



THE CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION  
OF MISSISSIPPI'S  
LEGISLATIVE  
COUNT DOWN  
CALENDAR





JANUARY 5  
89 days left



*A note from the Executive Director of the Children's Foundation of Mississippi, Dr. Linda Southward:*

The Children's Foundation of Mississippi serves as a convener, facilitator, advocate, and catalyst for positive change for Mississippi's children. We are pleased to present you with the 2021 Mississippi Legislative Calendar. During the 2021 Legislative Session, these calendar pages will provide you with facts and information impacting Mississippi children. When we make sure that children and youth get off to a strong start, we're setting the stage for Mississippi to realize new possibilities. **Thank you for your service!**

*The artwork on the weekend pages are Mississippi 5th graders' responses to the prompt "What do Mississippi kids need?"*

JANUARY 6  
88 days left



Mississippi KIDS COUNT serves as a research component of the Children's Foundation of Mississippi. Data work is conducted by Mississippi State University's Social Science Research Center. Mississippi KIDS COUNT is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and provides data, statistics, and original research about the health, education, safety, and well-being of Mississippi's children.

*\* This research was funded by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Inc., and we thank them for their support; however, the findings and conclusions presented in the report are those of the author(s) alone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Foundation.*

JANUARY 7  
87 days left



***Connect with us!***

**Website:** [ChildrensFoundation.org](http://ChildrensFoundation.org)

**Email:** [info@childrensfoundationms.org](mailto:info@childrensfoundationms.org)



@MississippiKidsCount  
@ChildrensFoundationMS



@MSKidsCount  
@ChildrenFndnMS

JANUARY 8  
86 days left

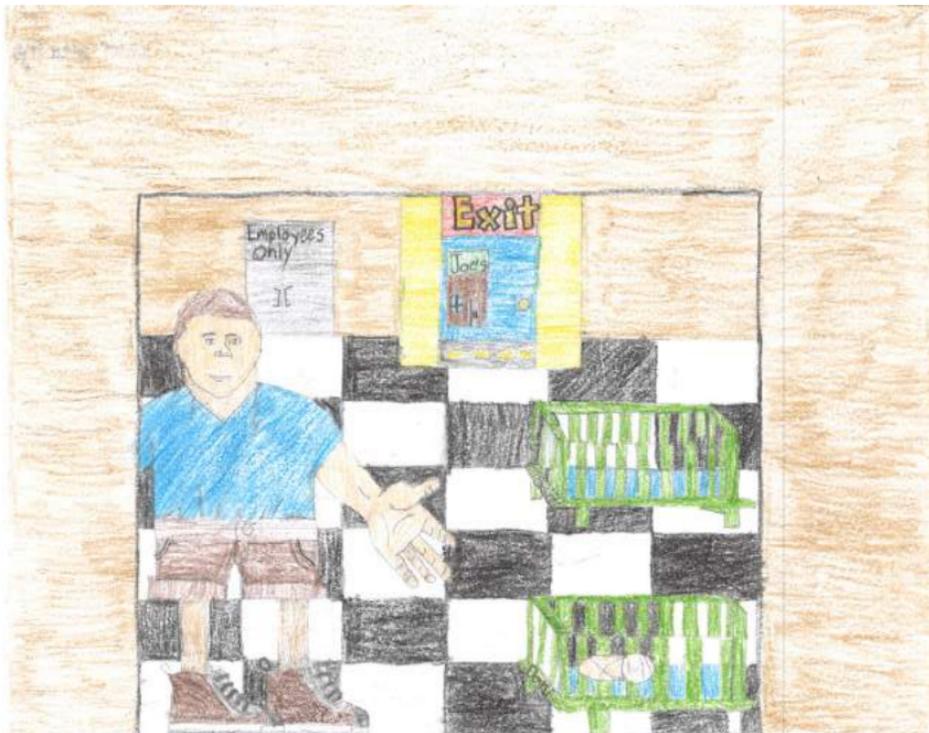
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The KIDS COUNT Data Center ([datacenter.kidscount.org](http://datacenter.kidscount.org)) is an amazing resource to hundreds of child well-being indicators in the areas of health, education, economic security, and family and community. Easy to use search options allow you to find your specific data needs and create professional visualizations to share the information.







