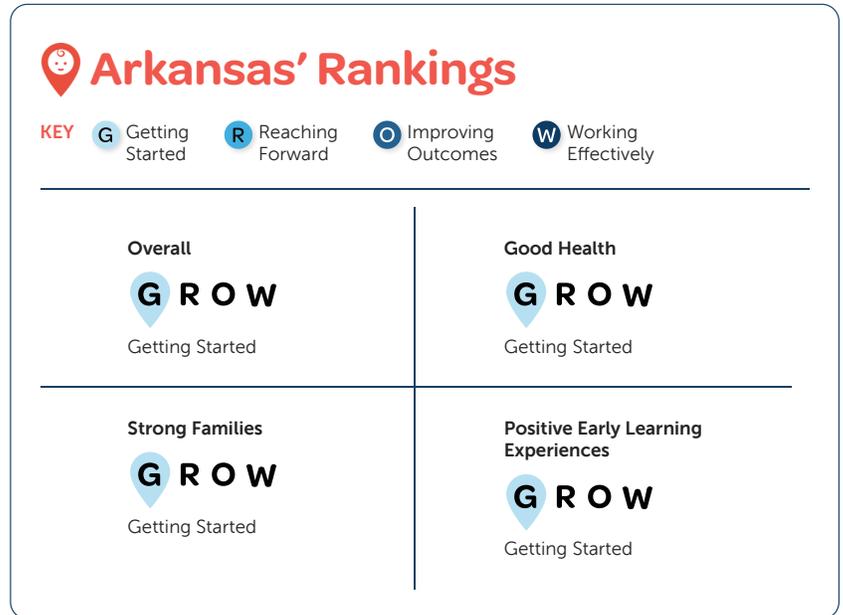




Where children are born can affect their chances for a strong start in life. Babies need good health, strong families, and positive early learning experiences to foster their healthy brain development and help them realize their full potential.

This fact sheet provides a snapshot of how infants, toddlers, and their families are faring with respect to these three developmental domains. For each domain, selected child or family indicators and policy indicators are highlighted and compared to national averages. Important demographic information is also included. A summary table of all indicators is provided on the last page, for reference.



Demographics

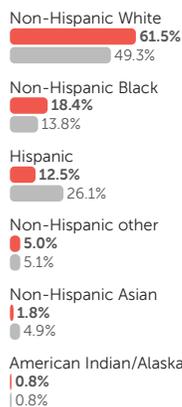
Infants and toddlers in Arkansas

Overview

Arkansas is home to 115,242 infants and toddlers, representing 3.8 percent of the state's population. As many as 59 percent live in households with incomes less than twice the federal poverty line (in 2017, about \$50,000 a year for a family of four), placing them at economic disadvantage. America's youngest children are diverse and are raised in a variety of family contexts. A broad array of policies and services are required to ensure that all of them have an equitable start in life.

ARKANSAS NATIONAL AVERAGE

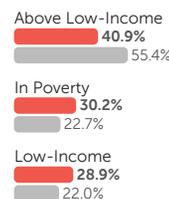
Race/ethnicity of infants and toddlers



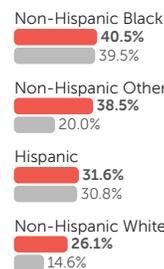
Working moms



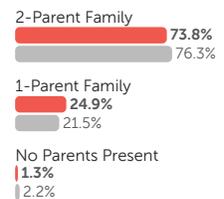
Poverty status of infants and toddlers



Infants and toddlers in poverty, by race



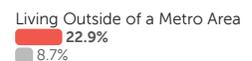
Family structure



Grandparent-headed households



Rural/Non-metro area



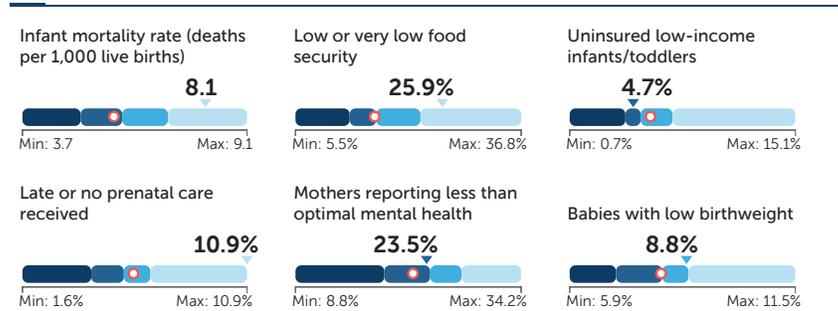
What is Good Health?

