

Education Indicators

- ✓ One out of three students in Tennessee (33.1 percent) received free or reduced-price lunches.
- ✓ School expulsions decreased by 21 percent between the 1996-97 school year and the 1997-98 school year, reversing a 10-year trend.
- ✓ 7.3 percent, or one out of 14, of expulsions were a result of carrying firearms.
- ✓ 18 percent of Tennessee's students (178,480) were classified in 1997-98 as receiving special education services.
- ✓ High school dropout rates have decreased slightly from the 1996-97 school year to the 1997-98 school year (from 4.6 to 4.4 percent).
- ✓ The average cost per week for quality child care ranges from \$70 per week for a four-year-old to \$150 for an infant.

Social Indicators

- ✓ Every day in Tennessee 30 children are abused or neglected (10,803 cases per year of indicated abuse).
- ✓ In 87 percent of the child abuse cases investigated, the alleged abuse was by a relative or someone living in the home.
- ✓ Juvenile court referrals for crimes against persons decreased from 6,054 to 5,960, or 1.6 percent from 1995 to 1997.
- ✓ Overall referrals to juvenile courts increased slightly (11 percent) from 1995 to 1997, with the largest category increase in non-criminal proceedings.
- ✓ Slightly more than two-thirds of the children in state custody, or 68 percent, were adjudicated Dependent/Neglect.
- ✓ Almost half, 43 percent, of the children in state custody were in foster care placements.

Economic Indicators

- ✓ Tennessee's unemployment rate for teens ranges from 3.8 to 43.8 percent in counties throughout the state.
- ✓ Slightly less than a fourth, or 23 percent, of all children under age 18 live in poverty.
- ✓ 12 percent of Tennessee's children live in extreme poverty (50 percent of the poverty level).
- ✓ In more than 95 percent of the Families First assistance groups (cases), the head of the household is female.
- ✓ In Families First assistance groups, the average age of the caretaker is 34.2 years, with half having a high school diploma.
- ✓ The number of participants in Tennessee's Food Stamp program has declined by 29 percent from the 1993-94 fiscal year to 1997-98, declining by 211,417 participants.