JANUARY 11  
83 days left

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## Did you know?

There are 698,583 children under the age of 18 in Mississippi.

.....  
They make up 23% of the population.

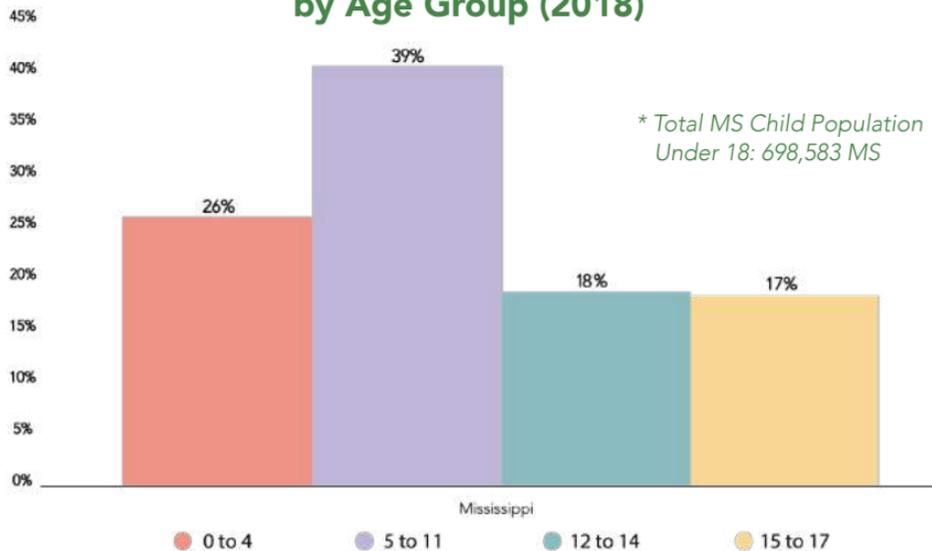


JANUARY 12  
82 days left

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## Mississippi Child Population by Age Group (2018)



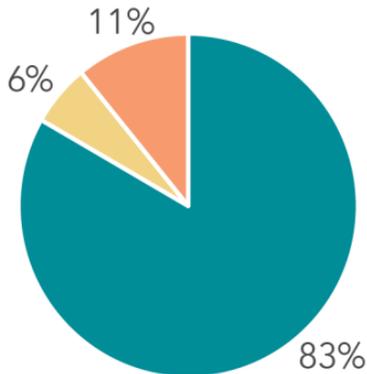
JANUARY 13  
81 days left

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*Findings from: The Mississippi Issues  
Impacting Children (MIIC) Survey:*

83% of Mississippians  
surveyed expressed support  
for public, state-funded  
pre-kindergarten system.



Neutral Oppose Support

JANUARY 14  
80 days left

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## Did you know?

Poverty increases a child's risk of experiencing health challenges, adverse academic outcomes, and reduced skill-building capacity.

