

## Speak Up for Kids! 2019 Data Snapshot

All children are born with the potential to do great things, but they need support along the way to fulfill that potential. Investing in high-quality health care and stable, nurturing early environments helps ensure all children get off to a strong, healthy start.

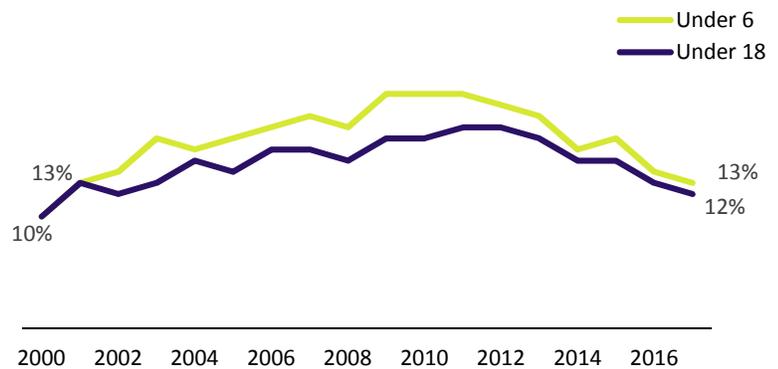


**COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN**  
Every Chance for Every Child

### Child Poverty

Poverty affects all areas of a child's life, from access to healthy foods to the likelihood of attending a high-quality school. **Approximately 12 percent of children under 18 and 13 percent of children under 6 were living in poverty in 2017**, defined as annual income of \$24,600 for a family of four. Colorado's child poverty rate in 2017 reached its lowest level since 2002, yet **close to 152,000 children in the state still experienced poverty.**

Colorado Kids in Poverty by Age Group, 2017



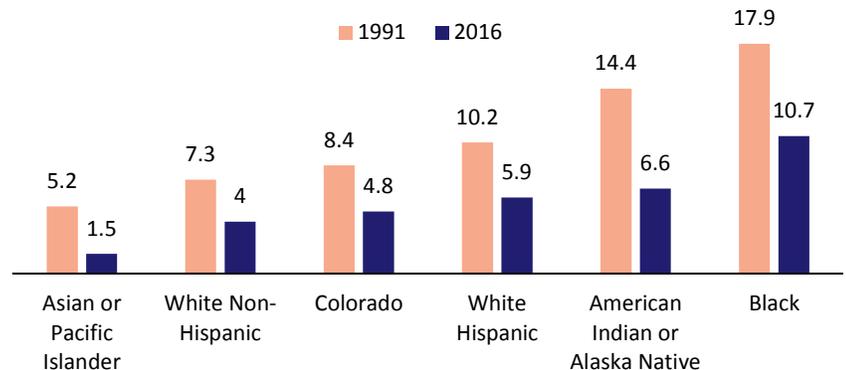
### Health Coverage

Increasing the number children with health insurance has been one of Colorado's greatest policy successes in recent years. **Colorado's uninsured rate for kids remained at a record low of 4 percent in 2017 (down from 14 percent in 2008)**, thanks to important policy decisions made by state lawmakers, coordinated efforts at the community level and the implementation of federal health care reform. However, current policies perpetuate significant barriers to coverage for some children, particularly for Colorado's Latino kids. **In 2016, 7 percent of Hispanic/Latino children in Colorado were uninsured, nearly twice the state average.** Removing barriers to health coverage for all kids is a critical step toward ensuring a healthy future for our state.

### Infant Mortality

**The infant mortality rate for Colorado babies has decreased dramatically during the past 25 years**, falling by 43 percent from a rate of 8.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births to 4.8 births per 1,000 live births in 2016. But significant barriers remain for some racial and ethnic groups: **the infant mortality rate of Colorado's black babies remains particularly high, even when controlling for a mother's income and level of education.** A body of research shows that stress associated with racism, discrimination and social isolation can have tangible impacts—and in some instances, tragic impacts—on the health of moms and babies.

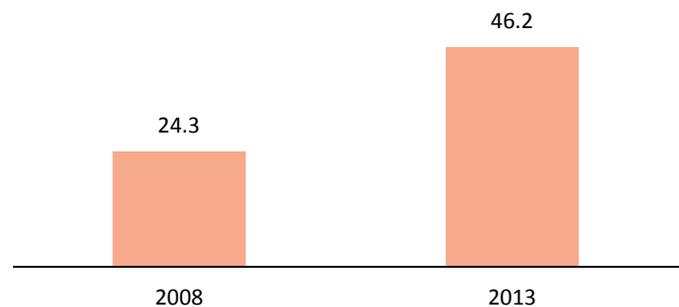
Colorado's Infant Mortality Rates by Race/Ethnicity (deaths per 1,000 live births)



### Maternal Mortality

All Colorado mothers deserve safe and healthy prenatal and postpartum experiences. However, **Colorado's maternal mortality rate nearly doubled between 2008 and 2013**, from 24.3 deaths to 46.2 deaths per 100,000 live births. The maternal mortality rate captures the death of a person during a pregnancy or up to one year after the end of that pregnancy, regardless of cause.

