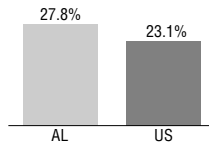


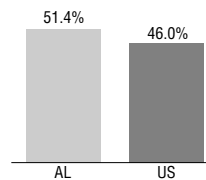
360,291 young children (0–6)

State rank in income inequality: 12 (1 is most unequal)

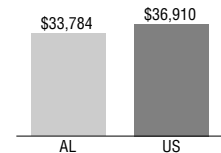
Percent of young children who live in poverty



Percent of young children who are low-income (below 200% of the federal poverty level, FPL)



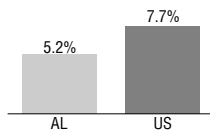
State median income for families with young children



State Efforts to Promote Family Economic Security

Wage and Income Supports

Percent of young children with at least one parent working full-time who remain in poverty



Income tax policies

- State income tax threshold is at or above the federal poverty level for a single-parent family of three
- Refundable earned income credit
- Refundable dependent care credit

Minimum wage

- Above federal level of \$5.15

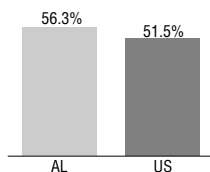
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

Maximum annual TANF benefit for a single-parent family of three with no earnings: \$1,968

Percent of state median income: 5.8%

Percent of federal poverty level: 13.9%

Percent of low-income young children whose parents are employed full- or part-time



Child Care Assistance (through the Child Care and Development Fund, CCDF)

CCDF subsidy coverage

Children who use CCDF subsidies as a percent of those who would be eligible under maximum federal guidelines: AL: 11% US: 12%

Subsidy purchasing power

- Maximum payment rate set at or above 75th percentile of market rate based on a recent survey

Subsidy co-payment burden N/A: Family of three at 150% FPL is not eligible for CCDF subsidies

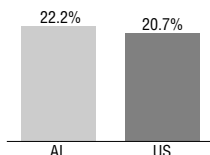
- Co-payment does not exceed 10% of income for single-parent family of three at 150% FPL

State spending

- Transfers TANF block grant funds to CCDF

Health and Nutrition Assistance

Percent of low-income young children who lack health insurance



Maximum Medicaid/Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) eligibility levels

- Infants (0–1 year) above 200% FPL (AL: 200% FPL)
- Children (1–6 years) above 200% FPL (AL: 200% FPL)
- Parent earning poverty-level wages is eligible for Medicaid (single-parent family of three)

Income eligibility limit: \$3,036

Percent of federal poverty level: 22.2%

Food stamp coverage

Young children (under age 5) who receive benefits as a percent of those below 130% FPL:

AL: 65.3% US: 58.5%

Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

- State supplements WIC funding

Data are most recent available (ranging from 1998 to 2000). Bar graph data are averaged across 1994, 1996, and 1998. See Reader's Guide.



State Child Development and Family Support Efforts

Overview

An attempt to pass legislation to implement a statewide lottery to fund prekindergarten failed in 2000. However, as of fiscal year 2001, there will be an Office of School Readiness. State funding for the Preschool Collaboration Project, the only program reported in *Map and Track 1998*, has ended, but the state does require all school districts to provide full-day kindergarten.

Programs for Young Children and Their Families

0–3 None reported.

3–6 None reported.

0–6 None reported.

The Transition to School

Transition efforts through state-funded Head Start or pre-k:

- Required Encouraged
- None reported Not applicable

Kindergarten—school districts required to provide:

- Full-day Half-day Not required

Kindergarten attendance:

- Compulsory Voluntary

Early Childhood Systems Development

The **Office of School Readiness** was established by legislation in May 2000. Its goal is to promote collaborative systems so that all 4-year-olds can enter school ready to learn. Modeled after Georgia’s office of the same name, and borrowing from North Carolina and Florida initiatives, this office was created despite the failure of legislation that would have approved a lottery-funded prekindergarten program. There is currently only administrative funding for the agency in which the office is housed, the Department of Children’s Affairs. Funding for programs is expected to come largely from public/private partnerships.

Funding change since *Map and Track 1998*: ▲ increase ▼ decrease ◆ no significant change

T includes TANF funds