**28% of Mississippi children live in poverty.**

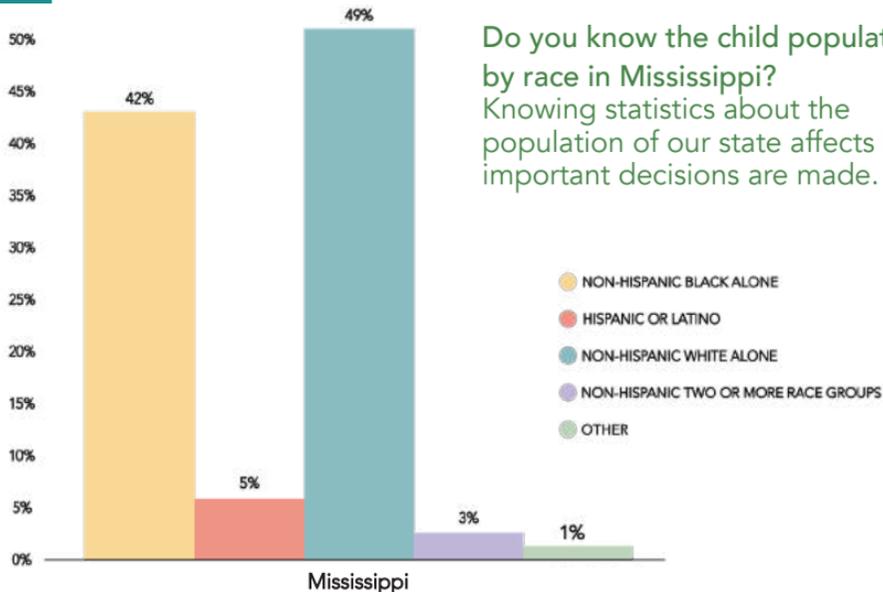
*\* Federal poverty definition = family of 2 adults/2 kids (under 18) with annual income below \$25,465*



JANUARY 15  
79 days left

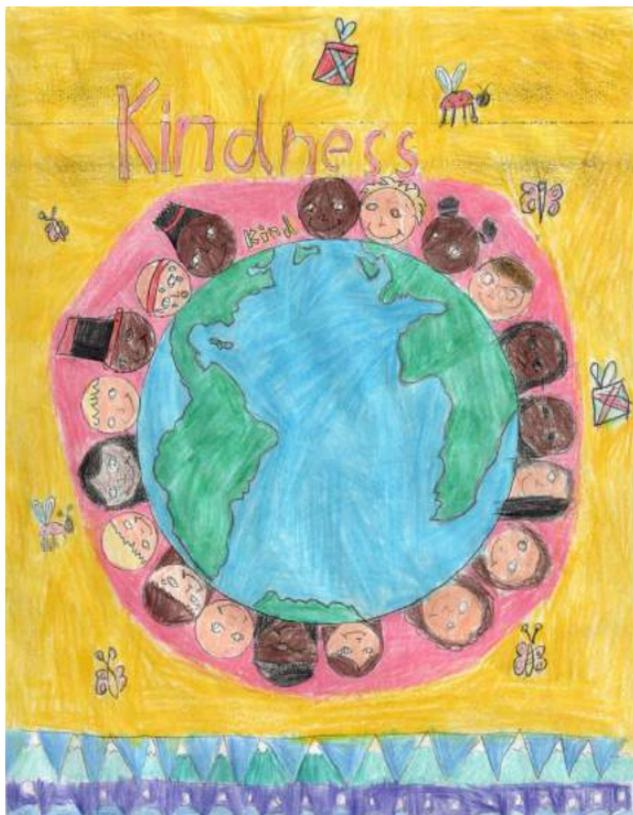
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Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau





JANUARY 18  
78 days left



We cannot make meaningful progress without taking an objective look at where things stand now. To better understand Mississippians' attitudes and opinions on issues affecting children from birth to age eight, the Children's Foundation of Mississippi commissioned the *Mississippi Issues Impacting Children (MIIC)* academic research survey of Mississippi residents aged 18 and older.

Find a copy of the survey brief at [ChildrensFoundationMS.org](http://ChildrensFoundationMS.org).

JANUARY 19  
77 days left

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Today, the Children's Foundation of Mississippi is proud to release the first ever Mississippi Risk and Reach Report!

Download your copy at:  
[ChildrensFoundationMS.org](http://ChildrensFoundationMS.org)



JANUARY 20  
76 days left



*Findings from: The Mississippi Issues  
Impacting Children (MIIC) Survey:*

Did you know **79%** of Mississippians agree that spending money on quality early childhood education will save the state money in the long-term? Also, **65%** of Mississippians expressed support for an annual tax increase of \$50 to fund public pre-kindergarten.



