



**W**here 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

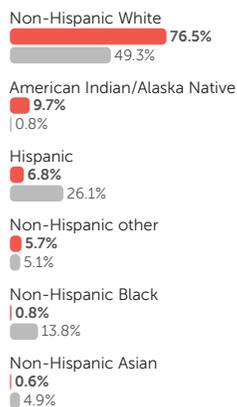
### Infants and toddlers in Montana

#### Overview

Montana is home to 38,060 infants and toddlers, representing 3.6 percent of the state's population. As many as 51 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.

■ MONTANA ■ NATIONAL AVERAGE

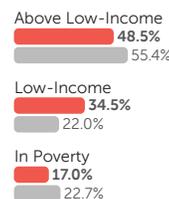
#### Race/ethnicity of infants and toddlers



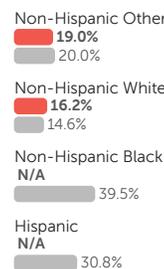
#### Working moms



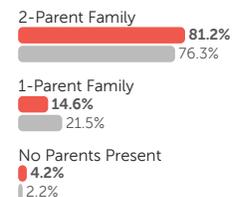
#### Poverty status of infants and toddlers



#### Infants and toddlers in poverty, by race



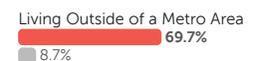
#### Family structure



#### Grandparent-headed households



#### Rural/Non-metro area



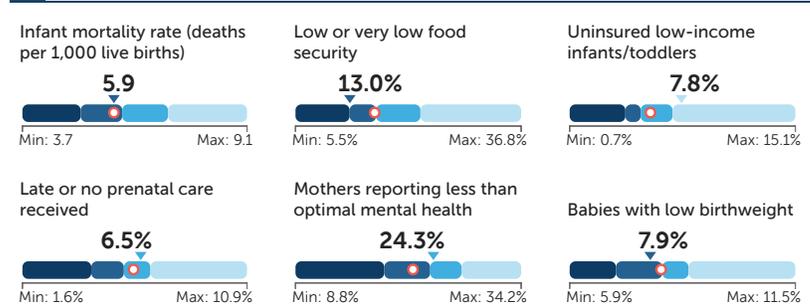
### What is Good Health?

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.

Montana falls in the Improving Outcomes (O) tier of states when it comes to the overall health of infants and toddlers. Montana's high ranking in the Good Health domain primarily reflects its indicators in the food security and nutrition subdomains, for which Montana is in the Improving Outcomes (O) tier. However, Montana is in the Reaching Forward (R) tier on maternal health indicators, including the percentage of women in the state receiving late or no prenatal care.

### Six Key Indicators of Good Health

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



### Good Health Policy in Montana

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Medicaid expansion state   | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| State Medicaid policy for maternal depression screening in well-child visits | Recommended                             |
| Medicaid plan covers social-emotional screening for young children           | Yes <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                          | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

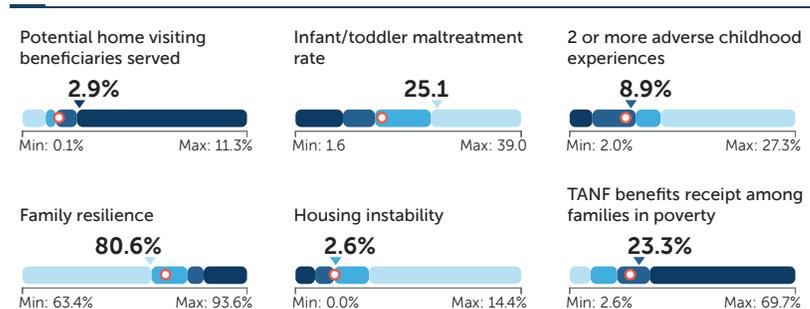
### What Defines Strong Families?

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.

Montana falls in the Reaching Forward (R) tier of states when it comes to indicators of Strong Families. The state's low ranking in this domain primarily reflects child welfare indicators that fall in the Getting Started (G) tier, such as the infant/toddler maltreatment rate. The prevalence of adverse childhood experiences, and the percentage of families with infants and toddlers living in poverty that receive TANF benefits, are in the Improving Outcomes (O) tier. Montana scores in the Working Effectively (W) tier for the percentage of young children eligible for home visiting who receive it.

### Six Key Indicators of Strong Families

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



### Strong Families Policy in Montana

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



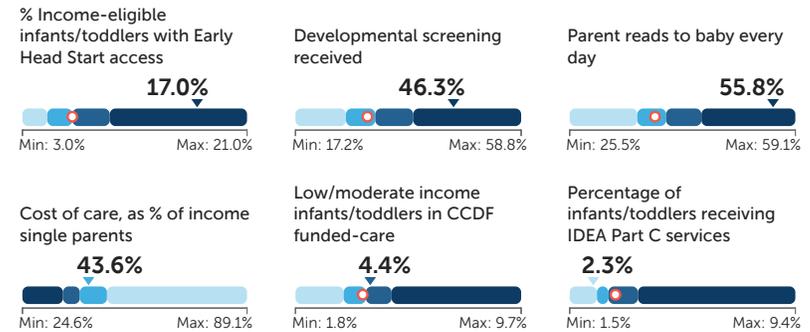
## What Defines Positive Early Learning Experiences?

