

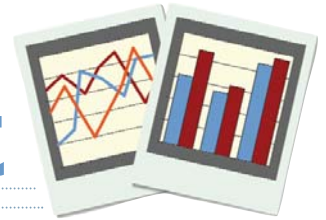


A Project of
The Annie E. Casey
Foundation

Improving educational and economic outcomes for children in immigrant families is part of the Casey Foundation's mission to help working families succeed.

data snapshot

Number Four, March 2007



One Out of Five U.S. Children is Living in an Immigrant Family

In 2005, there were 15.7 million children in immigrant families residing in the United States. These included both children who were born outside the United States and children born in the United States to at least one foreign-born parent. If current immigration levels continue, children in immigrant families will constitute 30 percent of the nation's school population in 2015.

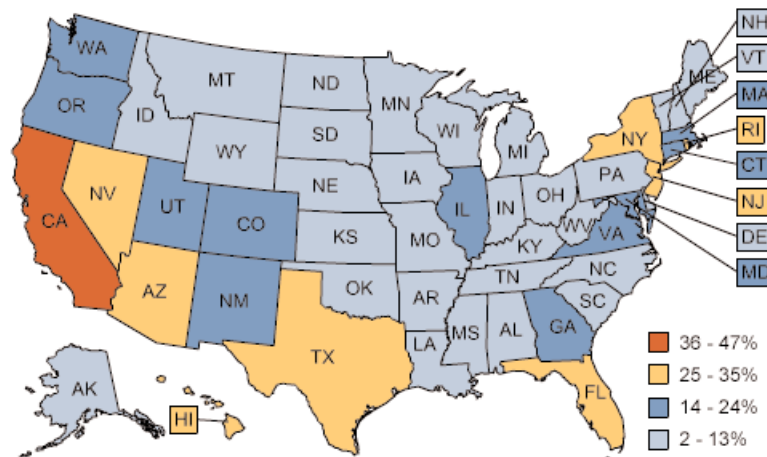
Eighty percent of these children were born in the United States and are entitled to the same support other U.S. citizen children receive. However, linguistic isolation and lack of economic resources put children in immigrant families at greater risk of growing up without the opportunities they need to succeed. Improving access to programs that strengthen the English language skills of immigrants and providing access to services in their first language can help level the playing field for these children.

This Snapshot includes state- and national-level data about children in immigrant families, background on why it is critical to help this growing group of children and resources for improving the well-being of children living in immigrant families.

Data Highlights

Figure 1
Percent of children in immigrant families: 2005

Source: Population Reference Bureau's analysis of the 2005 American Community Survey.

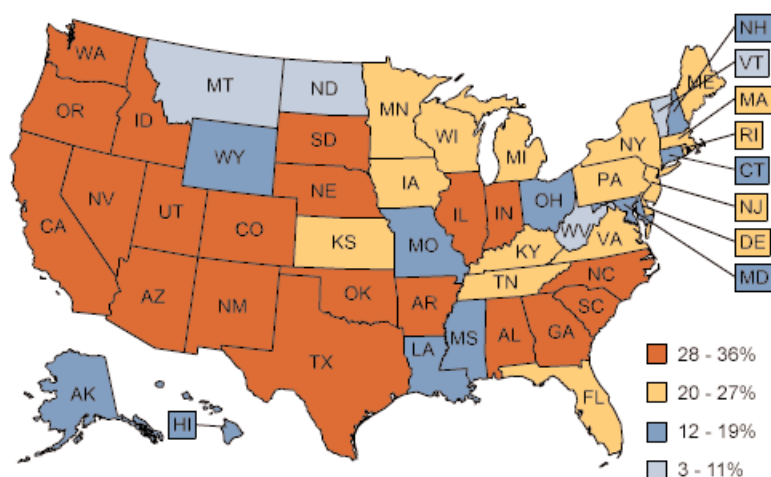


- In 2005, 21 percent of all U.S. children lived in immigrant families. Among the fifty states, California (47 percent), Nevada (32 percent), New York (32 percent), Texas (30 percent), and New Jersey (30 percent) had the highest proportions of immigrant children. With the exception of Nevada, these are historically gateway states that still serve as entry points for many immigrant groups.
- Of the 15.7 million children, 3.1 million are foreign-born. The remaining 12.6 million are U.S-born but have at least one foreign-born parent. For these families, changes in

immigration law can impact both immigrant parents and their citizen children.