Good physical and mental health provide the foundation for babies to develop physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially. The rate of brain growth is faster in the first 3 years than at any other stage of life, and this growth sets the stage for subsequent development. Access to good nutrition and affordable maternal, pediatric, and family health care are essential to ensure that babies receive the nourishment and care they need for a strong start in life.

Arkansas falls in the Getting Started (G) tier of states when it comes to the overall health of infants and toddlers. The state's low ranking in the Good Health domain primarily reflects the indicators of food security, nutrition, and maternal health. However, Arkansas has a lower percentage of uninsured low-income infants and toddlers compared to many other states. The state's Medicaid plan covers early childhood mental health services in home and pediatric/family medicine practice settings, but not in early care and education programs.

Six Key Indicators of Good Health

KEY ← Range of all state values → ▼ Arkansas ○ National average
G Getting Started **R** Reaching Forward **O** Improving Outcomes **W** Working Effectively



Good Health Policy in Arkansas

Medicaid expansion state	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
State Medicaid policy for maternal depression screening in well-child visits	No policy
Medicaid plan covers social-emotional screening for young children	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Medicaid plan covers IECMH services at home	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Medicaid plan covers IECMH services at pediatric/family medicine practices	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Medicaid plan covers IECMH services at ECE programs	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

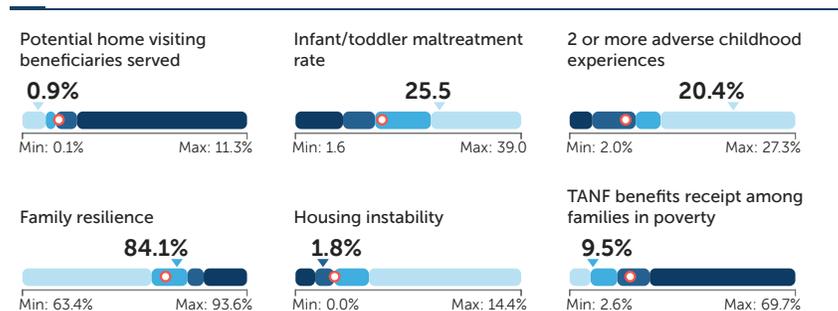
What Defines Strong Families?

Young children develop in the context of their families, where stability and supportive relationships nurture their growth. All families of infants and toddlers benefit from support with parenting, and many—particularly those challenged by economic instability—need access to resources that help them meet their children's daily and developmental needs. Important supports include home visiting services, child welfare systems that are responsive to young children's needs, and family-friendly employer policies that provide paid sick and family leave.

Arkansas falls in the Getting Started (G) tier of states when it comes to indicators of Strong Families. The state's low ranking in this domain reflects indicators of access to basic needs and supports, such as TANF benefits for families living in poverty, as well as the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences among infants and toddlers. However, a lower percentage of young Arkansans have experienced housing instability compared to those in many other states, which puts Arkansas in the Improving Outcomes (O) tier for this indicator.

Six Key Indicators of Strong Families

KEY ← Range of all state values → ▼ Arkansas ○ National average
G Getting Started **R** Reaching Forward **O** Improving Outcomes **W** Working Effectively



Strong Families Policy in Arkansas

Paid sick time that covers care for child	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paid family leave	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Positive Early Learning Experiences

In Arkansas



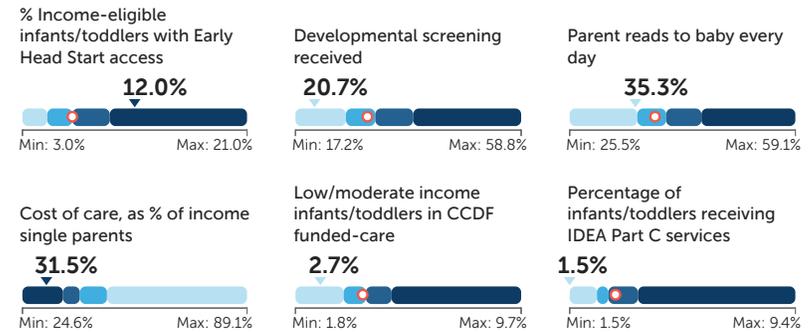
What Defines Positive Early Learning Experiences?

