



# Hawai'i KIDS COUNT E-Bulletin

## February 2016 Issue

Center on the Family | University of Hawai'i at Mānoa-CTAHR

### IN THIS ISSUE

SAMHSA's National Behavioral Health Barometer  
Early Childhood Homelessness in the U.S.  
Young Children in Deep Poverty  
Keiki Caucus Legislative Package

### SAMHSA'S NATIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BAROMETER

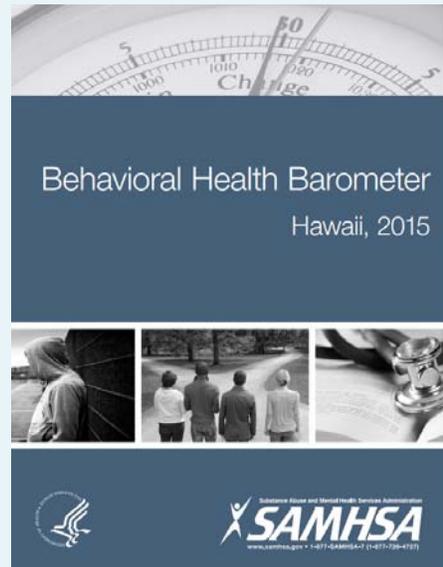
The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, more commonly known as SAMHSA, works to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness. Their National Behavioral Health Barometer report highlights important trends in behavioral health nationally, as well as for each state and the District of Columbia.

The findings cover key behavioral health issues, such as the rates of substance use, mental illness, and treatment patterns among youth and young adults. The report provides a mechanism for tracking change and trends over time.

Substance use data on youth and young adults presented in the Hawai'i snapshot indicates that:

- The share of adolescents (aged 12 – 17) using cigarettes decreased during the period examined, with 4.5% of Hawai'i's adolescents reporting recent use of cigarettes compared to 5.2% in the U.S.
- Alcohol drinking among young people aged 12 – 20 decreased during the period examined; 13.2% of young people in this age group reported recent alcohol use, down from 16.3% in 2010/2011.
- Illicit drug use among adolescents aged 12-17 years also dropped from 10.9% in 2010/2011 to 9.5% in 2013/2014.

The Behavioral Health Barometer: Hawai'i can be read in its entirety at [http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/2015\\_Hawaii\\_BHBarometer.pdf](http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/2015_Hawaii_BHBarometer.pdf).



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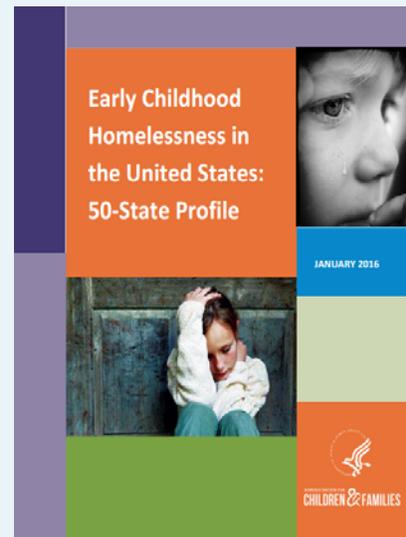
## EARLY CHILDHOOD HOMELESSNESS IN THE U.S.

In January, the Administration for Children and Families released Early Childhood Homelessness in the United States: 50-State Profile. This report provides estimates of the number of children who are experiencing homelessness in each state.

Hawai'i's profile indicates that approximately 2,369 children under the age of six are homeless, or 1 in 48 children in this age group. Nationally, 1 in 18 children in this age group are homeless.

Research documents the connection between early childhood experiences and brain development. The early years provide a foundation for a child's future learning, behavior and health. Experiences of homelessness during these early years are associated with poor academic achievement and poor engagement in elementary school, making it very difficult for children to catch up with their peers. These findings underscore the importance of ensuring that young children who are homeless have access to high quality early care and learning. The report, therefore, highlights the number of homeless children served by early childhood programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, and Child Care and Development Fund subsidies.

The report notes that while Hawai'i is known for a high homeless rate, we have a relatively low rate (2.2%) of children under age six who are experiencing homelessness. Connecticut has the lowest share (1.2%) while Kentucky has the highest (10.6%). The report may be read in its entirety at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ece/homelessness\\_profile\\_package\\_with\\_blanks\\_for\\_printing\\_508.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ece/homelessness_profile_package_with_blanks_for_printing_508.pdf).



