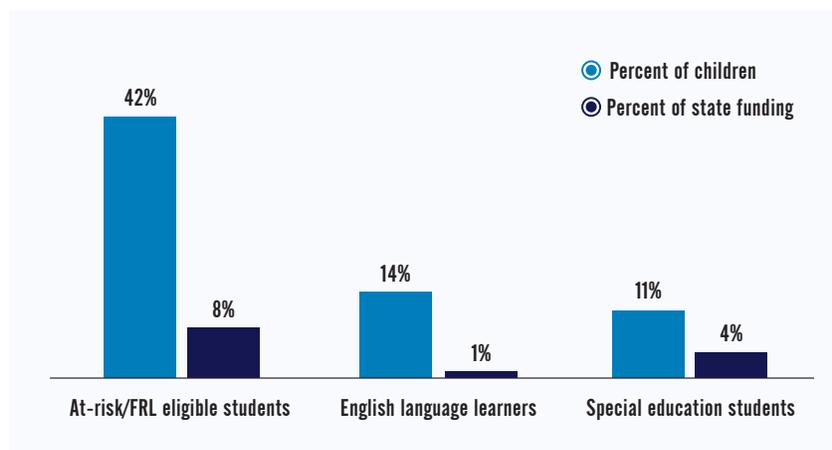
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Research shows that targeted investments that respond to students' specific learning needs lead to better outcomes for kids. But our state's school funding formula is 25 years old, and it has failed to keep up with the changing demographics of Colorado's children and the current evidence-based best practices in school finance.

Colorado's current school funding formula exacerbates inequities between kids by allocating more dollars for district characteristics instead of student needs. As a result, Colorado's children who face the most barriers, including students in low-income families, special education students and English language learners, receive dramatically insufficient funding.

Student Groups as a Percentage Colorado's Total Student Population vs. the Share of State Funding for Each Category



Sources: Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Legislative Council Staff.

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