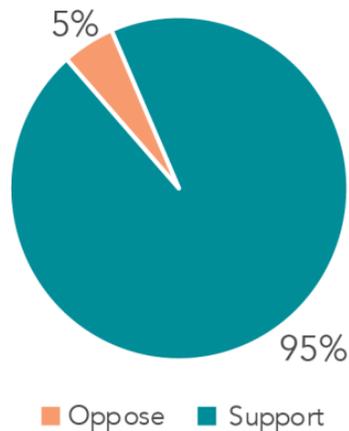
JANUARY 21  
75 days left

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### MIIC Survey Findings:

Mississippians believe the state should rate child care centers and make these findings available to the public.



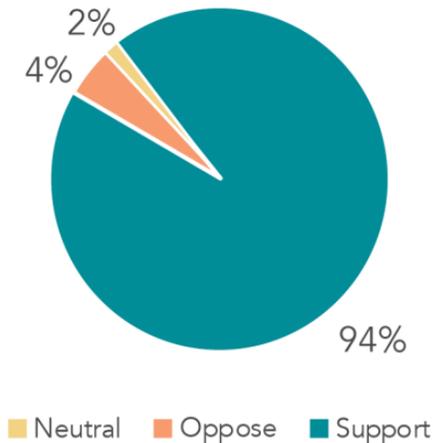
JANUARY 22  
74 days left

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### MIIC Survey Findings:

Mississippians value policies that make sure children get off to a strong start. They support requiring a wellness exam or check-up before enrolling in child care centers.







JANUARY 25  
69 days left



There is great opportunity to strengthen the workforce and the state economy of Mississippi as families pursue education and training programs to advance their careers and achieve economic and social mobility. However, childcare issues are often a significant barrier for student parents.

### Did you know?

More than 40% of parents in Mississippi postponed school or a training program due to childcare issues.

*Source: [USChamberFoundation.org/Untapped Potential](http://USChamberFoundation.org/UntappedPotential)*

**JANUARY 26**  
68 days left



**“Nothing is more critical to Mississippi’s economy than the development of a strong workforce, and this begins with connecting the dots with education.”**

-Scott Waller,  
*President and CEO of the  
Mississippi Economic Council*

JANUARY 27  
67 days left

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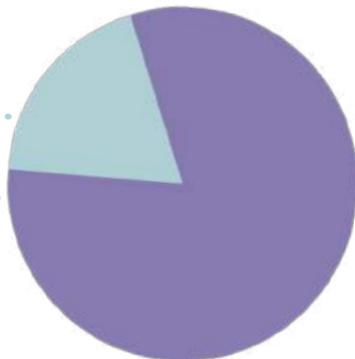
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## Did you know?

Estimated Annual Loss to Mississippi's  
Economy Due to Childcare Issues:  
**\$673 million**

\$120 million lost  
in tax revenue

\$553 million lost to MS  
employers due to absences  
and employee turnover



Source: [USChamberFoundation.org/Untapped Potential](http://USChamberFoundation.org/UntappedPotential)

JANUARY 28  
66 days left

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As policymakers and business leaders consider ways to position Mississippi for success, investing in childcare could enable Mississippi to fully capitalize on its resources. Access to affordable, quality childcare is essential for working parents to enter, re-enter, or stay in the workforce.

More at: [USChamberFoundation.org/UntappedPotential](https://USChamberFoundation.org/UntappedPotential)



JANUARY 29  
65 days left

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## MS parents surveyed about childcare issues revealed:

Over **75%** of parents rely on family members for some form of childcare.

**65%** of families pay out of pocket for childcare, with only **7%** receiving federal or state childcare provider assistance.

