ABOUT THE STATE OF THE CHILD REPORT

TCA 37-3-103(a)(1)(E) requires the commission to (E) Publish annually, on or before December 31, a comprehensive report on the status of children and youth in Tennessee; and distribute the report to the governor, to each member of the general assembly and to each of the state’s depository libraries.

The purpose of the State of the Child is to provide an annual overview of the well-being of children, youth and families in Tennessee through the available data. The report seeks to cover as many topics affecting children as possible, spanning from maternal and prenatal health to youth aging out of foster care.

The data contained in this report comes from publicly available reports or data sets. The commission relies heavily on reporting from state and federal departments as well as non-governmental organizations. Without their continual work and dedication to the children in Tennessee, this report would not be possible.

ABOUT THE TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH (TCCY):

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY) is an independent, nonpartisan agency created to ensure the state's policies and programs effectively promote and protect the health, well-being and development of children and youth.

Established by the Tennessee General Assembly as a permanent commission, TCCY is the state’s centralized informational resource and advocacy agency for timely, fact-based information to aid policymaking and coordination of resources.

WHAT TCCY DOES:

Data and Insights: Monitors various child and youth indicators to identify trends and areas of concern; keeps up with best practices for addressing issues affecting children and youth.

Collaboration: Convenes various agencies and organizations in leading efforts to improve services for children and youth.

Policy Advocacy: Reviews data and outcomes of various policies related to children and youth to provide evidence-based suggestions for improvement.

Public Awareness: Promotes public awareness about children’s issues and advocates for community engagement in addressing these concerns.
Over the last decade, Tennessee’s children have become more diverse. In 2012, the largest racial group (Non-Hispanic White) comprised 67 percent of the child population; now it is 64 percent.

Comparing the demographics of Gen Alpha to Baby Boomers shows the changes Tennessee has seen over just a few generations.³
Age

Demographics

The services and investment needed from the state to support healthy and thriving children changes as they grow. Ensuring services are available to meet the needs of Tennessee children, from prenatal care through career development, is critical to a more successful future.

More than one in five Tennesseans are under 18

31 percent of Tennessee children are under 6

33 percent of Tennessee children are age 6 to 11

35 percent of Tennessee children are age 12 to 17

Compared to 2012, Tennessee has seen a slight decline in the percent of children under 6 but an increase in the percent of Tennesseans under 18.

In 2012:

Children under 18 were 17 percent Tennessee’s population

33 percent were under 6

33 percent were age 6 to 12

34 percent were age 11 to 18

Estimated total spending on children under five years of age accounted for 12.5 percent of all expenditures for children in Tennessee in FY 2021-22, while children under age five are 26.2 percent of all children in the state.

Children under five experience the highest rates of poverty of any age group in the state. Additionally, due to the rapid brain development occurring during the earliest years, which lays the foundation for learning and development throughout the lifespan, investing more of our state funds into our youngest Tennesseans would provide a greater return on investment.

Experiences

Demographics

In addition to a child’s age, life experiences can drastically shape services and supports needed to thrive.

1 in 10 Tennessee children age 5-17 speak a language other than English at home. Of those, two-thirds speak Spanish.

One in seven Tennessee children are part of an immigrant family.

Of Tennessee children born in another country, half were born in Latin America.

One in ten Tennessee children are age 6 to 11

8 of 10 children live with their biological parent as the householder.

Nearly 1 in 10 Tennessee children live with their grandparent as the householder.

45 percent of teens 15 to 19 are in the labor force.

Nearly 2 in 5 Tennessee children 12 through 17 were bullied, picked on or excluded in the last year.
Measures of Poverty

Economics

There are two major measures of poverty, each considering different factors and expenses. Understanding which measure is being referenced and what is included is critical to properly assessing the challenges our children are facing and how we can improve resources and protections for them. Below is a brief explanation of the two commonly used measures, the Official Poverty Measure and Supplemental Poverty Measure.

Official Poverty Measure
U.S. Census Bureau

The Official Poverty Measure (OPM) was developed in the mid-1960's. It was calculated based upon the cost of a minimum food diet in 1963 multiplied by three. Each year it is updated to reflect current prices. The OPM only includes pre-tax cash income and does not include any government assistance or subsidies. The OPM is the same across the continental United States.

Supplemental Poverty Measure
Bureau of Labor Statistics & U.S. Census Bureau

"In November 2011, the Census Bureau released its first report on the new SPM. The SPM addresses numerous concerns of official-measure critics, and its intent is to provide an improved statistical picture of poverty. The SPM income or resource measure is cash income plus in-kind government benefits (such as food stamps and housing subsidies) minus nondiscretionary expenses (taxes, medical out-of-pocket expenses, and work expenses). The SPM thresholds are based on a broad measure of necessary expenditures—food, clothing, shelter, and utilities (FCSU)—and are based on recent, annually updated expenditure data. The SPM thresholds are adjusted for geographic differences in the cost of living. The SPM uses a broader unit of analysis that treats cohabiters and their relatives in a more satisfactory way." - Social Security Administration.

State of the Child 2023
Official Poverty Measure

Economics

After a significant decline in child poverty among those under 5 between 2019 and 2021, Tennessee saw an uptick in under 5 poverty in 2022. One in five of our youngest children are living in poverty.4 At the same time poverty rates for those ages 5 to 17 are at their lowest on record and less than one percent above the comparable national group. Due to the rapid development occurring in the earlier years, children 0 to 5 are particularly susceptible to the potentially negative impacts of living below the poverty line.

While Median Household Income in Tennessee has increased more than the Consumer Price index, the Federal Poverty Line has failed to keep up with rising costs.5,6

Due to the low poverty threshold established by the Federal Poverty Line, many programs establish their benefits cap as a percentage of the FPL.7-12

Sometimes referred to as benefits cliffs, these limits can create challenges as workers earn higher wages that might make them ineligible for still needed resources.

A large percentage of Tennessee households with children, nearly a third, make 500 percent FPL or higher.13 Nationally and across the south, a slightly higher percent of children live above 500 FPL, at 37 and 33 percent respectively,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tennessee Family of Three Median Income</th>
<th>Family of Three Federal Poverty Line</th>
<th>Consumer Price Index Annual Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>$85,423</td>
<td>$23,030</td>
<td>$292.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>$78,715</td>
<td>$21,960</td>
<td>$270.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Unavailable</td>
<td>$21,720</td>
<td>258.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$71,133</td>
<td>$21,220</td>
<td>255.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$68,493</td>
<td>$20,780</td>
<td>251.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$66,525</td>
<td>$20,420</td>
<td>245.12</td>
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</tbody>
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Economics

Overall Child Poverty

Child Poverty Under 5

Child Poverty Among Ages 5 to 17

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent FPL in 2022</th>
<th>50% FPL</th>
<th>75% FPL</th>
<th>84% FPL</th>
<th>90% FPL</th>
<th>100% FPL</th>
<th>125% FPL</th>
<th>133% FPL</th>
<th>138% FPL</th>
<th>143% FPL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income for a family of three</td>
<td>$9,155</td>
<td>$17,273</td>
<td>$19,332</td>
<td>$23,030</td>
<td>$30,629</td>
<td>$31,781</td>
<td>$32,702</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent FPL in 2022</th>
<th>150% FPL</th>
<th>165% FPL</th>
<th>175% FPL</th>
<th>180% FPL</th>
<th>200% FPL</th>
<th>225% FPL</th>
<th>250% FPL</th>
<th>300% FPL</th>
<th>350% FPL</th>
<th>400% FPL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income for a family of three</td>
<td>$41,454</td>
<td>$42,606</td>
<td>$44,408</td>
<td>$51,818</td>
<td>$57,757</td>
<td>$68,080</td>
<td>$80,609</td>
<td>$100,100</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The United States saw an historic decline in children living below the supplemental poverty measure in 2021 due to policies such as the child tax credit, stimulus, and pandemic EBT. After those programs expired the percent of children living under the supplemental poverty measure returned to previous levels.

### National Supplemental Poverty Measure

The supplemental poverty rate experienced an historical drop in 2021 largely due to the Child Tax Credit. Because it directly counts federal cash benefits, the SPM is very responsive to benefit changes.\(^{15}\)

### Tennessee Supplemental Poverty Measure

At a state-level, the Supplemental Poverty Measure is available in 3-year averages for all ages. Listed below are the three-year averages spanning the last seven years for Tennessee’s Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) and the Official Poverty Measure (OPM).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>SPM</th>
<th>OPM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019-21</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-19</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-18</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-17</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-16</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-15</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-14</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though all races and ethnicities experienced a sharp increase in children living under the supplemental poverty measure in 2022, American Indian/Alaskan Native and Hispanic children had the only substantial increase when comparing pre- and post-pandemic rates.
Supplemental Poverty Measure

Economics

Since the Supplemental Poverty Measure includes non-cash benefits such as tax credits or programs such as SNAP, WIC or TANF, we are able to measure the number of children those programs lift out of poverty. Though these numbers are only available on a national level, they still provide significant insight into how children, youth and families can be further supported. While children may receive many of these programs, these numbers evaluate the individual impact of each program on its own.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Refundable Child Tax Credit</th>
<th>Stimulus Payment</th>
<th>Social Security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021: 2,919,000</td>
<td>2020: 3,246,000</td>
<td>2019: 1,454,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022: 1,411,000</td>
<td>2021: 2,270,000</td>
<td>2020: 1,155,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Refundable Tax Credits</th>
<th>SNAP</th>
<th>School Lunch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019: 4,161,000</td>
<td>2019: 1,030,000</td>
<td>2019: 582,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020: 2,766,000</td>
<td>2020: 1,150,000</td>
<td>2020: 160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021: 4,893,000</td>
<td>2021: 891,000</td>
<td>2021: 271,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022: 3,521,000</td>
<td>2022: 1,407,000</td>
<td>2022: 828,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Subsidies</th>
<th>TANF</th>
<th>WIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019: 614,000</td>
<td>2019: 151,000</td>
<td>2019: 120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020: 801,000</td>
<td>2020: 215,000</td>
<td>2020: 66,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021: 595,000</td>
<td>2021: 109,000</td>
<td>2021: 39,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022: 791,000</td>
<td>2022: 286,000</td>
<td>2022: 98,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Child Tax Credit

Economics

After the success of the fully-refundable federal child tax credit, many states have moved to implement a similar state-level credit. Since Tennessee does not have a state income tax there are implementation challenges, however a new child tax credit in Washington, a state without an income tax, may provide a model to follow.