Figure 2
Percent of children in immigrant families who are living in linguistically isolated households: 2005

Source: Population Reference Bureau's analysis of the 2005 American Community Survey.



- One in every five children in immigrant families (2.2 million) had difficulty speaking English in 2005. An even greater number, 4.3 million children, lived in linguistically isolated households in which no person 14 years of age or older speaks English very well. Nationally, 27 percent of all children in immigrant families in the United States lived in a linguistically isolated household.

Background on Children in Immigrant Families

The expansion of immigrants into new states beyond the traditional immigrant hubs over the past 10 to 15 years has brought immigrant issues onto the agenda of policy makers and child advocates across the nation. This level of growth presents challenges to systems that lack the infrastructure to support these children and their families. These families face unique challenges that vary considerably depending on their ability to speak English, education level, and immigration status.

- Most children in immigrant families (69 percent) live with at least one parent who works full-time, year-round. However, for many of these families, a job alone is not enough to provide for their family's basic needs. Nearly one in three, 32 percent, of children in immigrant families live in low-income working families (income was below about \$39,600 for a family of four). This is compared with 18 percent of children living in U.S.-born families.
- In today's economy, lack of a high school diploma as well as poor English language skills are major barriers to accessing better paying jobs. A much higher proportion of immigrant children are living in families where no parent has a high school diploma (27 percent), when compared to children in U.S.-born families (8 percent).

How Your State Ranks

The table below shows the 50 states ranked by the number of children in immigrant families as a percentage of children in all families in 2005.

Figure 3
States ranked by
percent of children
in immigrant
families: 2005

Source: Population Reference Bureau's analysis of the 2005 American Community Survey.

Definition of Children in Immigrant Families:

Children in immigrant families are those children who are foreign-born or who have at least one foreign-born parent.

	Foreign-born children	U.S. born with at least one foreign-born parent	Total children in immigrant families	Percent children in immigrant families of all children	Rank
California	712,000	3,860,000	4,571,000	47%	1
New York	261,000	1,187,000	1,448,000	32%	2
Nevada	33,000	163,000	196,000	32%	2
Texas	361,000	1,531,000	1,892,000	30%	4
New Jersey	123,000	523,000	646,000	30%	4
Florida	253,000	907,000	1,160,000	29%	6
Arizona	99,000	346,000	445,000	28%	7
Hawaii	14,000	67,000	81,000	27%	8
Rhode Island	9,000	51,000	61,000	25%	9
Illinois	139,000	581,000	720,000	22%	10
Massachusetts	70,000	248,000	318,000	22%	10
Washington	76,000	240,000	316,000	21%	12
Colorado	51,000	186,000	237,000	20%	13
Oregon	41,000	122,000	164,000	19%	14
Maryland	59,000	203,000	262,000	19%	14
Connecticut	33,000	120,000	153,000	18%	16
New Mexico	18,000	70,000	88,000	18%	16
Virginia	64,000	230,000	294,000	16%	18
Georgia	84,000	261,000	345,000	15%	19
Utah	22,000	81,000	103,000	14%	20
Delaware	5,000	21,000	26,000	13%	21
Minnesota	45,000	109,000	153,000	12%	22
North Carolina	68,000	181,000	249,000	12%	22
Nebraska	14,000	35,000	49,000	11%	24
Kansas	18,000	56,000	74,000	11%	24
Alaska	2,000	18,000	20,000	11%	24
Idaho	10,000	30,000	40,000	11%	24
Michigan	70,000	198,000	268,000	11%	24
New Hampshire	8,000	20,000	28,000	9%	29
Oklahoma	17,000	59,000	76,000	9%	29
Pennsylvania	55,000	179,000	234,000	8%	31
Wisconsin	27,000	79,000	106,000	8%	31
Arkansas	13,000	37,000	50,000	7%	33
Iowa	13,000	35,000	48,000	7%	33
South Carolina	20,000	50,000	70,000	7%	33
Tennessee	26,000	69,000	95,000	7%	33
Indiana	27,000	79,000	106,000	7%	33
Missouri	26,000	59,000	85,000	6%	38
Maine	4,000	11,000	15,000	5%	39
Ohio	42,000	103,000	145,000	5%	39
Vermont	2,000	5,000	7,000	5%	39
South Dakota	4,000	5,000	9,000	5%	39
Alabama	17,000	34,000	51,000	5%	39
Kentucky	14,000	30,000	43,000	4%	44
North Dakota	1,000	4,000	6,000	4%	44
Louisiana	8,000	38,000	47,000	4%	44
Wyoming	1,000	4,000	4,000	4%	44
Montana	2,000	6,000	7,000	3%	48
Mississippi	4,000	14,000	18,000	2%	49
West Virginia	1,000	7,000	8,000	2%	49
District of Columbia	4,000	16,000	20,000	18%	NR
Puerto Rico	6,000	39,000	45,000	4%	NR
US	3,091,000	12,566,000	15,657,000	21%	