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.

Montana scores in the Working Effectively (W) tier of states when considering key indicators related to early care and education and early intervention for infants and toddlers. The state's high ranking in the Positive Early Learning Experiences domain primarily reflects indicators in the Working Effectively (W) tier, including percentage of parents reading to their babies daily and the percentage of income-eligible infants/toddlers with access to Early Head Start. Montana is in the Reaching Forward (R) tier, however, on the state's average infant care costs as a percentage of single parents' and married parents' incomes, and in the Getting Started (G) tier for the percentage of children receiving IDEA Part C services.

## Six Key Indicators of Positive Early Learning Experiences

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



## Positive Early Learning Experiences Policy in Montana

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

## All indicators for Montana

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

### Good Health

|   |              |                         |  |              |                         |
|---|--------------|-------------------------|--|--------------|-------------------------|
| <b>G</b> Eligibility limit (% FPL) for pregnant women in Medicaid | <b>162.0</b> | National average: 200.0 | <b>G</b> Uninsured low-income infants/toddlers | <b>7.8%</b>  | National average: 5.8%  |
| <b>O</b> Low or very low food security                            | <b>13.0%</b> | National average: 16.5% | <b>O</b> Infants ever breastfed                | <b>83.9%</b> | National average: 83.2% |
| <b>O</b> Infants breastfed at 6 months                            | <b>61.1%</b> | National average: 57.6% | <b>R</b> Late or no prenatal care received     | <b>6.5%</b>  | National average: 6.2%  |
| <b>R</b> Mothers reporting less than optimal mental health        | <b>24.3%</b> | National average: 22.0% | <b>W</b> Preventive medical care received      | <b>95.8%</b> | National average: 90.7% |
| <b>W</b> Preventive dental care received                          | <b>39.8%</b> | National average: 30.0% | <b>O</b> Babies with low birthweight           | <b>7.9%</b>  | National average: 8.2%  |
| <b>O</b> Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)     | <b>5.9</b>   | National average: 5.9   | <b>G</b> Received recommended vaccines         | <b>63.6%</b> | National average: 70.7% |

## Strong Families

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>R</b> Housing instability                                | <b>2.6%</b><br><i>National average: 2.5%</i>   | <b>R</b> Crowded housing                              | <b>12.5%</b><br><i>National average: 15.6%</i> |
| <b>O</b> TANF benefits receipt among families in poverty    | <b>23.3%</b><br><i>National average: 20.6%</i> | <b>G</b> Infant/toddler maltreatment rate             | <b>25.1</b><br><i>National average: 16.0</i>   |
| <b>R</b> Unsafe neighborhoods                               | <b>6.0%</b><br><i>National average: 6.3%</i>   | <b>G</b> Family resilience                            | <b>80.6%</b><br><i>National average: 82.6%</i> |
| <b>W</b> 1 adverse childhood experience                     | <b>17.9%</b><br><i>National average: 21.9%</i> | <b>O</b> 2 or more adverse childhood experiences      | <b>8.9%</b><br><i>National average: 8.3%</i>   |
| <b>G</b> Infants/toddlers exiting foster care to permanency | <b>96.1%</b><br><i>National average: 98.4%</i> | <b>W</b> Potential home visiting beneficiaries served | <b>2.9%</b><br><i>National average: 1.9%</i>   |

## Positive Early Learning Experiences

|  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>W</b> Parent reads to baby every day                                  | <b>55.8%</b><br><i>National average: 38.2%</i> | <b>O</b> Parent sings to baby every day                           | <b>61.9%</b><br><i>National average: 56.4%</i> |
| <b>W</b> % Income-eligible infants/toddlers with Early Head Start access | <b>17.0%</b><br><i>National average: 7.0%</i>  | <b>R</b> Cost of care, as % of income married families            | <b>12.0%</b><br><i>National average: N/A</i>   |
| <b>R</b> Cost of care, as % of income single parents                     | <b>43.6%</b><br><i>National average: N/A</i>   | <b>O</b> Low/moderate income infants/toddlers in CCDF funded-care | <b>4.4%</b><br><i>National average: 4.2%</i>   |
| <b>W</b> Developmental screening received                                | <b>46.3%</b><br><i>National average: 30.4%</i> | <b>R</b> Infants/toddlers with developmental delay                | <b>1.7%</b><br><i>National average: 1.1%</i>   |
| <b>G</b> Percentage of infants/toddlers receiving IDEA Part C services   | <b>2.3%</b><br><i>National average: 3.1%</i>   |   |  |