It is estimated by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy that a state-level fully refundable child tax credit of $1,300 for those under 18 and $1,560 for children under 6 would cut Tennessee’s child poverty rate by 25 percent. A $3,100 credit could cut state child poverty in half.

How Tennessee families used the Child Tax Credit

At the end of 2021, three out of five Tennessee families reported receiving a Child Tax Credit within the last month. It is estimated by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy that a state-level fully refundable child tax credit of $1,300 for those under 18 and $1,560 for children under 6 would cut Tennessee’s child poverty rate by 25 percent. A $3,100 credit could cut state child poverty in half.

More families used Child Tax Credit funds for food than any other area of spending.

More families used Child Tax Credit funds for school than any other area of spending.
Household Finances

In Tennessee between September 20th - October 2nd, 2023:

55 percent of households with children reported that the increase in prices over the last two months has been very stressful.

80 percent of households with children reported they think prices will increase in the next six months.

58 percent of households with children being very concerned that prices will increase in the next six months.

1 in 3 households reported that they chose not to take a trip in the last seven days due to the cost of gas.

Approximately 2 percent of households reported applying for unemployment insurance between June 1, 2023 and October 2023. Of those, 58 percent did not receive benefits.

70 percent of Tennessee households are using usual income sources to cover any or all expenses, while nearly one in three are using credit cards or loans and more than one in four are using money from savings or selling assets/possessions to cover any or all expenses.

Changes in Weekly Wages by County

In Tennessee and nationally, approximately 40 percent of households reported it was somewhat or very difficult to pay for usual household expenses in the last week.

70 percent of Tennessee households are using usual income sources to cover any or all expenses, while nearly one in three are using credit cards or loans and more than one in four are using money from savings or selling assets/possessions to cover any or all expenses.
In 2022, Tennessee’s 3.4 percent unemployment rate was the second-lowest in 50 years, just behind 3.3 percent in 2019. The trend was similar nationally, with 2022 having the lowest average annual unemployment rate since 1969 at 3.6 percent. In August of 2023, Tennessee’s unemployment rate was 3.1 percent.

1 in 10 households with children in Tennessee reported their household had experienced a loss of income within the last month.

Among all Tennessee workers who are not currently employed, 18 percent cite caregiving as a reason they are not currently working.

There are significant disparities in the challenges to obtaining employment based upon the individual’s education history. Transportation is a major barrier to those with less than a high school diploma, while those with an associate’s degree report the greatest challenges related to care-giving.
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Economics

What is TANF?
“The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides states and territories with flexibility in operating programs designed to help low-income families with children achieve economic self-sufficiency. States use TANF to fund monthly cash assistance payments to low-income families with children, as well as a wide range of services.” - Office of Family Assistance

A Decade of TANF

Reviewing state-level TANF numbers over the last decade gives us insight into trends in economic assistance for families across the state.

The average number of children served monthly by TANF in Tennessee has declined 77 percent in the last 10 years, from 100,992 in 2012 to 23,211 in 2022, while the number of children has gone from 1.49 million to 1.53 million.

The monthly average of individuals served by TANF has decreased 80 percent.

The monthly average of children served by TANF has decreased 77 percent.

Using 2022 dollars, the monthly wage of recipients has remained fairly stable. The average monthly benefit has increased between $170 - $200.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Monthly Wage of Recipients</th>
<th>Average Monthly Wage of Recipients (2022 dollars)</th>
<th>Average Monthly Cash Benefit</th>
<th>Average Monthly Cash Benefit (2022 dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$925.95</td>
<td>$1,196.94</td>
<td>$164.64</td>
<td>$212.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$918.26</td>
<td>$1,169.44</td>
<td>$164.78</td>
<td>$209.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$907.85</td>
<td>$1,147.50</td>
<td>$164.83</td>
<td>$208.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$921.86</td>
<td>$1,156.77</td>
<td>$164.72</td>
<td>$206.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$928.24</td>
<td>$1,141.10</td>
<td>$165.41</td>
<td>$203.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$928.33</td>
<td>$1,117.64</td>
<td>$166.72</td>
<td>$200.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$909.78</td>
<td>$1,074.78</td>
<td>$173.35</td>
<td>$204.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$929.84</td>
<td>$1,073.94</td>
<td>$242.44</td>
<td>$280.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$932.66</td>
<td>$1,062.72</td>
<td>$244.51</td>
<td>$278.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>$986.94</td>
<td>$1,050.64</td>
<td>$337.45</td>
<td>$359.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>$1,061.72</td>
<td>$1,120.82*</td>
<td>$383.69</td>
<td>$405.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Single year child poverty number unavailable for 2020

*2013-2014: 12 months

Source: Tennessee Department of Health and Human Services
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Economics
At the end of FY2021, Tennessee had $798 million in unobligated TANF funds, more than any state other than New York.45 Tennessee was also second highest in per-child unobligated funds with $522, falling behind only Hawaii’s $1,255.

The TANF Opportunity Act passed in 2021 required the Department of Human Services to allocate a portion of the TANF surplus into opportunity pilot program grants.46

In FY2021, Tennessee received $191 million in federal funding for TANF.45 The federal TANF block grant amount has remained the same since 1997 and lost nearly half of its value due to inflation.47

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Assistance</td>
<td>$81.3</td>
<td>$80.6</td>
<td>$71.4</td>
<td>$61.6</td>
<td>$18.4</td>
<td>$57.6</td>
<td>$23.5</td>
<td>$110.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Care</td>
<td>$44.2</td>
<td>$31.9</td>
<td>$16.1</td>
<td>$16.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>$7.8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-K/Head Start</td>
<td>$62.0</td>
<td>$48.2</td>
<td>$61.7</td>
<td>$85.9</td>
<td>$82.1</td>
<td>$83.1</td>
<td>$83.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work, Education &amp; Training/Work Supports/Work-Related Activities</td>
<td>$38.4</td>
<td>$35.1</td>
<td>$22.3</td>
<td>$18.8</td>
<td>$7.8</td>
<td>$20.7</td>
<td>$24.2</td>
<td>$20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Management</td>
<td>$32.5</td>
<td>$30.0</td>
<td>$26.6</td>
<td>$22.4</td>
<td>$26.3</td>
<td>$26.7</td>
<td>$31.9</td>
<td>$30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$9.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1.12</td>
<td>$1.11</td>
<td>$2.4*</td>
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<td>Child Welfare Services</td>
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<td>$14.6</td>
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</table>

*In FY2021, ‘Other’ also includes expenditures classified as “Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancy Prevention” and “Services for Children and Youth.”

Housing

Economics
1 IN 6 Tennessee rental households with children report being behind on their rent.56

Among those 1 IN 6 who are behind in rent, 50 percent are very likely to face eviction in the next two months.57

Nationally, those behind on payments feel much less likely to face eviction, with only 15 percent reporting eviction as very likely.57

Nearly one in three Tennessee households with children reported their household reduced or forgone expenses for basic household necessities, such as medicine or food, in order to pay an energy bill.57

For approximately one in 10, this happened almost every month.57

Over half of renting households with children in Tennessee had a rent increase between $1-$249 over the last 12 months.59 Nationally, this figure was slightly lower. Overall rent increases were slightly less common in Tennessee.59

![Image of a house with a graph showing rent increases by amount.](image-url)
In 2022, there were 1,145 children experiencing homelessness across the state of Tennessee and 629 young adults age 18 to 24.

**Sheltered:**
There were 721 children living in an emergency shelter and 121 in transitional housing.

Among young adults 145 lived in an emergency shelter and 31 were in transitional housing.

**Unsheltered:**
618 children were living unsheltered.
341 young adults were living unsheltered.

**Parenting Youth:**
There were 55 young adults parenting children while experiencing homelessness. The majority of those young adults lived in an emergency shelter, while 10 were unsheltered and 5 lived in a transitional home.

There were 77 children of parenting young adults who were experiencing homelessness.

---

**Economics**

- In nearly 40 percent of rental units, rent is more than 35 percent of household income. Among those with a mortgage, housing cost burden is much less likely at 19 percent.  
- 3 out of 4 Tennessee children live in a one-family detached house.  
- 1 in 3 Tennessee households with children live in a structure built before 1979.  
- 1 in 10 Tennessee households with children have a non-relative living in the household.  
- 1 in 20 Tennessee households with children have a grandparent living in the household.  
- More than half of Tennessee households with children have lived in their current home or apartment for 2 to 9 years. One in seven moved in less than 12 months ago.  
- 24 percent of Tennessee renter households are extremely low income, making $26,500 or less as a 4-person household.  
- Tennessee has a shortage of 129,343 rental homes that are affordable and available for extremely low-income renters.
Accessiblity
Child Care & Early Education

In Tennessee, between 2010-2022 there were 9 child care centers per 1,000 children.¹

The map below breaks this out by county. Counties in shades of blue have 10 or more child care centers per 1,000 children while counties in shades of green have fewer than 10 centers per 1,000 children.

Across all licensed child care facilities in the state, including those licensed by the Departments of Human Services and Education, the average capacity is 76 children.² The median is 68, though this does not take into consideration challenges with capacity that arise with a fluctuating workforce.

