READY NATION
COUNCIL FOR A STRONG AMERICA
MAINE

Understanding the facts about children in Maine illustrates why smart, proven investments in Maine's children and youth are critical to strengthening our current and future workforce and growing our economy

Children in Maine[1]

- 250,404 children (under the age of 18) live in the state;
- 35,000 children (14 percent) live in poverty (about $25,465 or less for a family of four);
- 15,000 children (6% percent) live in extreme poverty (about $12,732 or less for a family of four);
- 31 percent of children live in a household with only one parent.

Child Care

- Although the number of children receiving child care vouchers has increased to 6087 in FY 2018 (up from 5614 the previous year), the majority of eligible children are not being served.[2]
- Many children receiving child care vouchers attend unlicensed and unregulated programs: 19 percent of those in both TANF- or ASPIRE-funded care.[3]
- Maine has a voluntary 4-step Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) to help ensure child care quality. But only about half (57 percent) of licensed child care settings participate in the QRIS.[4]
- Of those who do participate, quality levels are not high: more than half (64 percent) are at Step 1, 12 percent are at Step 2, 10 percent are at Step 3 and 15 percent are at Step 4.[5]

Early Childhood Education

- Only 40 percent of eligible Maine children participated in Head Start programs.[6]
- In Fall 2019, 6,203 Maine 4-year-olds (46%) are enrolled in public pre-k programs.[7]
- Maine's state pre-k program meets 9 of the 10 National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) quality standards.[8]
- 73 percent of Maine children under the age of 6 have both or their only parent in the workforce.[9]

School Performance[10]

- On standardized tests given in grades 3-8 and to high school juniors, half of Maine students are below grade level in English, 63 percent are below grade level in math, and 41 percent are below grade level in science.

Graduation Rates

- 13 percent of high school students in Maine do not graduate on time.[11]

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[1] Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2019). http://datacenter.kidscount.org

[2] 2019 Maine Kids Count. https://www.mekids.org/site/assets/files/1241/kidscount_2019.pdf

[3] Maine Child Care Advisory Council (2016, January). Child Care Matters. Report to the 127th Maine Legislature. https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/documents/CCDF%20REPORT.pdf

[4] Maine Kids Count 2019 https://www.mekids.org/site/assets/files/1241/kidscount_2019.pdf

[5] Maine Kids Count 2019 https://www.mekids.org/site/assets/files/1241/kidscount_2019.pdf

[6] Maine Kids Count 2019 https://www.mekids.org/site/assets/files/1241/kidscount_2019.pdf

[7] Data from Maine Department of Education, December 2019..

[8] National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) (2019) The State of Preschool 2018. http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Maine_YB2018R.pdf

[9] Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2019). http://datacenter.kidscount.org

[10] Maine Department of Education ESSA dashboard. https://www.maine.gov/doe/dashboard

[11] Maine Department of Education ESSA dashboard. https://www.maine.gov/doe/dashboard