

State policies that promote the economic security of our nation's families can help offset larger economic and social conditions that make it difficult for families to get by and get ahead. This four-part profile provides data on low-income children and families in the United States and summarizes state policy choices regarding families' work attachment and advancement, income adequacy, and asset development.

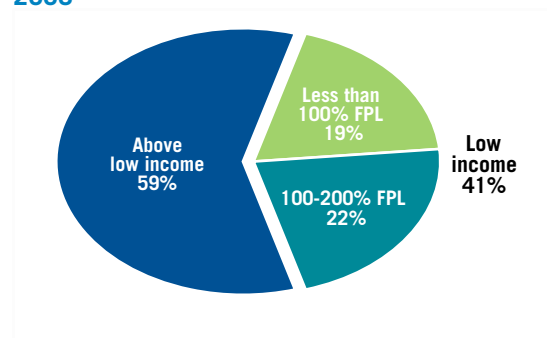
In the United States, there are 40.9 million families, with 73.8 million children. Among these children, 41 percent live in low-income families, defined as income below twice the federal poverty level (for 2009, \$44,100 for a family of four). Young children are particularly likely to live in low-income families--44 percent of children under the age of 6 live in low-income families.

Low wages and a lack of higher education contribute to families having insufficient incomes. Nationally, 51 percent of low-income children have at least one parent who works full-time, year-round.

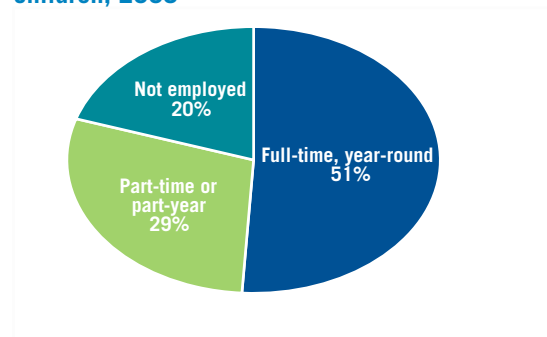
Parents without a college education often struggle to earn enough to support a family, but only 27 percent of adults in the U.S. have a bachelor's degree. A substantial portion of children in the U.S. whose parents only have a high school diploma--60 percent--are low income.

Children of foreign-born parents are also more likely to be low income than children of native-born parents--60 percent of children of immigrant parents live in low-income families.

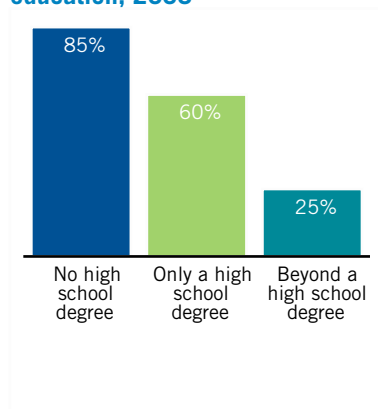
Children in the United States by income level, 2008¹



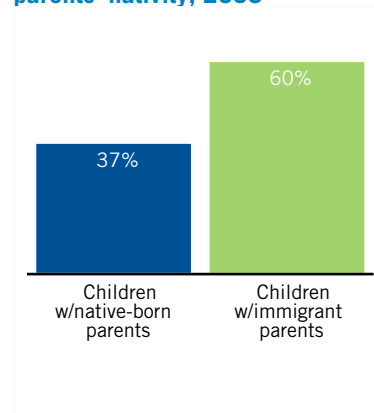
Employment status of parents of low-income children, 2008¹



Percent of children who are low-income by parental education, 2008¹



Percent of children who are low-income by parents' nativity, 2008¹



50-State Profiles and Report

For policy and demographic information for your state, visit www.nccp.org/profiles/fes.html. Each state profile also provides links to 50-state tables of all policy and demographic information that can be viewed and downloaded.

To learn more about the policy choices that states make and why they matter, see NCCP's recent report, *Staying Afloat in Tough Times: What States Are and Aren't Doing to Promote Family Economic Security* (www.nccp.org/publications/pub_833.html).