18 per 1,000 - Grundy
15 per 1,000 - Bledsoe, Johnson, Obion, Pickett, and Weakley
13 per 1,000 - Crockett, Decatur, Henry, and Putnam
12 per 1,000 - Anderson, Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Greene, Jackson, Roane, and Van Buren
11 per 1,000 - Blount, Campbell, Cannon, Cheatham, Hamblen, Lincoln, Moore, Sullivan and Washington
10 per 1,000 - Bedford, Carroll, Coffee, Franklin, Gibson, Hamilton, Hawkins, Houston, Humphreys, Loudon, Overton, Scott, Unicoi, Union, Williamson, and Wilson
9 per 1,000 - Bradley, Clay, Dickson, Dyer, Fentress, Grainger, Hardin, Henderson, Jefferson, Knox, Lawrence, McMinn, Robertson, Sevier, Shelby, Sumner, and Warren
8 per 1,000 - Davidson, Hardeman, Madison, Marion, Meigs, Perry, Sequatchie, Trousdale and Wayne
7 per 1,000 - Benton, Cumberland, Fayette, Giles, Haywood, Monroe, Morgan, Polk, Rutherford, and Tipton
6 per 1,000 - DeKalb, Hancock, Lake, Lauderdale, Lewis, Marshall, Maury, McNairy, Smith, Stewart, and White
5 per 1,000 - Hickman, Macon, Montgomery, and Rhea
2 per 1,000 - Chester
**Affordability**

Child Care & Early Education

Cost of child care in Tennessee by type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Infant center-based</th>
<th>Infant home-based</th>
<th>Toddler center-based</th>
<th>Toddler home-based</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>$10,301</td>
<td>$7,602</td>
<td>$8,372</td>
<td>$7,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$8,751</td>
<td>$6,458</td>
<td>$7,113</td>
<td>$6,005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase in Market Rate Price</td>
<td>$1,549</td>
<td>$1,143</td>
<td>$1,259</td>
<td>$1,063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Child care costs continue to be out of reach for many families, particularly single-income households. For many families, child care is the largest household expense, totaling more than their rent or mortgage.

Infant center-based care is more than 2023 in-state tuition in all but two of Tennessee's four-year public universities.

**Child care numbers:**

On average in FFY2020, 38,100 Tennessee children were served by Child Care Development Funds each month.

92 percent of children receiving care at a licensed provider were at center-based care.

14,260 children participated in Head Start.

16,634 children four or under were enrolled in pre-k.

In calendar year 2020, there were 98,800 federal child care tax credit claims in Tennessee, totaling $52,007.

---

**High Quality**

Child Care & Early Education

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

In Tennessee, there are 53 child care centers with NAEYC accreditation.

However, those 53 centers are in just 16 of Tennessee's 95 counties. Additionally, 7 out of 10 accredited programs are in Davidson, Knox, Shelby or Williamson.

**Tennessee Licensing**

Of the 4,142 licensed child care providers in Tennessee:

- 56 percent are regulated by the Department of Human Services
- 43 percent are regulated by the Department of Education

Of DHS licensed facilities 80 percent have a 3 star rating indicating the child care provider has achieved the highest quality standards and provides child care at the highest standard.
Ensuring a strong child care workforce is a critical component of a healthy and functioning society. Creating a workforce that is highly-skilled and well compensated allows for more opportunities for children's brains to develop and parents to engage in the workforce.

In 2021, the average earnings of a Preschool or Kindergarten teacher in Tennessee was $21,249. The average earnings of a child care worker was $12,973. 10 percent of the child care and early education workforce in Tennessee does not have health insurance. This was more common among the child care workforce with one in eight being uninsured. 1 in 10 child care workers make an income below the poverty line. Half of the child care/early education workforce lives in a home with children. More than one in four live with a child under 6.

Preschool and Kindergarten teachers worked an average of 29 hours per week while child care workers averaged 21 hours.

Educational attainment of the child care and early education workforce in Tennessee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers</th>
<th>Child Care Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than HS Diploma</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular HS Diploma or Equivalent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate's Degree</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Some College</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2021, the average earnings of a Preschool or Kindergarten teacher in Tennessee was $21,249. The average earnings of a child care worker was $12,973.
Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) Results

Education

Results by demographics (all grades)¹

2023 TCAP ELA Proficiency by Student Demographics

Economically Disadvantaged students and English Learners were hit the hardest by pandemic learning loss while students with disabilities have shown the strongest pandemic recovery.¹

| All Students | -14.7% | +28.7% | +9.8% |
| Economically Disadvantaged | -24.7% | +43.4% | +7.9% |
| English Learners with Transitional 1-4 | -24.5% | +32.2% | 0.0% |
| Students with Disabilities | -20.0% | +58.9% | 27.1% |

After a post-pandemic dip, Tennessee has seen improvement on the percent of elementary students meeting or exceeding expectations on TCAP Math and English Language Arts (ELA).

In 2023, one in three middle schoolers met or exceeded expectations on TCAP ELA testing, slightly more did so on the TCAP math test.

High schoolers perform much better on TCAP ELA than TCAP Math. In 2023, 43 percent met or exceeded expectations in ELA, compared to 23 percent in math.
Universal Screener

Education

In addition to TCAP, the Tennessee Literary Success Act requires districts and charter schools to adopt a state-approved universal reading screener and administer it to their K-3 students three times per year.2

What is a universal reading screener?2

A universal reading screener is a short, standardized assessment to check that students are on track in developing their early reading skills. “Universal” refers to its administration to all students in a grade level. Screeners are nationally normed, with results based on comparisons to other students in the same grade and school year season. A single screener is a combination of very short subtests, each focused on a key skill. Different combinations of subtests are given to students based on their grade and school season (fall, winter, spring).

Students scoring at the 41st percentile or above nationally are considered to be meeting grade-level expectations for the reading skills tested.2

Between the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school year, each class improved on the percent of students meeting grade-level expectations compared to their universal screener performance from the year prior.2

![Graph: Comparison of students meeting grade-level expectations between 2021-22 and 2022-23](image)

Between 2021-2022 and 2022-23 Tennessee saw a:

- 4.1 percent increase in students meeting grade-level expectations between Kindergarten and 1st grade;
- 14.6 percent increase in students meeting grade-level expectations between 1st and 2nd grade; and
- 5.2 percent increase in students meeting grade-level expectations between 2nd and 3rd grade;

Support Services

Education

In the 2021-2022 school year approximately:

- 56% of school districts had zero or one psychological professionals on staff.8

The National Association of Social Work standards call for a ratio of at least one for every 250 students.10

In 2022-23, there were 660 school psychologists employed by Tennessee districts.7 Data on how those professionals were broken out across districts is not available yet.

Discipline

Education

In 2021-22, 40 percent of out-of-school suspensions were given to 9th-12th graders, 40 percent to 6th-8th and 20 percent to elementary students.11

After a drop in expulsions, likely due to students not being in school, there has been an increase in expulsions in 2021-22 school year. In 2021-22 there were 1,590 expulsions.11

Among schools that used corporal punishment in 2021-22 the rate varied from 0.24 instances per 1,000 children to 142 instances per 1,000.12

Across all schools using corporal punishment the rate was 7.6 per 1,000.12

In 2022-2023, there were 511 social workers serving 975,545 students, a ratio of 1:1,909.3

The National Association of Social Work standards call for a ratio of at least one for every 250 students.10

In 2022-23, there were 660 school psychologists employed by Tennessee districts.7 Data on how those professionals were broken out across districts is not available yet.

In the 2020-21 school year there were 1,049 instances of corporal punishment across 33 LEAs. Among those, 187 had a 504/IEP.10

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School Infrastructure

Education

Building Tennessee’s Tomorrow: Anticipating the State’s Infrastructure Needs is the 21st in a series of legislatively required reports produced by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. The report maintains an inventory of infrastructure needs across the state. Each year the report reviews needs over a five-year period. The 2023 report reviewed state-wide needs from July 2021-June 2026. All of the figures reflected below represent the that time period. The 2023 report found school renovations to be the third highest need across the state.

One in 10 Tennessee schools have infrastructure rated in fair or poor condition.

School districts where more than one in three schools have infrastructure rated in fair or poor condition:

- Athens - 80.0 percent
- Lake County - 66.7 percent
- Germantown - 66.7 percent
- Bledsoe County - 60.0 percent
- Davidson County - 43.4 percent
- Lauderdale County - 42.9 percent
- Marion County - 40.0 percent
- Milan SSD - 33.3 percent
- Humphreys County - 33.3 percent

Tennessee’s public schools need 97.4 million dollars in infrastructure improvements to be in compliance with state and federal laws.

Funds needed for compliance by state and federal law:

- $19 million for asbestos compliance
- $51 million for Americans with Disabilities Act compliance
- $17 million for Education Improvement Act compliance
- $10 million for fire codes compliance.

School districts with the greatest need for compliance funding:

- $4.34 million - Shelby County
- $4.73 million - Bristol
- $4.25 million - Collierville
- $3.87 million - Madison County
- $3.50 million - Germantown
- $2.02 million - Lauderdale County
- $1.69 million - Montgomery County
- $1.85 million - Wilson County
- $1.75 million - Robertson County
- $1.70 million - Oak Ridge

Across all existing Tennessee public schools, there are $5.8 billion dollars needed to bring schools up to good or better condition.

School districts with greatest need for renovation funding:

- $2.28 billion - Davidson County
- $3.63 million - Shelby County
- $1.41 million - Wilson County
- $1.40 million - Williamson County
- $1.31 million - Rutherford County
- $1.01 million - Montgomery County
- $89.4 million - Bristol
- $82.1 million - Robertson County
- $64.9 million - Hamilton County
- $60.0 million - Sevier County

Funds needed for compliance by state and federal law:

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- $51 million for Americans with Disabilities Act compliance
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“Public school facilities that are well-planned, designed, built, operated and maintained have an outsized positive impact on education, health, the natural environment and our communities”

Of children living under the FPL, 81 percent are in excellent or very good health compared to 94 percent of children living at 200% FPL or greater.7

1 in 30 children were unable to obtain needed health care in the last year.1

More than 1 in 4 Tennessee children have insurance that is not adequate for the child’s health needs.4

1 in 4 Tennessee children age 12-17 did not have a preventive medical visit in the last year.2

Nationally, the rate was higher at 2 in 7.3

89 percent of Tennessee children are in excellent or very good health.6

61 percent of Tennessee children 9-35 months did not receive a developmental screening in the last year.5

Of children living under the FPL, 81 percent are in excellent or very good health compared to 94 percent of children living at 200% FPL or greater.7
Many of Tennessee’s public school students work to manage chronic health conditions and disabilities while at school. School nurses, social workers, counselors and other support staff are crucial in maintaining a healthy and safe learning environment for all children.