Colorado's Maternal Mortality Rates (deaths per 100,000 live births)



### Oral Health for Pregnant People

A mother's oral health is essential to their overall health, as well as the health of their baby. During pregnancy, changes to a woman's diet and hormone levels increase her risk for a number of oral health conditions including periodontal disease, which has been linked to adverse birth outcomes. **Approximately 25 percent of all pregnant women in Colorado lacked dental insurance in 2016, and about 18 percent of expecting mothers reported not going to the dentist because they could not afford to go.** The 900 pregnant

people who use the Colorado CHIP program for their health insurance each year do not have access to dental insurance, despite its critical importance during pregnancy.

### Child Hunger

Hunger is more prevalent among kids in Colorado than many people think. In 2017, about **14 percent of Colorado high school students reported that they went hungry** sometimes, most of the time or always because of lack of food at home. **One in eight Colorado kids of all ages lived in households that experienced food insecurity** between 2015 and 2017.

### E-Cigarettes and Vaping

E-cigarettes contain harmful substances including nicotine, and Colorado’s young people are using them at a much higher rate than the national average. In 2017, **27 percent of young people in our state were current users of e-cigarettes, more than double the national average of 13 percent.** And more than 58 percent of high school students reported in 2017 that it was somewhat or very easy to obtain electronic vapor products.

### Child Care Access, Affordability and Quality

Nearly two-thirds of Colorado kids under 6 have all parents in the workforce and depend on some form of child care each week. **Between 2010 and 2018, the number of licensed child care slots in Colorado increased by more than 8 percent, yet the state lost roughly 24 percent of licensed facilities.** This shift is explained by the fact that while many licensed homes closed, capacity in child care centers grew. However, licensed homes have historically provided child care to the state’s infants, and the closing of home facilities has led to fewer licensed slots for children younger than 12 months.

### Colorado Preschool Program

The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) is Colorado’s state-funded, voluntary preschool program for 3- and 4-year-old children who experience risk factors that are associated with academic failure. The number of available slots in CPP is capped by the legislature, and as a result, not all children who qualify can actually enroll in the program. The Colorado Department of Education estimates that **in the 2017-2018 school year, as many as 8,202 additional 4-year-olds qualified for CPP but had no preschool or Head Start spots available to them.**

### Early Childhood Educator Salaries

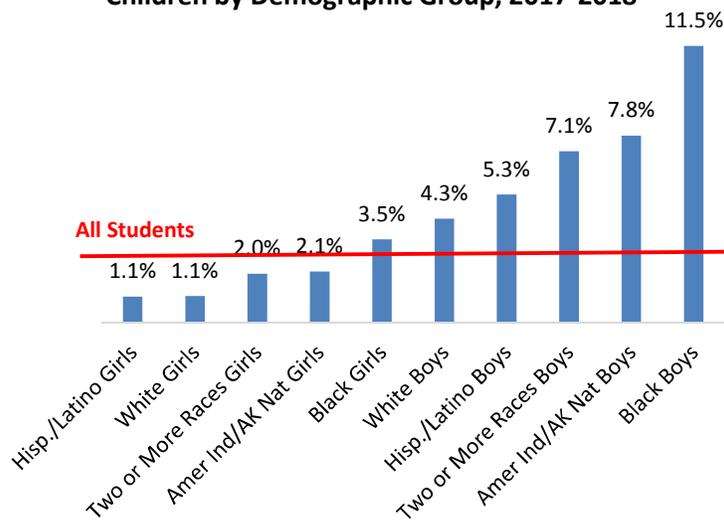
In 2016, our state’s **preschool teachers made significantly less than kindergarten, elementary and high school teachers**—and in fact, only slightly more than parking lot attendants and animal caretakers. The Colorado Early Childhood Workforce Survey found that **low pay led preschool teachers to leave their jobs four times more often than elementary school teachers.** Low wages for early childhood educators contribute to high turnover in the profession, which hurts the quality of education children receive.

### Early Childhood Suspensions and Expulsions

Children under 8 years old are at critical stages of development; being suspended or expelled from school for what are often developmentally appropriate (yet challenging) behaviors does little to address a child’s needs, and can have profound consequences on their future. Young students who experience suspension or expulsion are more likely to experience future disciplinary action, drop out of high school, or be incarcerated later in life. **In the 2017-2018 school year, Colorado schools issued 8,366 out-of-school suspensions to students in prekindergarten through third grade.**

Our schools are failing to apply disciplinary action proportionately among all students. Boys, especially those who identify as black, American Indian/Alaska Native, two or more races, or Hispanic/Latino face a much higher risk of being suspended out-of-school than their peers for often similar, developmentally appropriate behavior. By focusing on alternatives to suspension and expulsion for non-threatening behavior, we have an opportunity to keep more students in the classroom and on track.

**Risk of Disciplinary Action for PK-3rd Grade Children by Demographic Group, 2017-2018**



**Find more information on child health and early childhood experiences in the full *KIDS COUNT in Colorado!* report.** KIDS COUNT is an annual publication of the Colorado Children’s Campaign that provides the best available state- and county-level data to measure and track the education, health and general well-being of our state’s children. The full report is available on the Colorado Children’s Campaign’s website at: [www.coloradokids.org](http://www.coloradokids.org).