WORK ATTACHMENT AND ADVANCEMENT

State Choices to Promote Child Care Affordability and Access

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Subsidies

15 states set earnings limit at or above 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) for a single-parent family of three.²

33 states set co-payment at or below 10% of income, for a family of three, 150% FPL, one child in care.³

14 states prohibit providers from charging additional fees.⁴

9 states set provider payment rates to at least 75th percentile of market rate.⁵

State Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit

13 states have a refundable credit available.⁶

State Choices to Promote Access to Health Insurance

Public Health Insurance for Parents

4 states set applicant earnings limit at or above 200% FPL for single-parent family of three.⁷

0 states set parents' eligibility up to same limit as children.⁸

11 states grant eligibility to legal immigrants for state-funded benefits when barred from federal.⁹

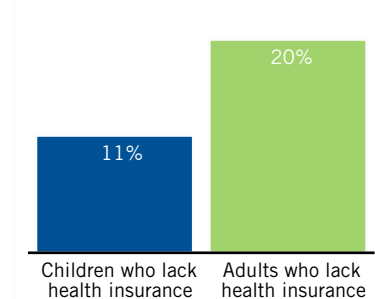
17 states grant eligibility for prenatal care to legal immigrants otherwise barred from benefits.¹⁰

Public Health Insurance for Children

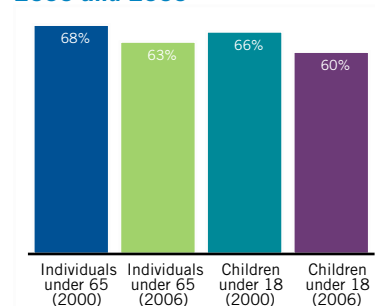
44 states set income eligibility limit for public health insurance (Medicaid/SCHIP) at or above 200% FPL for a family of three for children ages birth to 18.¹¹

0 states¹²

Health insurance status by age, 2007¹³



Employer-based health insurance coverage, 2000 and 2006¹⁴



State Choices to Promote Access to Benefits for the Under- and Unemployed

Unemployment Insurance

19 states count more recent earnings with alternate base period.¹⁵

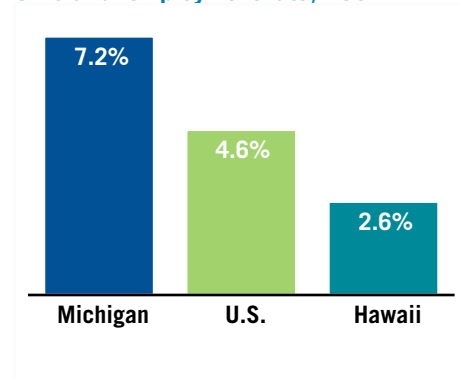
27 states grant some eligibility to those seeking part-time work.¹⁶

15 states have general "good cause" provision.¹⁷

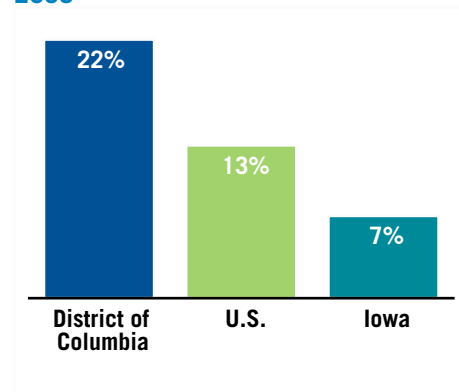
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Cash Assistance

12 states set earnings limit at or above 75% FPL for a single-parent family of three.¹⁸

Official unemployment rate, 2007¹⁹



Part-time workers who want full-time work, 2003²⁰



INCOME ADEQUACY

State Choices to Increase and Supplement Wages

Minimum Wage Standards

0 states¹²

6 states index minimum wage to inflation.²¹

State Earned Income Tax Credit

20 states have enacted a refundable state EITC.²²

12 states with a refundable credit set their state EITC at or above 10% of the federal EITC.²²