**Most common chronic health and disability diagnoses among Tennessee students**

- 44,706 are diagnosed with ADHD
- 36,773 are diagnosed with asthma
- 24,429 have an “other” diagnosis
- 20,940 are diagnosed with a mental health disorder
- 16,956 are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder
- 15,272 have a severe life-threatening allergy
- 6,655 are diagnosed with a seizure disorder
- 3,880 are diagnosed with diabetes
- 277 are diagnosed with adrenal insufficiency

**In the 2022-23 school year:**

- The most common life-threatening allergies were food allergies. Epinephrine was administered 1,255 times in public schools.
- School nurses had 5.1 million encounters with students.
- In the 2022-23 school year, school nurses conducted more than 1.3 million health screenings in schools including:
  - 340,519 vision screenings
  - 325,178 hearing screenings
  - 301,573 blood pressure screenings
  - 295,646 BMI screenings
  - 63,445 oral health screenings
  - 11,754 scoliosis screenings
- Emergency treatment was administered to students 31,174 times.

**Chronic Health & Disability Diagnosis**

- 1 in 5 Tennessee children have special health care needs.
- 1 in 25 Tennessee children have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.
- 1 in 7 Tennessee children have been diagnosed with ADD/ADHD.

**4.9 percent of Tennessee children under 18 are reported to have a disability.**

- 4.6 percent have a cognitive difficulty
- 1.1 percent have a self-care difficulty
- 1.0 percent have a vision difficulty
- 0.6 percent have an ambulatory difficulty
- 0.5 percent have a hearing difficulty

**Disability Rights Laws in Public Primary and Secondary Education from the ADA National Network**

There are three main laws that address the rights of students with disabilities in public schools:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

These laws each address different parts of the educational picture for students with disabilities.

The ADA is a broad law that provides civil rights protections to all individuals with disabilities in the US in many different aspects of life. Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination by state and local governments, which includes public schools.

Section 504 is more limited; it provides civil rights protections to all individuals with disabilities in programs that receive federal funding, which includes most public schools. Both the ADA and Section 504 are nondiscrimination laws that do not provide any funding to the covered entity.

Finally, IDEA is a statute that mandates free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for students with disabilities eligible under IDEA. It is not an antidiscrimination law. Note that Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and least restrictive environment (LRE) are legal terms defined in IDEA. IDEA provides federal funding to schools to support IDEA eligible students.
Obesity

Health

Obesity in childhood can be a risk factor for diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol. Addressing and reducing childhood obesity requires a systemic approach that evaluates a child's access to affordable healthy and nutritious foods, safe green space and parks to play, and other contributing health factors. In addition to the listed physical health contributors, mental health can play a large role in childhood obesity.

In the 2022-23 school year, the percent of Tennessee students who are Overweight or Obese was higher than it has been in the previous five years.$^{19-21}$

Over the decade, the frequency of physical activity among high school students has declined.$^{19-20}$

Over the last decade, the percentage of students who were physically active for at least 60 minutes on five of the last seven days decreased 15 percent.$^{21}$

Over the last decade, the frequency of physical activity among high school students has declined.$^{19-20}$

Food & Nutrition

Health

Community Eligibility Provision

*The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a non-pricing meal service option for schools and school districts in low-income areas. CEP allows the nation's highest poverty schools and districts to serve breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students without collecting household applications. Instead, schools that adopt CEP are reimbursed using a formula based on the percentage of students categorically eligible for free meals based on their participation in other specific means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).*

- U.S. Department of Agriculture$^{23}$

A recent rules change has expanded eligibility for schools to ensure more children have access to meals at school every day. Previously, schools had to have an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) of 40 percent; now schools are eligible for the CEP with an ISP of 25 percent.$^{24}$

In the 2022-23 school year, 59 percent Tennessee schools were eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision. Of those, 91 percent participated.$^{25}$

With the updated rules, now nearly 70 percent of schools are eligible.$^{26}$

Benefits of the Community Eligibility Provision$^{23}$

- eliminates unpaid meal charges
- minimizes stigma
- reduces paperwork for school nutrition staff and families, and
- streamlines meal service operations.

Food Insecurity

In 2021, child food insecurity varied in Tennessee counties from 0.0 percent to 26.3 percent.$^{27}$

1st Quintile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Food Insecurity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Williamson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moore</td>
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<td>Wilson</td>
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<td>Cheatham</td>
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<td>Sumner</td>
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<td>Knox</td>
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2nd Quintile

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<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
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<td>Overton</td>
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3rd Quintile

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<td>Ida</td>
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<tr>
<td>North °</td>
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<td>Wayne</td>
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<tr>
<td>Van Buren</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marion</td>
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<td>Meigs</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Planters</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Union</td>
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4th Quintile

<table>
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<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Food Insecurity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Davidson</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sullivan</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carroll</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crockett</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibson</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greene</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grundy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeKalb</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhea</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
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</table>

5th Quintile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Food Insecurity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hawkins</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardeman</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bledsoe</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seguachie</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obion</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campbell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pickett</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hancock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shelby</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardeman</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauderdale</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haywood</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Health Insurance

Health

In 2022, more than half of Tennessee’s children were covered by TennCare, at 55 percent. 2022 represents the highest percentage in recorded data since before 1999. More than 50 percent of children have been covered since 2020. This increase may be due to children not losing coverage during the pandemic. The percent of children covered by TennCare has increased 31 percent over the last decade, going from 42 percent in 2012 to 55 percent in 2022.28

Since it began being recorded in 2014, TennCare has covered more than half of Tennessee’s live births each year.29

Nearly 1 in 10 adults living with children in Tennessee are uninsured.30

While financial eligibility for TennCare and CoverKids for children and certain adults is based upon the federal poverty line and adjusts accordingly, the eligibility guidelines for parents and caretakers are not. In November 2023, the monthly income limit for a family of three is $1,611 or $19,332 annually.31 This eligibility limit has not changed since it decreased in early 2019 from $1,749.32 When initially established, the income limit reflected 90 percent FPL; it is now 77 percent.

Over the same period of time, the eligibility determination for children’s coverage has increased by $8,825 annually for a family of 3.33

Children are more likely to maintain insurance, attend well-child visits, receive on-time vaccinations and remain engaged with the health care system when their parents are insured.

In 2022, 5.3 percent of Tennessee children were uninsured.34 Among those uninsured, two thirds were financially eligible for TennCare or CoverKids insurance.

In 2022, 55 percent of Tennessee children were covered by TennCare, at 55 percent. 2022 represents the highest percentage in recorded data since before 1999. More than 50 percent of children have been covered since 2020. This increase may be due to children not losing coverage during the pandemic. The percent of children covered by TennCare has increased 31 percent over the last decade, going from 42 percent in 2012 to 55 percent in 2022.28

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Health Insurance

A significant component to ensuring children have access to health care is to protect those who are already insured or are eligible for insurance from losing coverage due to procedural mistakes on an application.

Prior to the Pandemic (FFY2019),
70 percent of CHIP application denials were procedural denials (i.e., incomplete application, missing documentation, missing enrollment fee, etc.)

In FFY2020, 91 percent of denials for CHIP coverage were due to procedural reasons for a total of 31,196 applications. That equates to one-third of Tennessee uninsured children in calendar year 2020.

In FFY2020:
- 29,154 Tennessee children were disenrolled from Medicaid after redetermination due to procedural reasons.
- 6,838 Tennessee children were disenrolled from CHIP after redetermination due to procedural reasons.

Medicaid and CHIP Unwinding - National Data from July 2023
- Nearly one in four beneficiaries due for renewal had their coverage terminated
  - 29 percent of those terminated were determined as ineligible based upon return of a renewal form
  - 71 percent were terminated for a procedural/administrative reason

Medicaid and CHIP Unwinding - Tennessee Data from July 2023
- 33 percent, or 27,037 beneficiaries due for renewal had their coverage terminated.
  - Approximately 7 out of 10 terminated applications were for a procedural reason.

Infant & Maternal Care

Health

In 2022, 1 in 12 Tennessee births resulted in NICU admission.
9.3 percent of Tennessee babies were born at a low birthweight.

Tennessee had a preterm birth rate of 11.29 in 2021, the highest rate since 2016. Nationally, the preterm rate also saw an increase to 10.8 percent.

In 2022, 47.4 percent of women in Tennessee between the ages of 24-34 reported never having a cervical cancer screening. Among those making less than $15,000 half never had a cervical cancer screening, compared to 1 in 7 among those making $200,000 or more.

In 2021, Tennessee had the 7th highest teen birth rate in the country, 21.5 per 1,000 females age (15-19). Nationally it was 13.9 per 1,000.

After a decline during the pandemic, Tennessee has seen an increase in the number of births to children under 15 in 2021 and 2022.

78 percent of Tennessee babies were most often laid on their back to sleep.