*Source: [USChamberFoundation.org/UntappedPotential](http://USChamberFoundation.org/UntappedPotential)*





Wope

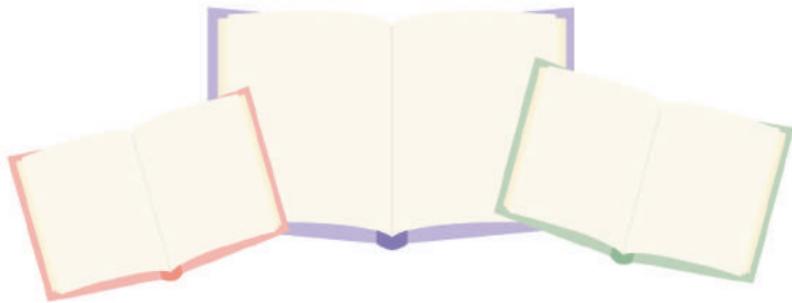
MRB.

FEBRUARY 1  
62 days left

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Education risk indicators measure the potential adversity that children may experience in regard to their overall well-being and quality of life. This week we are spotlighting risk factors in the area of education.



FEBRUARY 2  
61 days left

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## Did you know?

Kindergarteners who score 530+ on the fall K-Readiness Assessment are projected to be proficient readers by the end of 3rd grade. The 2018 average fall K-Readiness Assessment in Mississippi was **501**.

Providing high-quality early education for all children  
can improve Mississippi's future!

FEBRUARY 3  
60 days left



## Early literacy skills matter!

Only **48.3%** of Mississippi's third-graders scored proficient on the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment (2018-19 school year).



Investing in early education helps children  
succeed in school and beyond.

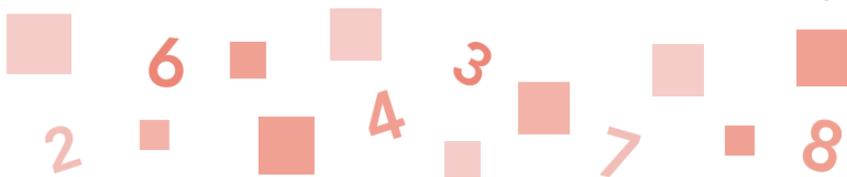
FEBRUARY 4  
59 days left



## Early learning matters!

Proficiency scores in elementary and middle school are linked with high school graduation rates. Only **51.4%** of Mississippi's 3rd graders scored proficient in math.

*-MAAP Mathematics Assessment scores 2018-19 school year*



**A strong start in childhood sets the stage for future success.**

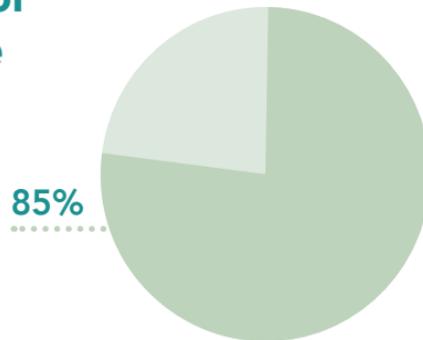
FEBRUARY 5  
58 days left

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**The more high school  
graduates, the more  
opportunities for  
our communities!**

Mississippi High School  
Graduation Rate



Source: MS Department of Education





FEBRUARY 8  
55 days left

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It is important to understand the availability and distribution of programs and resources that provide supports for Mississippi children in the area of education.



This gives insight into how educational risks are being addressed, identifies inequities, and marks opportunities for Mississippians to work together to promote greater educational outcomes for our children.

FEBRUARY 9  
54 days left

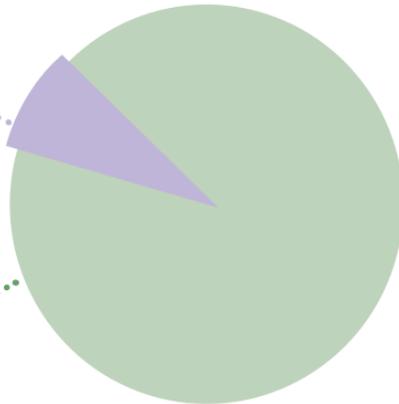
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## Where do Mississippi children attend school?