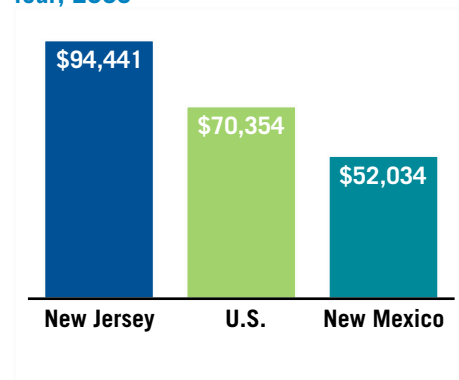
State Choices to Reduce Tax Burdens

Income Tax Liability

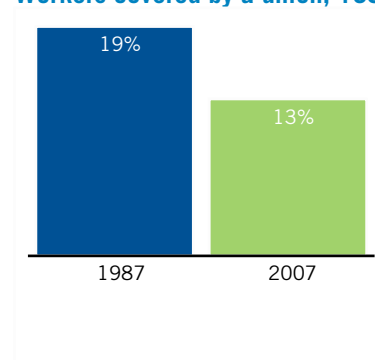
26 states set their income tax threshold for a two-parent family of four above 100% FPL.²³

24 states have no tax burden for two-parent family of four at 100% FPL.²³

Median annual household income for family of four, 2006²⁴



Workers covered by a union, 1987 and 2007²⁵



State Choices to Promote Access to Paid Leave

Family and Medical Leave

6 states have enacted provisions for paid family and/or medical leave.²⁶

State Choices to Promote Adequate Benefits for the Under- and Unemployed

Unemployment Insurance

13 states provide an additional dependent allowance.²⁷

32 states index weekly benefit amount to average weekly wage.²⁸

12 states provide at least 20 weeks of benefits to all recipients.²⁹

Food Stamps

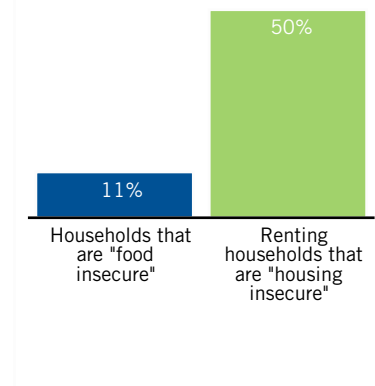
7 states grant eligibility for state-funded benefits to legal immigrants when barred from federal.³⁰

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Cash Assistance

22 states provide an annual maximum benefit for family of three of at least \$5,000.¹⁸

22 states pass through or disregard a portion of child support income.³²

Households facing hardships, 2006³¹



ASSET DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION

State Policy Choices to Promote Asset Development

Individual Development Accounts

18 states have a state-supported IDA program in operation.³³

State Choices to Promote Asset Protection

Public Health Insurance for Parents

23 states disregard assets in determining parents' eligibility for public health insurance.¹¹

Public Health Insurance for Children

48 states disregard assets in determining children's eligibility for public health insurance.¹¹

Food Stamps

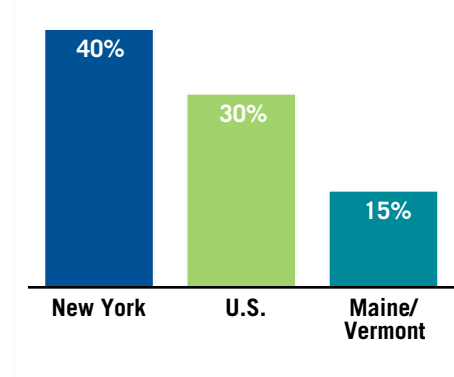
50 states make their food stamp eligibility rules more generous than federal rules, generally by aligning their treatment of vehicles to a TANF-funded program.³⁴