Maternal Depression

Among Tennessee women who were pregnant or gave birth:
- 17% had depression in the three months before pregnancy
- 16% had depression during pregnancy
- 15% had postpartum depressive symptoms

About Maternity Practices in Infant Nutrition and Care (mPINC): CDC’s national survey mPINC assesses maternity care practices and provides feedback to encourage hospitals to make improvements that better support breastfeeding. About every 2 years, CDC invites all eligible hospitals across the country to complete the mPINC survey. Hospitals are scored from 0-100 on their performance. The questions focus on specific parts of maternity care that affect how babies are fed. In 2022, 45 of Tennessee’s 59 eligible hospitals participated.
Among mothers who gave birth in Tennessee in 2021, half began prenatal care in the 2nd or 3rd month of pregnancy while 1 in 12 began prenatal care in the third trimester or had no prenatal care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Month</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Month</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>32.9%</td>
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<td>4th Month</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5th Month</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
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<td>6th Month</td>
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<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Not Stated</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the last several years, the percent of pregnancies with at least one risk factor has been increasing. In 2021, more than one out of every three births in Tennessee had a risk factor during pregnancy.

Pregnancy risk factors include Pre-Pregnancy Diabetes, Gestational Diabetes, Pre-Pregnancy Hypertension, Gestational Hypertension, Eclampsia, Previous Preterm Birth, Infertility Treatment Used, Fertility Enhancing Drugs, Assistive Reproductive Technology, and Previous Cesarean Delivery.

After trending upward between 2016-2019, instances of births in Tennessee with maternal morbidity have begun to decline.

Maternal Morbidity includes a maternal transfusion, admission to the Intensive Care Unit, Perineal Laceration, Ruptured Uterus and an unplanned hysterectomy.

Tennessee has a higher percentage of infants breastfed at discharge from the hospital than the national average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tennessee</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tennessee has a ratio of 77.8 pediatricians per 100,000 children compared to a national rate of 74.9. Of Tennessee’s 95 counties, 10 have rates higher than the national average and 33 have 0 currently certified pediatricians.

Pediatrician includes those currently certified by the American Board of Pediatrics in General Pediatrics (alone) and those certified in both General Pediatrics and another ABMS specialty.

Tennessee has a ratio of 12.3 OB/GYNs per 100,000 people compared to a national rate of 12.16. Of Tennessee’s 95 counties, 9 have rates higher than the national average and 43 have 0 OB/GYNs.

Physicians include active Obstetrics and Gynecology M.D.s employed by the federal government or non-federal industries. Active M.D.s include those who are not retired, semiretired, working part-time, temporarily not in practice, or not active for other reasons, and indicated they worked more than 20 hours per week.
In 2021, 2.6 percent of Tennessee high school students reported they had never seen a dentist. This is the first increase in this indicator since 2015.

In 2021, Tennessee had 1 dentist for every 1,790 people. This rate varied by county from 1:1,240 to 1:18,850.

In 2022, 60 percent of public water systems, serving nearly 90 percent of Tennessean served by public water systems, had fluoridated water.

In 2020, only one in three Tennessee pregnant women had their teeth cleaned during pregnancy. Though an increase from 2019, it is still six percentage points below the national average.

Tennessee saw the largest increase in immunization rates for the Haemophilus influenzae type B vaccine (HIB). Between 2021 and 2022 rates for HIB vaccine increased 5.6 percentage points. Since the introduction of this vaccine in 1987, annual incidence of HIB has decreased 99 percent in those under 5.

A Healthy People 2030 goal is to have fewer than 1.3 percent of children receive 0 recommended vaccinations. Tennessee is currently falling behind this goal with 1.6 percent of children with 0 recommended vaccines.

Immunizations and Vaccinations

Dental Care

In 2021, 2.6 percent of Tennessee high school students reported they had never seen a dentist. This is the first increase in this indicator since 2015.

In 2021, the percent of high school students who saw a dentist in the last year increased to 73.2 percent.

Among children age 1-17 more than three out of four had a preventive dental visit within the last year.

Preventative dental visits among age 1-17 by insurance type:
- Public health insurance only - 72.2 percent
- Private health insurance only - 80.8 percent
- Public & private health insurance - 85.9 percent
- 0-99 percent FPL - 68.4 percent
- 100-199 percent FPL - 70.6 percent
- 200-399 percent FPL - 74.9 percent
- 400 percent FPL or more - 87.8 percent

Preventative dental visits among age 1-17 by household income:
- 0-99 percent FPL - 78.3%
- 100-199 percent FPL - 80.5%
- 200-399 percent FPL - 78.8%
- 400 percent FPL or more - 80.4%
- 50.0%
- 55.0%
- 60.0%
- 65.0%
- 70.0%
- 75.0%
- 80.0%
- 85.0%
- 90.0%
- 95.0%

Tennessee has met the Healthy People 2020 Goal for the full recommended vaccination series (4:3:FS:3:1:FS) twice in the last six years.

Overall, Tennessee's percent of children under 24 months up to date on vaccinations increased from 74.8 percent in 2021 to 77.1 in 2022.

Tennessee children have not met the Healthy People 2020 objective of five of the 12 immunizations in any of the last six years.

In 2022, Tennessee fell furthest below the Healthy People 2020 flu vaccine goal. Tennessee was at just 48.3 percent, a drop from 54.6 percent in 2021. The Healthy People 2020 goal is 70 percent.

Vaccine refusals declined from 3.0 percent in 2021 to 2.1 percent in 2022. However, refusal rates fluctuate by region from 0.9 in the Jackson-Madison County Region to 6.5 percent in East Tennessee Region.

In 2022, Tennessee met four out of 12 individual childhood vaccines objectives identified in Healthy People 2020.

In 2022, 60 percent of public water systems, serving nearly 90 percent of Tennessean served by public water systems, had fluoridated water.
Infant Mortality

Health

After a slight decline between 2019-2022, the infant mortality rate nationally and in Tennessee increased in 2022.43,44

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>U.S. Rate</th>
<th>TN Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*2022 figures are provisional

Leading Causes of Infant Deaths 2018-2021

- Unintentional infant deaths due to suffocation
- Non-Injury: All other diseases (Residual)
- Suffocation
- Non-Injury: Symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified
- Non-Injury: Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities
- Non-Injury: Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period

Tennessee has consistently had a higher rate of unintentional infant deaths due to suffocation.

Maternal Mortality

Health

Tennessee’s Maternal Mortality Review Commission found in 2021 134 women across the state died during or within a year after their pregnancy ended. This was a significant increase from 2020, largely driven by deaths from COVID-19, the leading cause of pregnancy-associated deaths.

Maternal Mortality Terms:
- Pregnancy-Associated: The death of a woman during pregnancy or within one year of the end of pregnancy from any cause. Pregnancy-associated deaths can further be classified into pregnancy-related deaths or pregnancy-associated, but not related deaths.
- Pregnancy-Related (40% of 2021 deaths): The death of a woman during pregnancy or within one year of the end of pregnancy from a pregnancy complication, a chain of events initiated by pregnancy, or the aggravation of an unrelated condition by the physiologic effects of pregnancy.
- Pregnancy-associated, but not related (47% of 2021 deaths): The death of a woman during pregnancy or within one year of the end of pregnancy from a cause that is not related to pregnancy.

Pregnancy-Related deaths in 2021:
- 53 total
  - Two-thirds of deaths occurred during pregnancy through 42 days postpartum.
  - Four out of five were determined to be preventable, with two in five having a good chance of being prevented.
  - Mental health contributed to nearly a third of deaths.

Covid-19

In 2021, the large increase in Tennessee’s Maternal Mortality Ratio was driven by COVID-19 deaths.

- 22 women died from COVID-19 during pregnancy or within a year after, comprising one out of every 6 pregnancy-associated deaths.
- Nearly 4 out of 5 women who died from COVID-19 were unvaccinated, and obesity contributed to two-thirds of pregnancy-associated deaths.
- 80 percent of COVID-19 deaths among pregnant or postpartum women were deemed pregnancy-related.
- More than five out of six COVID-19 deaths were preventable.

Pregnancy-Associated

57 percent of pregnancy-associated deaths occurred between 43-365 days postpartum.

- Nearly 3 out of 4 could have been prevented with appropriate resources and interventions.
- Between 2017-2021:
  - Women over 40 had a Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Ratio 2.75 times higher than those under 30.
  - Women covered by TennCare had a Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Ratio of 129.3 compared to 40.1 among those with private insurance.
  - Women without insurance had a Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Ratio of 184.8, nearly 4.75 times the rate among privately insured.

Pregnancy-Associated, Not Related Deaths in 2021: 63 deaths

- Between 2017-2021:
  - The leading cause of death was acute overdose followed by motor vehicle crashes and homicide/suicide.
  - Substance use disorder was prevalent in 94 percent of overdose deaths. Mental health conditions were a contributing factor in 59 percent.
  - The average age of women who died from an acute overdose was 29.

Maternal Mortality Ratio 2.75 times higher than those without insurance.
Death by intent

Homicide

FROM 2018 - 2021

There were 222 homicide deaths among children under 18.

73 percent were from firearms representing 162 deaths.

15 percent were from an unspecified injury representing 34 deaths.

6 percent were from another specified, classifiable injury representing 13 deaths.

The cause of death for the remaining 16 deaths are not listed due to data suppression standards.

In 2021, Tennessee had among the highest rates of all states on both under-18 homicides and under-18 homicides using a firearm.

In 2021, Tennessee had 66 homicide victims under 18, representing a rate of 5.5 per 100,000.

17 were due to an Unspecified Injury.

13 were due to a Firearm.

57 were due to a Firearm.

In 2012, Tennessee had 45 homicide victims under 18, representing a rate of 3 per 100,000.

17 were due to a Firearm.

13 were due to an Unspecified Injury.

In 2021, 1 in 4 deaths among those 1-17 were due to a firearm.

1 in 6 were due to Motor Vehicle Traffic; 1 in 17 were due to cancer.

