

# North Carolina

## A profile of its children

**Understanding the facts about children in North Carolina illustrates why smart, proven investments in North Carolina's children and youth are critical to protecting Wyoming's competitive edge in a global market place.**

### Children in North Carolina<sup>1</sup>

- Almost 2.3 million children (under the age of 18) live in the state;
- 560,000 children (25%) live in poverty (about \$22,100 or less for a family of four);
- 259,000 children (11%) live in extreme poverty (about \$11,000 or less for a family of four);
- 37 percent of children live in a household with only one parent.

### Early Childhood<sup>2</sup>

- Almost 18,000 children participate in the federally-funded Head Start program. However;
- Only 7 percent of 3-year-olds and 35 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded pre-kindergarten, Head Start or a special education preschool program;
- 65 percent of children under the age of 6 have both or their only parent in the work force.

### School Readiness<sup>3</sup>

- Math:
  - 56 percent of fourth graders are below grade level in math;
  - 63 percent of eighth graders are below grade level in math.
- Reading:
  - 66 percent of fourth graders are reading below grade level;
  - 69 percent of eighth graders are reading below grade level.

### Graduation Rates<sup>4</sup>

- 27 percent of high school students do not graduate on time with a high school diploma;
- These rates are worse for youth of color:
  - 28 percent of African-Americans do not graduate on time;
  - 42 percent of Latinos do not graduate on time.

<sup>1</sup> 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*. Table B09001, Population Under 18 Years of Age. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on December 13, 2011 from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>

<sup>2</sup> Barnett, W.S., Epstein, D.J., Carolan, M.E., Fitzgerald, J., Ackerman, D.J. & Friedman, A.H. (2010). *The state of preschool 2010 – State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research; Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2011). *KIDS COUNT data center*. Baltimore, MD: Author. Retrieved on December 12, 2011 from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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>