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Cash Assistance

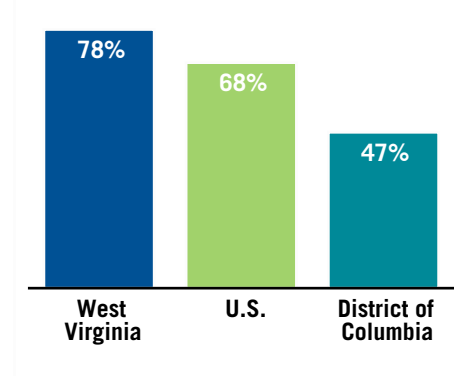
2 states disregard assets for eligibility determination.¹⁸

30 states exclude at least one vehicle from asset test.¹⁸

Children who are "asset poor," 2004³⁵



Homeownership rate, 2007³⁶



DATA NOTES AND SOURCES

Data were compiled from 50-state sources. Some state policy decisions may have changed since these data were collected.

1. State data were calculated from the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (the March supplement) of the Current Population Survey from 2007, 2008, and 2009, representing information from calendar years 2006, 2007, and 2008. NCCP averaged three years of data because of small sample sizes in less populated states. The national data were calculated from the 2009 data, representing information from the previous calendar year.
2. Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, *State Child Care Assistance Policies 2007: Some Steps Forward, More Progress Needed*, National Women's Law Center, September 2007.
3. If the state calculates co-payments based on the cost of care, figure reflects the co-payment for a 4-year-old in licensed, nonaccredited center care at the maximum state payment rate.
Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, *State Child Care Assistance Policies 2007: Some Steps Forward, More Progress Needed*, National Women's Law Center, September 2007.
4. Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, *Child Care Assistance Policies 2005: States Fail to Make up Lost Ground, Families Continue to Lack Critical Supports*, National Women's Law Center, September 2005.
5. States were asked to report state reimbursement rates and the 75th percentile of market rates for their state's most populous city, country, or region. Data reflect basic provider payment rates (higher rates may be available for particular types of care). Rates are considered below the 75th percentile if they are based on an out-dated market rate survey (more than 2 years old).
Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, *State Child Care Assistance Policies 2007: Some Steps Forward, More Progress Needed*, National Women's Law Center, September 2007.
6. Nancy Duff Campbell, Joan Entmacher, Amy K. Matsui, Cristina Martin Firvida, and Christie Love, *Making Care Less Taxing: Improving State Child and Dependent Care Tax Provisions*, National Women's Law Center, 2006; with updates from National Women's Law Center, 2009 Supplement to *Making Care Less Taxing*, 2006.
7. Figure reflects limit under Medicaid plan with highest income eligibility limit for parents, taking into account the value of earnings disregards (which may be time-limited in some cases).
Donna Cohen Ross and Caryn Marks, *Challenges of Providing Health Coverage of Children and Parents in a Recession: A 50-State Update on Eligibility Rules, Enrollment and Renewal Procedures, and Cost-Sharing Practices in Medicaid and SCHIP in 2009*, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, January 2009 <http://www.kff.org> (accessed February 16, 2009).
8. Value reflects comparison of applicant earnings limit for a single parent with 2 children to the highest Medicaid or SCHIP program eligibility limit for children ages 6-19.
Donna Cohen Ross and Caryn Marks, *Challenges of Providing Health Coverage of Children and Parents in a Recession: A 50-State Update on Eligibility Rules, Enrollment and Renewal Procedures, and Cost-Sharing Practices in Medicaid and SCHIP in 2009*, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, January 2009 <http://www.kff.org> (accessed February 16, 2009).
9. Lawful permanent residents (LPRs) are generally barred from federal benefits during their first 5 years as LPRs, unless they entered the U.S. before 8/22/96. Exceptions include refugees and U.S. veterans (and their families). See data source for more details.