Tennessee Leading Causes of Death in 2021 (1-17)

5.8 per 100,000

Firearm

4.8 per 100,000

Motor Vehicle Traffic

2.3 per 100,000

Non-Injury: All other diseases

1.7 per 100,000

Non-Injury: Malignant Neoplasms (Cancers)

1.5 per 100,000

Non-Injury: Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities

United States Leading Causes of Death in 2021 (1-17)

3.7 per 100,000

Firearm

3.4 per 100,000

Motor Vehicle Traffic

2.1 per 100,000

Non-Injury: All other diseases

2.0 per 100,000

Non-Injury: Malignant Neoplasms (Cancers)

1.5 per 100,000

Suffocation

In 2021, Tennessee had the 13th highest rate of in unintentional deaths. Tennessee had the 11th highest rate of Unintentional Motor Vehicle Deaths.

The unintentional death rate per 100,000 among children age 1 to 17 increased by 1.0 from 2012 to 2021.

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Death by intent

Suicide

**FROM 2018 - 2021**
There were 164 suicide deaths among children age 9 - 17.

54 percent were from **Firearms**
Representing 80 deaths

37 percent were from **Suffocation**
Representing 55 deaths

17 percent were from **Poisoning**
Representing 10 deaths

In 2021, 27.8 percent of high school students who had attempted suicide in the previous 12 months reported that they had asked someone for help such as a doctor, counselor or hotline prior to their attempt.49

**TENNESSEE RATES**
Suicide rates among age 9 to 17 by year:
- 2018: 5.1 per 100,000
- 2019: 4.1 per 100,000
- 2020: 4.7 per 100,000
- 2021: 4.9 per 100,000
- 2018-2020 suicide rate: 4.7 per 100,000

Suicide rate between 2018-2021 among age 9 to 17 by mechanism:
- Firearm: 2.6 per 100,000
- Suffocation: 1.8 per 100,000

Suicide rate between 2018-2021 among young adults(18-24) by mechanism:
- Firearm: 1.9 per 100,000
- Suffocation: 0.3 per 100,000

In 2021, Tennessee ranked among the top twenty states in rate of suicides among ages 9-17 and in the top 10 in rate of firearm suicides among the same ages.47 Since 2018 the firearm suicide rate among young adults has increased from 10.3 per 100,000 to 14.1 per 100,000.47

**NATIONAL RATES**
Suicide rates among age 9 to 17 by year:
- 2018: 4.9 per 100,000
- 2019: 4.4 per 100,000
- 2020: 4.5 per 100,000
- 2021: 4.6 per 100,000
- 2018-2020 suicide rate: 4.7 per 100,000

Suicide rate between 2018-2021 among age 9 to 17 by mechanism:
- Firearm: 2.1 per 100,000
- Suffocation: 1.9 per 100,000
- Poisoning: 0.3 per 100,000

Suicide rate between 2018-2021 among young adults(18-24) by mechanism:
- Firearm: 8.7 per 100,000
- Suffocation: 5.2 per 100,000
- Poisoning: 1.4 per 100,000
- Fall: 0.6 per 100,000
Mental Health of Tennessee High Schoolers

Nearly 3 in 10 students reported within the last month their mental health was most of the time or always not good. Poor mental health was much more prevalent among high school girls.

Within the last year, 53 percent of high school girls and 30 percent of high school boys felt sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks, representing a 63 percent increase since 2011. One in three students reported that their mental health was most of the time or always not good during the pandemic.

37 percent of high school students have lived with someone who was depressed, mentally ill or suicidal.

Bullying

Between 2019-2021 there was a decrease in the percent of students bullied on school property but an increase in those who were electronically bullied.

Restrictive Eating

43 percent of students reported eating less food, fewer calories or foods low in fat to lose weight or keep from gaining weight. Among girls, this jumped to 54 percent. More than one in three high school girls and one in seven high school boys had taken one of the following actions within the last 30 days to try to lose weight or keep from gaining weight:

- going without eating for 24 hours or more
- taking diet pills, powders or liquids
- vomiting or taking laxatives
- smoking cigarettes; or
- skipping meals

Non-Suicidal Self-Harm

One in four high school students reported that within the last 12 months they had done something to purposely hurt themselves, such as cutting or burning themselves, without wanting to die. This was more commonly reported among high school girls at 34.5 percent, compared to boys at 15.8 percent. It was also more frequently reported among white students at 27.2 percent, compared to Black students at 11.8 percent.

Mental Health of Tennessee High Schoolers

Mental Health

Nearly one in five students reported being bullied on school property and more than one in six had been bullied electronically within the last year.
State of the Child 2023

Suicide Mental Health

Since 2017, all measures of suicidal ideation have increased among Tennessee high school students.¹

Comparing Tennessee to the United States:
Between 2019 and 2021, the suicide rate in Tennessee among youth age 13-18 increased from 7 per 100,000 to 9.4 per 100,000.² The U.S. only saw a small rate increase from 7.9 to 8.1.³

In 2021, Tennessee had a similar rate of high schoolers considering attempting suicide as the rest of the nation.¹,⁴

However, Tennessee students were more likely to report having attempted suicide and, of those attempts, were more likely to have needed medical attention.⁴

Across all measures, 11th graders had the highest rate of suicidal behaviors.³ They were also the most likely to have asked for help before their attempt.¹

More than one in three had asked a doctor, counselor or hotline for help.¹

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) National Substance Use and Mental Health Services Survey (N-SUMHSS) is a survey of substance use and mental health treatment facilities in the United States. In the 2022 N-SUMHSS, Tennessee included 220 mental health treatment facilities and reported 73,599 clients in mental health treatment on March 31, 2022. The survey response rate in Tennessee was 78.3 percent.

Of surveyed substance use and mental health treatment facilities:
- 52 percent served young children (0-5).
- 72 percent served children (6 - 12).
- 78 percent served adolescents (13-17); and
- 86 percent served young adults (18-25).
- 35 percent had dedicated or exclusively designed programs for children/adolescents with a serious emotional disturbance.
- 54 percent did not have a crisis intervention team.
- 5.9 percent of facilities were a residential treatment center for children.

In Tennessee, the utilization rate of beds in residential facilities was 68 and in hospital inpatient facilities it was 72.4.⁵ Nationally the bed utilization rates are much higher at 82.4 in residential and 151.9 in hospital inpatient facilities.⁵

At the end of September 2023, among all households with children in Tennessee, 1 in 10 reported a child in the home needs mental health treatment.⁶ This was most commonly reported among the highest and lowest income earners, 22 percent of those making less than $25,000 and 29 percent of those making $200,000 or more.⁶

Of households reporting a child needing mental health treatment, 63 percent reported all children needing treatment had received it.⁷

Of all who needed treatment, more than half found it somewhat or very difficult to get treatment. Those making $25,000-36,000 reported the most difficulty obtaining treatment, with 72 percent reporting it was somewhat difficult.⁷

53 percent were satisfied with all of the treatment the child received.⁷

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reported behaviors of the child needing mental health treatment⁴</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very sad or depressed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engaging in problematic behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feel anxious or clied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show unusual anger or outbursts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show changes in their ability to stay focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show changes in their eating behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behave in ways that they’ve previously outgrown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suicide Mental Health

Of households reporting a child needing mental health treatment, 63 percent reported all children needing treatment had received it.⁷

Of all who needed treatment, more than half found it somewhat or very difficult to get treatment. Those making $25,000-36,000 reported the most difficulty obtaining treatment, with 72 percent reporting it was somewhat difficult.⁷

53 percent were satisfied with all of the treatment the child received.⁷
Nearly one in four students reported they had been offered, sold or given an illegal drug on school property.

Tobacco
18 percent of high school students currently vape. 1 in 18 students vape daily. 5 percent of high school students currently smoke cigarettes, down from 28 percent in 2003. Even fewer, 1 in 250 smoke cigarettes daily.

Alcohol
Both nationally and in Tennessee, alcohol use among high school students has been trending down over the decade.

In 2011, 33 percent of Tennessee high schoolers currently drank alcohol. In 2021, it was 22 percent. Nationally, these figures were 39 and 23 percent respectively.

However, the percent of Tennessee students reporting binge drinking within the last 30 days increased from 8.8 percent in 2019 to 13.4 in 2021. Nationally, that figure dropped from 13.7 to 10.5 percent.

Nearly one in seven students reported they had ever taken prescription pain medicine without a prescription or differently than prescribed.

Nearly one in four students reported they had been offered, sold or given an illegal drug on school property.

Other Substances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of students reporting lifetime use by substance</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meth</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1.8 percent of students reported having injected an illegal drug.

Marijuana
More than one in four students reported ever using marijuana, representing a decline from one in three reporting lifetime use in 2017 and 2019. This decline was also seen nationally.

One in seven report currently using marijuana.

1 in 14 report ever using synthetic marijuana.

While historically, Tennessee students were more likely than their national counterparts to try marijuana before the age of 13, a decline from 7.4 in 2019 to 4.9 percent in 2021 brought the state in line with the national rate.

1 in 32  reported they most of the time or always felt that they were treated badly or unfairly in school because of their race or ethnicity
• Nearly 1 in 10 Black students reported feeling this way.
• 1 in 16 Hispanic/Latino students reported feeling this way.
• 1 in 50 white students reported feeling this way.

Among Metro Nashville Students:
56 percent reported a parent or adult in their home has sworn at, insulted or put them down. One in eight said it happens always or most of the time.

Nearly 1 in 4 12th-grade girls reported an adult or someone at least 5 years older than them had made them do sexual things they did not want to do, compared to 3 percent among senior boys.

