

DATA SNAPSHOT

KIDS COUNT IN POLK COUNTY

Child population

Strong communities offer pathways to opportunity to every family and child. Families of color have faced, and still face, discrimination that limits their opportunities. As Iowa becomes more diverse, helping every family — of every race — support their children is ever more important.

Number of children (0-17)	120,710	Pct Other*	8%
Pct Asian	5%	Pct White, not Hispanic	65%
Pct Black or African Am.	10%	Pct Hispanic or Latino**	14%

* includes American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and two or more races

** can be of any race; total of all categories may not add up to 100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2020

Wages

Iowa families are working hard, but wages have not kept up with costs and productivity. All workers, especially those with children, must earn well above the minimum wage to meet even a bare-bones budget.

Wage needed to meet basic needs: single parent with 1 child under 6 Iowa: \$21.16	\$22.83
Wage needed to meet basic needs: 2 working parents with 2 children Iowa: \$16.11	\$15.81
State median wage	\$19.19
State minimum wage	\$7.25

Source: Common Good Iowa, The Cost of Living in Iowa, 2022

Births

The roots of lifelong health start before birth. Iowa babies — and their moms — need access to high-quality health care that sets them up for a strong start.

Percent of births with no or inadequate prenatal care, 2020 Iowa: 16%	15%
Percent of births at low birthweight, 2020 Iowa: 7.0%	7.9%
Percent of births covered by Medicaid, 2021 Iowa: 41%	42%

Sources: Prenatal care, low birthweight: Iowa Dept. of Health and Human Services. Medicaid/CHIP births: Iowa State Data Center

Child care

Working parents rely on reliable, affordable child care to provide for their families, grow in their careers and contribute to their communities and Iowa's economic growth. It's out of reach for too many Iowa families.

Annual cost of infant care Iowa: \$11,129	\$13,607
Annual cost of school-age care Iowa: \$5,954	\$6,099
Tuition and fees at UI (2022-23)	\$10,353
Percent of young children with all available parents in the workforce Iowa: 76%	74%
Children on Child Care Assistance or CCA Plus, September 2022	4,458

Sources: Costs: Common Good Iowa calculations from 2022 Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral data. Tuition: University of Iowa, accessed at <https://admissions.uiowa.edu/finances/estimated-costs-attendance>. Young children with working parents: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2016-20. CCA: Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.

Education

A state that values advancing opportunity for all its children is one that invests — in word, deed and dollars — in their education. The vast majority of Iowa children attend public schools that are obligated to serve all children.

Children enrolled in public schools	78,226
Children enrolled in private schools	6,908
Percent of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool (parent reported) Iowa: 46%	42%

Sources: School enrollment: Iowa Department of Education, 2022-23; Preschool: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2016-20.