National Immigration Law Center, *Guide to Immigrant Eligibility for Federal Programs, Fourth Edition*, 2002; with updates from Update Page, www.nilc.org/pubs/Guide_update.htm (accessed October 17, 2008).
10. States have the option of using federal State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) funds to provide prenatal care to women regardless of immigration status. They can also extend prenatal care to immigrant women using state funds.
National Immigration Law Center, *Guide to Immigrant Eligibility for Federal Programs, Fourth Edition*, 2002; with updates from Update Page, www.nilc.org/pubs/Guide_update.htm (accessed October 17, 2008).
11. Donna Cohen Ross and Caryn Marks, *Challenges of Providing Health Coverage of Children and Parents in a Recession: A 50-State Update on Eligibility Rules, Enrollment and Renewal Procedures, and Cost-Sharing Practices in Medicaid and SCHIP in 2009*, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, January 2009 <http://www.kff.org> (accessed February 16, 2009).
- 12.
13. Figures reflect the percent of children (under age 18) and adults (ages 18-64) who did not have health insurance coverage at any point during the year.
Current Population Survey, 2008 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, "Health Insurance Coverage Status and Type of Coverage by State and Age for All People" <http://pubdb3.census.gov> (accessed September 3, 2008).
14. 2000:
Figures reflect the percent of children under age 18 and the percent of adults under 65 who were covered by employer-based health insurance during at least part of the year.
Current Population Survey, 2001 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, "Health Insurance Coverage Status and Type of Coverage by State and Age for All People," <http://pubdb3.census.gov> (accessed March 5, 2008).
2006:
Figures reflect the percent of children under age 18 and the percent of adults under 65 who were covered by employer-based health insurance during at least part of the year.
Current Population Survey, 2007 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, "Health Insurance Coverage Status and Type of Coverage by State and Age for All People," <http://pubdb3.census.gov> (accessed March 5, 2008).
15. In most states, the base period consists of the first 4 of the 5 most recently completed quarters. Some states allow claimants to use an alternative base period that includes more recent earnings.
U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Security, *Comparison of State UI Laws, 2006*, <http://www.ows.doleta.gov> (accessed July 11, 2007).
16. Rick McHugh and Andrew Stettner, *How Much Does Unemployment Insurance for Jobless Part Time Workers Cost?*, National Employment Law Project, May 2005, <http://www.nelp.org> (accessed July 13, 2005).
17. A general "good cause" provision extends eligibility to persons who leave their jobs for "personal emergencies" or "compelling circumstances", which should include--among others--child care conflicts, illness, domestic violence, and spousal relocation. Eligibility determinations, however, may vary in practice. States may also specifically recognize certain reasons as "good cause"; for more information see Appendix B in Rebecca Smith, Rick McHugh, Andrew Stettner, and Nancy Segal, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Confronting the Failure of State Unemployment Insurance Systems to Serve Women and Working Families*, National Employment Law Project, 2003.
Rebecca Smith, Rick McHugh, Andrew Stettner, and Nancy Segal, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Confronting the Failure of State Unemployment Insurance Systems to Serve Women and Working Families*, National Employment Law Project, July 2003.