Nearly 1 in 3 reported a parent or other adult in their home had ever hit, beat, kicked, or physically hurt them. For more than one in eight, this physical abuse happened within the last 12 months.
Indicators By Domain

**Education**
- Early Childhood Education
  - Number of ECE centers within a 5-mile radius
  - Number of NAEYC accredited centers within a 5-mile radius
  - Percentage 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in nursery school, preschool or kindergarten
- Elementary Education
  - Percentage third graders scoring proficient on standardized reading tests, converted to NAEP scale score points
  - Percentage third graders scoring proficient on standardized math tests, converted to NAEP scale score points
- Secondary and Postsecondary Education
  - Percentage ninth graders graduating from high school on time
  - Ratio of students enrolled in at least one AP course to the number of 11th and 12th graders
  - Percentage 18-24 year-olds enrolled in college within a 25-mile radius
- Educational and Social Resources
  - Percentage students in elementary schools eligible for free or reduced-price lunches, reversed
  - Percentage teachers in their first and second year, reversed
  - Percentage adults ages 25 and over with a college degree or higher

**Health & Environment**
- Healthy Environments
  - Percentage households without a car located further than a half-mile from the nearest supermarket, reversed
  - Percentage impenetrable surface areas such as rooftops, roads or parking lots, reversed
  - EPA Walkability Index
  - Percentage housing units that are vacant, reversed
- Toxic Exposures
  - Average number of Superfund sites within a 2-mile radius, reversed
  - Index of toxic chemicals released by industrial facilities, reversed
  - Mean estimated microparticle concentration (PM2.5; micrograms per cubic meter), reversed
  - Mean estimated 8-hour average ozone concentration (parts per billion), reversed
  - Number of summer days with maximum temperature above 90F, reversed
- Health Resources
  - Percentage individuals ages 0-64 with health insurance coverage

**Social & Economic**
- Economic Opportunities
  - Percentage adults ages 25-54 who are employed
  - Percentage workers commuting more than one hour one way, reversed
- Economic & Social Resources
  - Percentage individuals living in households with incomes below 100% of the federal poverty threshold, reversed
  - Percentage households receiving cash public assistance or Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, reversed
  - Percentage owner-occupied housing units
  - Percentage individuals ages 16 and over employed in management, business, financial, computer, engineering, science, education, legal, community service, health care practitioner, health technology, arts and media occupations
### Opportunity Gap

Researchers have found that the difference in children’s experiences and access to resources, reflected in the Child Opportunity Index score, can vary widely even within metro areas. The opportunity gap, calculated for the 100 largest metro areas across the United States allows us to see the wide disparities children experience in Tennessee’s four largest metropolitan areas. The Child Opportunity Gap is the difference in median scores between very low- and very high-opportunity neighborhoods in a given metro.5

A higher opportunity score indicates more opportunity in a neighborhood, while a higher opportunity gap indicates more disparity within that metro area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity Gap</th>
<th>Rank Among 100 Largest Metro Areas</th>
<th>Typical Low-Opportunity Neighborhood Score</th>
<th>Typical High-Opportunity Neighborhood Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>Memphis</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>16th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>46th</td>
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Opportunity Gap By Race/Ethnicity

Percentages represent the share of children of that race or ethnicity living in very-low, low, moderate, high or very-high opportunity neighborhoods.6

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Opportunity Score of neighborhood where a typical child lives

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Knoxville, TN

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<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
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</table>

Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Child Maltreatment

Child Welfare

In 2021, Tennessee had 3,962 first-time victims of abuse, representing the fourth lowest rate in the country. Across all victimization, both first-time and recurring, Tennessee ranks 15th, indicating the state experiences higher instances of recurring abuse than others.

In 2021, there were approximately 86 child abuse hotline referrals made per 1,000 Tennessee children. Of those, 48 percent were screened out.

55.5 out of every 1,000 Tennessee children received an investigation or alternative response.

After investigation, 7,178 children had an abuse substantiation and 25,633 were unsubstantiated.

17 percent of victims had received family preservation services within the last 5 years.

3.2 percent of victims had been reunited with their families within the last five years.

The rate of child victimization has decreased from 6.2 per 1,000 in 2017 to 5.0 in 2021. This recent decline could be due to the pandemic.

One in four victims were under one year old.

Of infants with prenatal substance exposure, 98.7 percent had a plan of safe care, much higher than the national average of 70.4 percent.

The most common perpetrator was one of the child’s parents, 62 percent.

There were 58 instances where the perpetrator was a foster parent or group home/residential facility staff. Though a very small percent (0.76), it is concerning considering the previous abuse already endured by these children and the fact that these are meant to be safer placements than the child’s home.
In 2021, the average time between the report of suspected maltreatment and the first face-to-face contact with the alleged victim or with another person who can provide information on the allegation was 4.5 days.\(^2\)

DCS response time policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P-1</td>
<td>Cases assigned this priority are initiated by a face-to-face contact with the ACS no later than twenty-four (24) hours, but immediately if the CPS supervisor deems it necessary. Priority 1 reports allege that children may be in imminent danger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-2</td>
<td>Cases assigned this priority are initiated by face-to-face contact with the ACS within two (2) business days. Priority-2 reports allege injuries or risk of injuries that are not imminent, life threatening or do not require immediate medical care where a two (2) business day delay will not compromise the investigative effort or reduce the chances for identifying the level of risk to the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-3</td>
<td>Cases assigned this priority are initiated by face-to-face contact with the ACS within three (3) business days. Priority-3 reports allege situations/occurrences considered to pose low risk of harm to the child where three (3) business days will not compromise the investigative effort or reduce the chances for identifying the level of risk to the child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tennessee’s investigation response times have fallen below the federal target.\(^2\)

In 2021, 9,227 children in foster care. Among those children:

- 57% were in a non-relative foster home
- 12% were in a relative foster home
- 9% were in a group home
- 7% were in an institution
- 7% were on a trial home visit
- 4% were in supervised independent living
- 3% were in a pre-adoptive home
- 1% had run away

In November 2023, DCS noted that between FY2022 and FY2023 the average number of days a child spent in custody increased by two months.\(^4\)

In FY2021, 97% of children in care had a monthly caseworker visit.\(^2\)

Among children who were under 12 and entered foster care within the 2021 fiscal year, 2.4% had their most recent placement in an institution. This was the highest prevalence of this in five years.\(^2\)

During FY2021, 14,558 children in Tennessee were served by the foster system.\(^5\)

In 2021, the average time between the report of suspected maltreatment and the first face-to-face contact with the alleged victim or with another person who can provide information on the allegation was 4.5 days.\(^2\)

Between 2020-2022 there were 1,528 foster home SIU investigations:\(^4\)

- Among those 1,397 were unsubstantiated
- 47 were substantiated
- 67 were unsubstantiated with concerns noted.

Parental substance use and neglect were the two most frequent circumstances associated with a child’s removal from home in FY2021.\(^5\)

*Categories are not mutually exclusive. Indicators at 1% or less were not included in the graph but include: Drug Abuse (Child), Alcohol Abuse (Parent), Refusal, Parent Death, Child Disability, Alcohol Abuse (Child).
Foster Care
Child Welfare

Tennessee has seen significant improvement in services to prevent removal or re-entry into foster care.³

Exits from care
Child Welfare

More than half of exits from care in 2021 were to reunification²

- 57% Reunification
- 23% Adoption
- 7.5% Guardianship
- 7.3% Other
- 4.6% Missing data

Exits from care by age and disability status²

- Adoption
- Guardianship
- Reunification
- Other
- Missing data

Between 2020-2022, in 56 percent of cases where safety concerns were present, DCS developed an appropriate safety plan with the family and continually monitored the safety plan as needed, including monitoring family engagement in safety related services.⁵

A review of TFACTs administrative data found that during the last three years the three most common reasons for custody have been parental substance abuse, neglect for younger age groups and unavailable parent and neglect for older age groups.⁵

Since 2018, the number of first-time foster youth experiencing three or more placements has steadily increased. (Note: For the year 2023 only the first 6 months of activity < through 06-30-2023 > is reflected. For more recent entry groups, less time will have elapsed to observe movement.)

Of first-time foster children entering the system in 2022, more than one in three had been in three or more placements by June 30, 2023.⁷

Among children entering in 2023, more than one in four had been in three placements by June 30th.⁷

In 2021, approximately 20 of 335 children exiting foster care to emancipation entered care when they were 12 or under.⁵

Tennessee has seen improvement in ensuring that all siblings are interviewed or observed during an investigation or assessment.³

Tennessee has seen significant improvement in services to prevent removal or re-entry into foster care.³
Many former foster youth can face significant challenges in the transition to adulthood, placing them at greater risk of victimization or negative social outcomes. Extension of foster care services allows these youth the opportunity to complete or continue their education with access to health care, housing assistance and other supports to help them succeed in life, while at the same time playing an important role in achieving the goals Tennessee has set for improving graduation rates, increasing educational attainment, building stronger families and creating safer communities.

In FY2023, 369 youth accepted Extension of Foster Care Services, representing the second largest number of youth ever served. 8

There was a decline in the average length participants stayed in EFCS. The average length of stay was 266 days, 82 days shorter than the previous year. 8

Of those aging out, 86 percent were eligible for Extension of Foster Care Services. (EFCS) Among those eligible half accepted EFCS. 8

Youth Villages’ YVLifeSet program is designed to assist young adults between the ages of 17 and 22 who are transitioning from child welfare and juvenile justice services to adulthood to learn the skills needed to live successfully.

A total of 1,220 youth participated in the program. At 12-month follow-up: 8
- 92 percent were in school, had graduated or were working;
- 95 percent were living with family or independently; and
- 95 percent experienced no trouble with the law.

In FY2023, 861 youth aged out of foster care. While the number of youth aging out has historically been declining each year, this represents and increase from 801 in FY2022. 8

In FY2023, 369 youth accepted Extension of Foster Care Services, representing the second largest number of youth ever served. 8

Transition Age Youth

Among children waiting to be adopted the median age is 10.2

Placement of children waiting for adoption: 2

60% Foster Family Home (Non-Relative)
15% Pre-Adoptive Home
9% Group Home
8% Foster Family (relative)
7% Institution
1% Runaway
1% Trial Home Visit
Abuse Deaths

Of the 47 substantiated abuse deaths in 2020, 70 percent of the victims had contact with Department of Children’s Services within the three years prior to their death. Between 2014-2020, 62 percent of victims had prior contact with DCS.

All deaths investigated by DCS (Substantiated, Unsubstantiated, Unable to Complete & Pending) involving a child in DCS custody.

