



KIDS COUNT in Colorado! Data Book

2025 Highlights

The ***KIDS COUNT in Colorado! Data Book*** is an annual publication by the Colorado Children's Campaign that provides the best available state- and county-level data on the well-being of kids in Colorado, with a focus on economic security, health, K-12 education, and early childhood.

The 2025 report highlights the growth of Colorado's developing early childhood system; the responsiveness of its public health programs to a changing policy and economic environment; and improvements in youth mental health. However, it also finds a significant number of children experiencing homelessness, stagnating test scores, and troubling trends in use of early prenatal care and deaths among teenagers.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

Nearly 30% of Colorado households with children experienced financial hardship. This was even more common in single-parent homes. In 2023, 28% of households with children made less than the estimated cost of living. Sixty-nine percent of single mothers did not have enough resources to meet their basic needs, compared with 16% of households with two parents.

Colorado had significant income differences across race. In 2023, the median income among households with children was \$118,733. But there were significant gaps in income across communities: The median income among American Indian/Alaskan families was \$56,700 and the median income among Black families was \$64,200 — less than half the median income of White and Asian and Pacific Islander families.

Many more children are homeless now than in prior years. The number of children experiencing homelessness increased drastically between 2023 and 2024. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's January Point-in-Time count, the number of children experiencing homelessness more than doubled. The number of public school students identified as homeless also increased by roughly 28%, or 5,000 students.

Sources: United Ways of Colorado; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Colorado Department of Education

HEALTH

More children were insured by Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) in fiscal year 2023-24. Enrollment in CHP+ grew by roughly 60,000 in fiscal year 2023-24. Many of these children were likely previously enrolled in Medicaid but now qualify for CHP+ because their families' incomes increased.

Fewer pregnant people received early prenatal care in 2023 than in the prior decade. In 2023, 22% of babies were born to parents who did not receive prenatal care in their first trimester.

Between 2016 and 2023, fewer teens died by suicide but more died by accidental overdoses, motor vehicle accidents, and homicide. The rate of children ages 15 to 19 who died as a result of suicide decreased to 14.6 death per every 100,000 teens in 2023, down from 18.1 deaths in 2016. However, rates of accidental overdoses, motor vehicle accidents, and homicides were significantly higher than they were in 2016.

Sources: Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment; Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing

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EARLY CHILDHOOD

More than two-thirds of Colorado 4 year olds participated in the Universal Preschool Program. In its first year, the Universal Preschool Program provided free, part-time preschool to more than 40,000 children, or roughly 70% of Colorado 4 year olds.

Colorado's child care capacity is growing. Between September 2023 and September 2024, the state added roughly 4,000 slots for children under 6 and 6,000 slots for school-age children.

More children are getting evaluated and supported for developmental delays. Between 2021 and 2023, Colorado nearly doubled the number of young kids who were evaluated for developmental delays. Increased evaluations also led to more kids getting the services they needed.

Sources: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office; Colorado Department of Early Childhood

K-12 EDUCATION

This year, Colorado is serving twice as many immigrant students as in the previous year. In the 2024-25 school year, there were nearly 30,000 immigrant students attending Colorado public schools, compared with roughly 15,000 the prior year.

Youth report that their mental health is improving. Between 2021 and 2023, more middle and high school students felt better able to manage their stress and fewer had feelings of hopelessness.

More than half of students did not meet academic standards in English and math. In 2024, 56% of students did not meet expectations in English and 66% of students did not meet expectations in math. While there was some improvement from the prior year, scores remain lower than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Colorado Department of Education; Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment.

For more information on the well-being of kids in Colorado, see the full ***KIDS COUNT in Colorado! 2025 Data Book.***