NR: Not Ranked

Numbers may not total due to rounding.

Find out how your state ranks in KIDS COUNT State-Level Data Online:

- **Children who have difficulty speaking English, by immigrant status: 2005**
(http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=880)
- **Children living in linguistically isolated households, by immigrant status: 2005**
(http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=890)
- **Children living below the poverty threshold, by immigrant status: 2005**
(http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=800)
- **Children whose parents all have less than a high school degree, by immigrant status: 2005** (http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=870)

KIDS COUNT state grantees have produced state reports on the unique issues facing children in immigrant families. **Visit the KIDS COUNT issues library.**
(<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/kcnetwork/issues/>)

What You Can Do

Policies and programs throughout the country are impacting the well-being of children living in immigrant families. The following publications and organizations address strategies to support their economic, academic, and social success:

About the KIDS COUNT Data Snapshot Series:

The Data Snapshot series highlights specific indicators of child well-being contained in the KIDS COUNT State-Level Data Online system (www.kidscount.org/sld).

KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States.

KIDS COUNT exemplifies the Foundation's commitment to using the best available data to measure the well-being of children and to enrich local, state, and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children.

- **Supporting English Language Acquisition: Opportunities for Foundations to Strengthen the Social and Economic Well-Being of Immigrant Families**
(http://www.gcir.org/resources/gcir_publications/Language%20Acquisition%20Paper.pdf) Provides an overview of the limited-English proficient immigrant population in the United States and highlights language acquisition programs and strategies that help improve the well-being of immigrant families.
- **Undercounted and Underserved: Immigrant and Refugee Children in the Child Welfare System**
(<http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/familytofamily/tools/immigration.pdf>) Focuses on the specific needs of immigrant and refugee children in the child welfare system and offers best practices and policy recommendations for better serving these populations.
- **Reaching All Children? Understanding Early Care and Education Participation Among Immigrant Families**
(http://www.clasp.org/publications/child_care_immigrant.pdf) Summarizes relevant socioeconomic characteristics related to the participation of immigrant families in early care and education programs and provides recommendations for increasing participation.
- **National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)**
(<http://www.familit.org>) This organization is committed to supporting literacy initiatives across the country through research, tools and technical assistance. The Annie E. Casey Foundation is currently collaborating with NCFL to support results-focused family literacy programs that target immigrant families living in select Casey places.

Sources

Data for this report were compiled by the Population Reference Bureau.

Donald J. Hernandez, "Demographic Change and the Life Circumstances of Immigrant Families" *Children of Immigrant Families* 14(2): Summer 2004.

U.S. Bureau of Census, Department of Commerce, American Community Survey 2005.

Ann Morse. *A Look at Immigrant Youth: Prospects and Promising Practices*, National Council of State Legislatures, March 2005.