13% Attend Private Schools

87% Attend Public Schools



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

FEBRUARY 10  
53 days left



Home visiting from professionals during pregnancy and early childhood has been shown to reduce risks and improve maternal and child outcomes. Evidence-based home visiting in Mississippi is administered primarily through the Healthy Families Mississippi home visiting program, supported by HRSA's Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program.

Only 622, or 0.4% of Mississippi children (birth-age 3) received home visiting services from the MIECHV home visiting program during FY 2020.

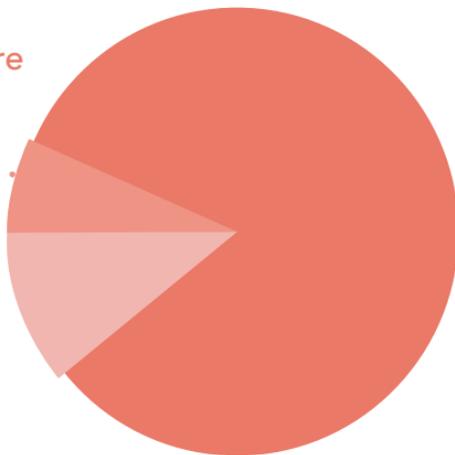
**FEBRUARY 11**  
52 days left



## Pre-K in Mississippi During the 2019/20 School Year:

**3,016** MS 4-year-olds  
(**approximately 8%**) were  
enrolled in state funded  
Pre-K Collaboratives

**5,841** MS 4-year-olds  
(**approximately 15%**)  
were enrolled in Pre-K  
programs funded by  
Title I or by local funds



FEBRUARY 12  
51 days left

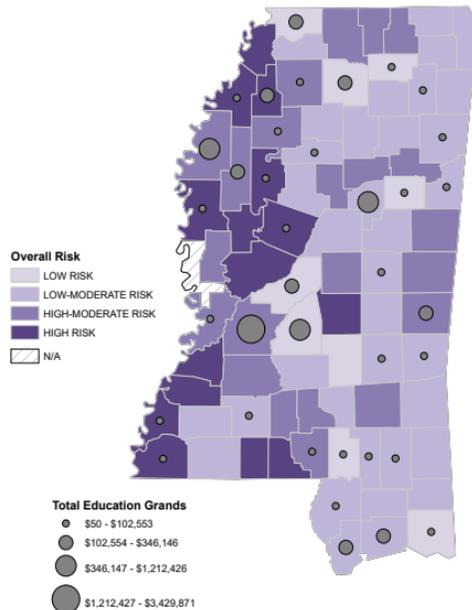
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**Philanthropic Giving for Education:** Approximately \$8.3 million was given by private foundations to support elementary and secondary education in 2016. Many high-risk counties received no direct grant dollars for education.

Learn more from the *Philanthropic Giving in Mississippi 2019* report from the Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy at [www.alliancems.org](http://www.alliancems.org).

TOTAL EDUCATION GRANTS BY OVERALL RISK







FEBRUARY 15  
48 days left

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This week we are spotlighting family and community risk indicators. These measure the potential effects of adverse experiences, conditions, or situations on a child's overall well-being.



You can learn more from our Mississippi KIDS COUNT Risk and Reach Report found on our website.  
[ChildrensFoundationMS.org](http://ChildrensFoundationMS.org)

FEBRUARY 16  
47 days left



A child's brain development, physical and mental health, and future success can all be impacted by experiencing child abuse and neglect.

**In 2020, Mississippi's children were reported to have experienced maltreatment like abuse and neglect at a rate of 113.4 per 10,000.**

Comprehensive supports are needed for children who have experienced abuse or neglect.

**FEBRUARY 17**  
46 days left



## Did you know?

**In 2020, 4,451 of Mississippi's children were in foster care.**



Not having a secure or stable home is an adverse experience for a child. Children in foster care are often at risk of health challenges. Foster care families need adequate supports to provide high-quality care for Mississippi's children.

