

Montana

A profile of its Native American children

Understanding the facts about Native American children in Montana illustrates why smart, proven investments in Montana's children and youth are critical to protecting Montana's competitive edge in a global market place.

Native American Children in Montana¹

- One in 10 children under age 18 is Native American;
- More than one in every three Native Americans in Montana is under age 18, totaling over 21,000 children;
- More than 8,600 Native American children under age 18 (42%) live in poverty (about \$22,100 or less for a family of four);
- Nearly 2,700 Native American children age 5 and under (44%) live in poverty;

School Achievement²

- Math:
 - 84 percent of Native American fourth graders are below grade level in math;
 - 81 percent of Native American eighth graders are below grade level in math.
- Reading:
 - 86 percent of Native American fourth graders are reading below grade level;
 - 75 percent of Native American eighth graders are reading below grade level.

Graduation Rates³

- Native American high school students fail to graduate on time with a high school diploma at twice the rate of all high school students throughout the state: 50 percent compared with 24 percent.

Early Care and Education⁴

- Currently, Montana has no state-funded pre-kindergarten program;
- Almost 2,200 Native American children participate in the federally-funded Head Start program;
- A survey of Montana residents shows that Native Americans place more importance on child care than non-Native Americans. About six in 10 Native Americans identified child care as 'somewhat or very important' compared to about four in 10 non-Native Americans.

¹ Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2011). *KIDS COUNT data center*. Baltimore, MD: Author. Retrieved on December 12, 2011 from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>; U.S. Census Bureau. (2011). *American Community Survey 2010 1-Year Estimates, 3-Year Estimates and 5-Year Estimates*. Table B09001, Population Under 18 Years of Age, Table B17001C, Poverty Status by Sex by Age and Table B01001C Sex by Age. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on December 13, 2011 from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>; Montana Kids Count. (2010). *2010 data book – Montana Kids Count*. Missoula, MT: University of Montana, Montana Kids Count. Retrieved on July 22, 2011 from <http://www.montanakidscount.org/filelib/26.pdf>;

² National Center for Education Statistics (2011). *The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2011* (NCES 2012–457). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.; National Center for Education Statistics (2011). *The Nation's Report Card: Mathematics 2011* (NCES 2012–458). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

³ Editorial Projects in Education. (2011). *EdWeek maps*. Bethesda, MD: Education Week. Retrieved on July 22, 2011 from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2011/06/09/index.html>

⁴ Montana Kids Count. (2010). *2010 data book – Montana Kids Count*. Missoula, MT: University of Montana, Montana Kids Count. Retrieved on July 22, 2011 from <http://www.montanakidscount.org/filelib/26.pdf>; Polzin, P.E. & O'Donnell, D. (2004). Economic status of American Indians in Montana: A preliminary assessment. *Montana Business Quarterly, Winter 2004*. Retrieved on December 14, 2011 from <http://www.bber.umt.edu/mbq/mbqjissue.asp?vol=42&num=4>