

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 North Carolina's competitive edge in a global market place.

Children in North Carolina¹

- 2,287,008 children (under the age of 18) live in the state;
- 580,000 children (26%) live in poverty (about \$22,800 or less for a family of four);
- 260,000 children (11%) live in extreme poverty (about \$11,400 or less for a family of four);
- 39 percent of children live in a household with only one parent.

Early Childhood²

- Approximately 18,935 children participate in the federally-funded Head Start program. However;
- Only 9 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 Readiness³

- 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 Rates⁴

- 22 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;
 - 31 percent of Latinos do not graduate on time.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau 2011 population estimates and U.S. Census Bureau 2011 American Community Survey data. Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2012). *KIDS COUNT data center*. Baltimore, MD: Author. Retrieved on February 4, 2012 from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

² Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M. E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J.H. (2011). *The state of preschool 2011 – State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, National Institute for Early Education Research; Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2012). *KIDS COUNT data center*. Baltimore, MD: Author. Retrieved on February 4, 2013 from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

³ 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.

⁴ U.S. Department of Education. (2012). *Provisional data file: SY2010-11 four-year regulatory adjusted cohort graduation rates*. Retrieved on November 30, 2012 from <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/state-2010-11-graduation-rate-data.pdf>