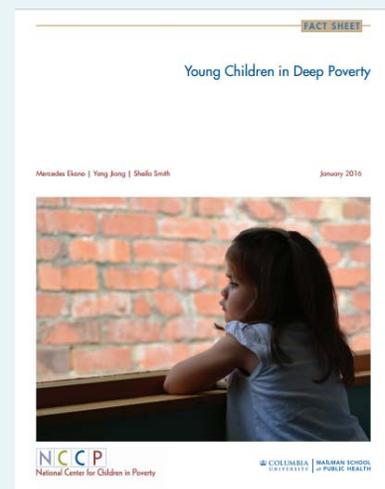
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## YOUNG CHILDREN IN DEEP POVERTY

Young Children in Deep Poverty, a recently published fact sheet from the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), examines the early health, development, and risk characteristics of young children living in extreme economic hardship. Deep poverty is measured as income of 50% or less of the poverty rate.<sup>1</sup> While the negative effects of poverty on children's development and longer-term outcomes are well documented, less is known about those who live in extreme poverty and the NCCP's publication aims to provide insight.

Young children in deep poverty fare even worse than poor children on several health indicators, most notably blood lead levels, obesity and parents' assessment of whether their children are thriving. Family adversities also put these young children at higher risk for future health and developmental problems. Compared to young children in poverty, higher shares of young children in deep poverty have parents who are experiencing less favorable physical or mental health, experiencing stress, and lack social support.



According to KIDS COUNT data, about 14% of children under the age of six<sup>ii</sup> live in poverty in Hawai'i, compared to 24% in the U.S.,<sup>iii</sup> while 6% of children under the age of 18 in Hawai'i live in deep poverty,<sup>iv</sup> compared to 10% in the U.S.

Young Children in Deep Poverty recommends that families in deep poverty be simultaneously connected with multiple programs, such as WIC (a supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), home visiting programs, Early Head Start, education and job programs for parents, as well as high quality early care and education for preschoolers. Coordinated services also help families cope with spells of severe economic hardships.

For an in depth look of how deep poverty affects young children, visit [http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text\\_1133.pdf](http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_1133.pdf)

<sup>i</sup>(n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.thefiscaltimes.com/2015/05/08/Why-So-Many-Americans-Are-Trapped-Deep-Poverty>.

<sup>ii</sup>(n.d.). Retrieved from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/5650-children-in-poverty-by-age-group?loc=13&loct=2#detailed/2/13/false/869,36,868,867,133/17,18,36/12263,12264>.

<sup>iii</sup>(n.d.). Retrieved from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/5650-children-in-poverty-by-age-group?loc=1&loct=1#detailed/1/any/false/869,36,868,867,133/17,18,36/12263,12264>.

<sup>iv</sup>(n.d.). Retrieved from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/45-children-in-extreme-poverty-50-percent-poverty?loc=13&loct=2#detailed/2/13/false/869,36,868,867,133/any/325,326>.

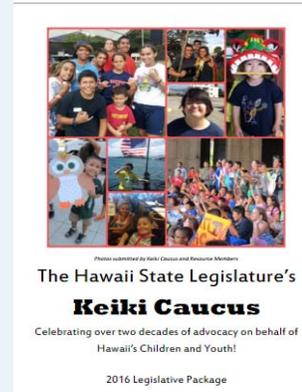
<sup>v</sup>(n.d.). Retrieved from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/45-children-in-extreme-poverty-50-percent-poverty?loc=13&loct=2#detailed/2/13/false/869,36,868,867,133/any/325,326>.

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## KEIKI CAUCUS LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

In late January, the Keiki Caucus released its 2016 Legislative Package. Some of the measures supported by the caucus call for continued investments in school readiness, supports for after-school programs, sex abuse prevention curriculum, and health monitoring and reporting. To review the Keiki Caucus' 2016 Legislative Package, visit, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/297147249/2016-Keiki-Caucus-Booklet#scribd>. To track bills and provide testimony, go to <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/>



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conclusions presented in the E-Bulletin are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Foundation.

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