18. Gretchen Rowe with Jeffrey Versteeg, *The Welfare Rules Databook: State Policies as of July 2005*, Assessing the New Federalism, The Urban Institute, 2006.
19. Figure reflects the percent of people age 16 and above who do not have a job but are available for and actively seeking work. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Unemployment Rates for States, Annual Average Rankings, 2007," <http://www.bls.gov> (accessed March 14, 2008).
20. Figure reflects the percent of part-time workers who are available to work full-time, but usually work less than 35 hours per week due to slack work or unfavorable business conditions, inability to find full-time work, or seasonal declines in demand. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 2003*, "Estimates for States, Table 16: Employed and Unemployed Persons by Full- and Part-Time Status, Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity," <http://www.bls.gov> (accessed March 14, 2008).
21. U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration Wage and Hour Division, "Minimum Wage Laws in the States," 2009, <http://www.dol.gov> (accessed July 20, 2009); additional information from Economic Policy Institute, Minimum Wage Issue Guide, Table 5, 2008, (accessed July 20, 2009).
22. State EITC Online Resource Center, <http://www.stateeitc.com> (accessed June 3, 2009); with additional information from NCCP.
23. Calculations include income tax credits that are available to all low-income families in the state, such as state earned income tax credits.
Jason A. Levitis and Andrew C. Nicholas, *The Impact of State Income Taxes on Low-Income Families in 2007*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2008. Available at: <http://www.cbpp.org> (Accessed March 19, 2009).
24. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, "State Median Income," <http://www.acf.hhs.gov> (accessed March 13, 2008).
25. Percent of employed workers who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Union Membership and Coverage Database, "Union Membership, Coverage, Density, and Employment, 1983-2007," www.unionstats.org (accessed March 5, 2008).
26. These reflect provisions for private sector employees; more generous rules may apply for the public sector. National Conference of State Legislatures, "State Family and Medical Leave Laws" (including external links to individual state statutes), 2006, <http://www.ncsl.org> with additional information from National Partnership for Women and Families, "Expecting Better: A State-by-State Analysis of Parental Leave Programs," 2005, <http://www.nationalpartnership.org> (accessed October 1, 2007); with additional information from NCCP.
27. U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Security, *Comparison of State UI Laws, 2006*, <http://www.ows.doleta.gov> (accessed July 11, 2007).
28. Andrew Stettner, Rebecca Smith, and Rick McHugh, *Changing Workforce, Changing Economy: State Unemployment Insurance Reforms for the 21st Century*, National Employment Law Project, 2004.
29. Potential duration is the maximum number of weeks of benefits that a claimant is eligible for under the regular state program. In most states, it is determined based on the amount and distribution of the recipient's earnings in the base period; eight states have a uniform potential duration for all claimants.
U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Security, *Comparison of State UI Laws, 2006*, <http://www.ows.doleta.gov> (accessed July 11, 2007).
30. Adult lawful permanent residents (LPRs) are generally barred from federal benefits during their first 5 years as LPRs. Exceptions include refugees and U.S. veterans (and their families). See data source for more details.
National Immigration Law Center, *Guide to Immigrant Eligibility for Federal Programs, Fourth Edition*, 2002; with updates from Update Page, <http://www.nilc.org> (accessed October 28, 2005).
31. Food Insecurity:
Figure reflects the percent of households forced to reduce food intake, disrupt normal eating patterns, or go hungry because they lack the money or resources to obtain adequate food.
Mark Nord, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson, *Household Food Security in the United States, 2006*, Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 2007, <http://www.ers.usda.gov> (accessed March 14, 2008).
Housing Insecurity:
Figure reflects the percent of families living in rental units who pay 30 percent or more of their income on housing.
U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey Custom Tables, 2006: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months," <http://factfinder.census.gov> (accessed March 14, 2008).
32. A child support pass-through is the amount of collected child support that the state gives to families on whose behalf the child support was collected. A child support disregard is the amount of child support that the family can keep without lowering their TANF benefits.
Jan Justice, *State Policy Re Pass-Through and Disregard of Current Month's Child Support Collected for Families Receiving TANF-Funded Cash Assistance*, Center for Law and Social Policy, 2007.
33. Community-based IDA programs are operating in all states but often without state support. Also, in some states without state-supported IDA programs, IDA legislation was passed but never implemented due to lack of state funding, or IDA legislation expired, and no new state support was allocated.
Center for Social Development, Washington University, "Summary Tables: IDA Policy in the States, Table 1," October 2006, <http://gwbweb.wustl.edu>
34. Households in which all members receive TANF cash assistance or SSI benefits do not have to meet gross income or asset eligibility criteria. Most states also waive these criteria for recipients of certain other benefits; some states waive these criteria for nearly all applicants.
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "States' Vehicle Asset Policies in the Food Stamp Program," November 2006.
35. Figure reflects the percent of children in households that have insufficient net worth to subsist at the federal poverty level for three months in the absence of income.
Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Assets and Opportunity Scorecard*, <http://www.cfed.org> (accessed February 25, 2008).
36. Figure reflects the percent of households who are homeowners.
U.S. Census Bureau, "Housing Vacancies and Homeownership, Annual Statistics 2007, Table 13," <http://www.census.gov> (March 14, 2008).