On average, there are 10.3 deaths in DCS custody investigated each year. Of those, an average of just under two are substantiated.

Every year the majority of substantiated abuse death victims are one or younger.

Between 2018-2021, 57 percent of child and infant deaths were one or under.
Domestic Violence

Each year, the majority of Tennessee child victims of domestic violence are first time victims.11

Of the 6,539 repeat victims of domestic violence since 2012, more than one in six had an order of protection that was violated.11

The most common domestic violence offenses against children in 2022 were:11

- 55.0 percent - Simple Assault
- 16.9 percent - Aggravated Assault
- 8.6 percent - Kidnapping/Abduction
- 8.1 percent - Forcible Fondling

2.6 percent of Tennessee women experienced intimate partner violence while pregnant in 2020, representing a significant increase from 0.6 percent in 2019.12

A domestic violence allegation was added to DCS’ assessment tool for families in October 2021. From then until April 2022 there were 11,381 allegations.4

Human Trafficking

According to The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, there were 111 victims of Child Sex Trafficking in Tennessee in 2021.1

The number of child victims of Commercial Sex Acts in Tennessee varies widely year-to-year. However, it has been trending upward over the last 10 years.11

More than three out of four Commercial Sex Acts with a child occurred in a hotel/motel or a home/residence.11

Between 2013-202211

There have been 10 reported child victims of involuntary servitude in Tennessee and 21 adult victims.

There have been 386 child victims of Commercial Sex Acts over the last 10 years

In 2.3 percent of cases the victim was under 10.

Black children were over represented as victims, comprising 36 percent of victims.

94 percent of victims were girls.

86 percent of known offenders were men.

In 2022, more than one in three victims of Commercial Sex Acts in Tennessee were 16 years old.

Commercial Sex Acts - Inducing a person by force, fraud or coercion to participate in commercial sex acts, or in which the person induced to perform such acts has not yet attained 18 years of age.

Involuntary Servitude - The obtaining of a person(s) through recruitment, harboring, transportation, or provision, and subjecting such person(s) by force, fraud or coercion into involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (not to include commercial sex acts)

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There continues to be a smaller share of youth in DCS juvenile justice custody that are in community based placements. As of December 5th, 2023 there were 615 youth in DCS Juvenile Justice custody. Of those youth, 61 were in a detention center awaiting placement while 554 had been placed. Among youth placed:

- 135 were in a hardware secure/youth development center facility
- 190 were in a staff secure facility
- 161 were in a community placement
- 68 were in another placement such as a foster home, trial home visit or they had run away.

In 2022, youth in juvenile justice custody make up about 7 percent of the total population in DCS custody, down from 11 percent in 2018 when the Juvenile Justice Reform Act was passed.

As of December 5th, 2023 there were 615 youth in DCS Juvenile Justice custody. Of those youth, 61 were in a detention center awaiting placement while 554 had been placed. Among youth placed:

- 135 were in a hardware secure/youth development center facility
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UNDERSTANDING TRENDS IN YOUTH CRIME

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation publishes annual crime data through their Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS) that provides insight into trends in youth crime.3

With the exception of population numbers used to calculate rate, all of the data contained in this section is from TIBRS and can be accessed at crimeinsight.tbi.tn.gov 3

Throughout this section the measure used is “Number of Crimes”, the broadest available measure, meaning an arrest is not necessary and there is always the chance that the alleged perpetrator is mistakenly attributed as being under 18.

Crimes Against Persons - Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter, Negligent Manslaughter, Justifiable Homicide, Kidnapping / Abduction, Rape, Sodomy, Sexual Assault with an Object, Fondling, Incest, Statutory Rape, Aggravated Assault, Simple Assault, Intimidation, Human Trafficking - Commercial Sex Acts, Human Trafficking - Involuntary Servitude


Crimes Against Society - Animal Cruelty, Drug/Narcotic Violations, Drug/Narcotic Equipment Violations, Gambling, Pornography, Prostitution, Promoting/Assisting or Purchasing Prostitution, and Weapons Law Violations.

Overall, the crime rate, including youth crime, has steadily trended down over the decade. In youth crime, there was a larger than usual drop in 2020 and subsequent increase back near previous levels in 2021 and 2022.

Crime Rate Over the Decade

Crimes Against Persons Rate (Per 1,000)

Crimes Against Property Rate (Per 1,000)

Crimes Against Society Rate (Per 1,000)
Youth Justice

In 2012, Tennessee had 36,819 crimes committed by youth under 18, representing a crime rate of 24.6 per 1,000.

In 2022, Tennessee had 30,638 crimes committed by youth under 18, representing a crime rate of 20.1 per 1,000.

### Under 18 Crime Rates by County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2012 Crimes</th>
<th>2012 Population</th>
<th>2012 Rate</th>
<th>2022 Crimes</th>
<th>2022 Population</th>
<th>2022 Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelby</td>
<td>10,254</td>
<td>507,567</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>8,347</td>
<td>489,684</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davidson</td>
<td>8,338</td>
<td>420,884</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>6,442</td>
<td>448,820</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>6,959</td>
<td>400,651</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>5,384</td>
<td>360,372</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between 2012-2022, Shelby, Davidson and Hamilton Counties all experienced a decline in the under-18 crime rate.
Youth and Firearm Crimes

Youth Justice

Percent change over the decade in the type of weapon used against a youth victim with any age offender:

- **Firearm**: ↑133.2%
- **Knife/Cutting Instrument**: ↓-23.4%
- **Blunt Object**: ↓-33.5%
- **Motor Vehicle**: ↑17.3%
- **Personal Weapons**: ↓-24.0%
- **Asphyxiation**: ↑60.5%
- **Fire/Explosives**: ↓-23.8%
- **Other**: ↓-17.0%
- **Unknown**: ↑126.4%
- **None**: ↑3456%
- **Poison/Drugs**: ↓-64.8%

In 2022 crimes where a youth used a firearm:

- 57.4 percent involved a Handgun
- 33.2 percent involved Firearm (Type Not Stated)
- 5.3 percent involved an Other Firearm
- 5.1 percent involved a Rifle
- 1.1 percent involved an Automatic Handgun
- 0.9 percent involved a Shotgun
- 0.2 percent involved a Firearm-Automatic (Type Not Stated)

The majority of murders committed by youth involve a firearm:
3.8% of crimes committed by youth involved a firearm, representing 1,414 crimes.

3.8% involved a knife or blunt object representing 1,404 crimes.

In 2012, 8.8% of crimes committed by youth involved a firearm, representing 2,700 crimes.

3.5% involved a knife or blunt object representing 1,064 crimes.

Though still only 12.3 percent of all crimes committed by youth under 18, this represents a 130 percent increase in firearm use over the decade and a 9 percent decrease in the use of knives or blunt objects.

Victims of crimes involving a firearm have increased by 56 percent between 2012-2022 and victims of firearm crimes with a youth offender have increased 27 percent. Crimes involving a firearm against a youth victim have increased by 133 percent.

Youth are much more likely to be the victim of a firearm crime than to perpetrate one.

In 2022, there were 1,561 crimes involving a firearm where the offender was under 18. During that same time period, there were 4,490 under-age -18 victims of crimes involving a firearm.

Youth Justice

No Gang

Gang

In the majority of Thefts from Motor Vehicles the age of the offender is unknown.

In 2022, gang involvement in thefts of motor vehicles was 6.0% compared to 1.6% in 2012.

In 2022, weapons law violations for under 18 offenders and the percent of those attributable to firearms have steadily increased over the decade.

The number of firearms stolen from cars has significantly increased over the decade (Any age offender).

Since 2012 there has been a 12,441 percent increase in the number of firearms stolen from motor vehicles, representing a rate change from 0.7 per 100,000 to 76.5 per 100,000.

In 2022, gangs were involved in 0.43% of all youth crimes.

Gangs comprised of adults were involved in 0.25% of all youth crime.
Youth in Detention Survey

Youth Justice

In spring of 2023, in order to fulfill federal GJDFP requirements, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth distributed its annual survey to youth in Juvenile Detention Centers across the state. Youth are asked about their life experiences and what they want legislators and those who work with teens to know. Youth were also asked about what they need more help with.

43 percent of youth stated that they or someone they have lived with needed or maybe needed help with mental health or drugs/alcohol. However, when asked about specific challenges, 45 percent of those who had previously said no indicated yes on at least one challenge indicating the real percent might be closer to 68 percent.

79% of youth indicated that someone who lived with them had (or maybe had) been arrested, in jail or detention.

What would you change about school, court, detention, or probation to make it better or more helpful?

"Let them understand that detention doesn’t help troubled kids, it makes them worse. Courts need better programs for serious trouble kids like me. We need more help than just being thrown in a cell."

(Quoted as written)

96

More than half of youth reported needing more help with school or their GED/Hi-Set

Have you or anybody who lived with you needed help with the following?

Drugs: 22%
ADD/ADHD: 35%

Vaping/Smoking: 31%
Thoughts/Attempt Suicide: 10%

Alcohol: 21%
Eating Disorder: 4%

Depression: 31%
Anger: 43%

Most common experiences among surveyed youth

Used drugs/alcohol
In trouble at school
Missed 10+ days of school
Failed a class or grade
Family problems
Parent died/left/in jail
Friend/family in gang

Among youth who indicated they had faced at least one of these challenges

the average number of challenging experiences was 6.5

85 percent of youth had experienced a health challenge

69 percent of youth had experienced an education challenge

63 percent of youth had experienced an adversity challenge

43 percent of youth had experienced an economic challenge

"Physical Abuse Homeless Addiction Short of Funds Suicidal” “loss of family members” “Been shot before and deal with depression” “Dad went to prison wen i was about 7” “I was adopted”

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Learn More:

Youth Justice

About TCCY

Resource Mapping

Youth Transitions

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

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T.J. King
Tracey Silverman

Demographics


Econonics


Youth Justice