Infants and toddlers learn through play, active exploration of their environment, and, most importantly, through interactions with the significant adults in their lives. The quality of babies' early learning experiences at home and in other care settings has a lasting impact on their preparedness for life-long learning and success. Parents who require child care while they work or attend school need access to affordable, high-quality care options that promote positive development.

Arkansas scores in the Getting Started (G) tier of states when considering key indicators related to early care and education and early intervention for infants and toddlers. The state's low ranking in the Positive Early Learning Experiences domain primarily reflects indicators of early intervention and prevention services, such as IDEA Part C services. However, the state's average infant care costs, as a percentage of single parents' and married parents' incomes, are less burdensome compared to other states, which puts the state in the Working Effectively (W) tier for these indicators.

Six Key Indicators of Positive Early Learning Experiences

KEY ← Range of all state values → ▼ Arkansas ○ National average
G Getting Started R Reaching Forward O Improving Outcomes W Working Effectively



Positive Early Learning Experiences Policy in Arkansas

Families above 200% of FPL eligible for child care subsidy No

All indicators for Arkansas

G Getting Started R Reaching Forward O Improving Outcomes W Working Effectively

Good Health

O Eligibility limit (% FPL) for pregnant women in Medicaid	214.0	<i>National average: 200.0</i>	O Uninsured low-income infants/toddlers	4.7%	<i>National average: 5.8%</i>
G Low or very low food security	25.9%	<i>National average: 16.5%</i>	G Infants ever breastfed	73.8%	<i>National average: 83.2%</i>
G Infants breastfed at 6 months	45.2%	<i>National average: 57.6%</i>	G Late or no prenatal care received	10.9%	<i>National average: 6.2%</i>
O Mothers reporting less than optimal mental health	23.5%	<i>National average: 22.0%</i>	R Preventive medical care received	92.0%	<i>National average: 90.7%</i>
G Preventive dental care received	17.5%	<i>National average: 30.0%</i>	R Babies with low birthweight	8.8%	<i>National average: 8.2%</i>
G Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	8.1	<i>National average: 5.9</i>	G Received recommended vaccines	67.8%	<i>National average: 70.7%</i>

Strong Families

O Housing instability	1.8% <i>National average: 2.5%</i>	R Crowded housing	13.3% <i>National average: 15.6%</i>
R TANF benefits receipt among families in poverty	9.5% <i>National average: 20.6%</i>	G Infant/toddler maltreatment rate	25.5 <i>National average: 16.0</i>
R Unsafe neighborhoods	6.3% <i>National average: 6.3%</i>	R Family resilience	84.1% <i>National average: 82.6%</i>
W 1 adverse childhood experience	16.1% <i>National average: 21.9%</i>	G 2 or more adverse childhood experiences	20.4% <i>National average: 8.3%</i>
O Infants/toddlers exiting foster care to permanency	98.7% <i>National average: 98.4%</i>	G Potential home visiting beneficiaries served	0.9% <i>National average: 1.9%</i>

Positive Early Learning Experiences

G Parent reads to baby every day	35.3% <i>National average: 38.2%</i>	R Parent sings to baby every day	56.8% <i>National average: 56.4%</i>
W % Income-eligible infants/toddlers with Early Head Start access	12.0% <i>National average: 7.0%</i>	W Cost of care, as % of income married families	9.2% <i>National average: N/A</i>
W Cost of care, as % of income single parents	31.5% <i>National average: N/A</i>	G Low/moderate income infants/toddlers in CCDF funded-care	2.7% <i>National average: 4.2%</i>
G Developmental screening received	20.7% <i>National average: 30.4%</i>	G Infants/toddlers with developmental delay	3.5% <i>National average: 1.1%</i>
G Percentage of infants/toddlers receiving IDEA Part C services	1.5% <i>National average: 3.1%</i>		