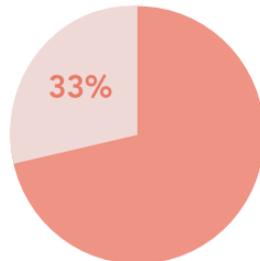
FEBRUARY 18  
45 days left

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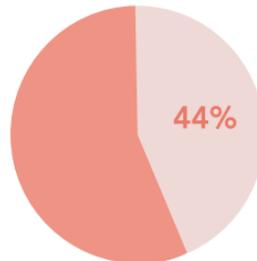
MISSISSIPPI  
kids  
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Mississippi's rate of children living with single parents is higher than the national rate.

### Children Living with a Single Parent



United States



Mississippi

Equitable access to supports like affordable, high-quality childcare are key for working families and single-parent families. While the cost of childcare for one infant or toddler at one of Mississippi's childcare centers is about 7% of the median income for married couples, the cost is about four times as much—28% of the median income—for single parents.

Source: American Census Survey

**FEBRUARY 19**  
44 days left

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**In 2018, there were juvenile justice referrals for 8,239 children in Mississippi.**



**High-quality, comprehensive education programs can reduce the risk of incarceration for Mississippi's children.**





FEBRUARY 22  
41 days left

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It is important to be knowledgeable about the existing family and community programs in Mississippi, as these make up the invisible wellness grids within communities that provide access to resources that shape families' health and well-being.



FEBRUARY 23  
40 days left

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**"We live in a world in which we  
need to share responsibility."**

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-Mr. Rogers



FEBRUARY 24  
39 days left



**| Quality affordable childcare is an important part of the foundation for a child's successful development.**



**FEBRUARY 25**  
38 days left

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**A healthy community provides resources, programs, and support for parents, children, and families. These include playgrounds, libraries, afterschool programs, and more.**



**FEBRUARY 26**  
37 days left



**When parents face challenges securing adequate childcare or experience disruptions in their childcare arrangements, it impacts the community. The Mississippi Pre-K Tax Credit allows local businesses to invest some of their taxes back into the community. Helping employees with childcare costs can benefit many.**

Source: MS Untapped Potential:  
*How Childcare Impacts Mississippi's state Economy*





# MARCH 1

34 days left



This week we are spotlighting economic risk indicators for child well-being in Mississippi. Poverty and economic challenges threaten the sturdy foundation that children need for lifelong learning and contributions to our communities. You can learn more from our Mississippi KIDS COUNT Risk and Reach Report found on our website.

MARCH 2  
33 days left

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Food insecurity is insufficient access to nutritious food.  
It can increase a child's risk of experiencing health issues.



During the early days of the pandemic, the country witnessed the gaps in the food supply chains and delivery systems. The food insecurity rate in Mississippi was 21% compared to 10.7% nationally.

*Source: 2020 Household Pulse Survey, Mississippi Results: Food Insecurity*

**MARCH 3**  
32 days left



**13 counties in Mississippi are categorized as high risk in child poverty, with child poverty rates greater than 50% for young children (birth-5).**

Poverty impacts a child's academic achievement, future employment, health outcomes, and more. It is easier and more effective to build a sturdy foundation than it is to repair or shore it up later.

MARCH 4  
31 days left



## Did you know?

Maternal education is a key predictor of family life and children's well-being. **12.6% of Mississippi's mothers had not received high school diplomas in 2018.**



Source: MS State Department of Health

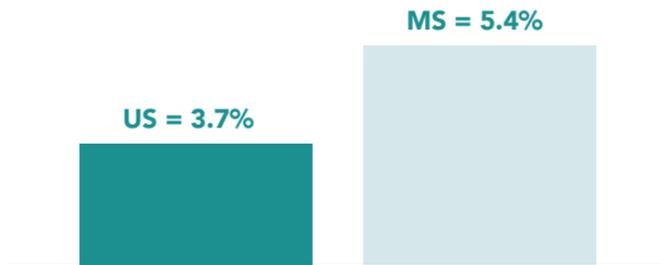
MARCH 5  
30 days left

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**Job loss can increase stressors for children and families.**

### Unemployment rate in 2019







**MARCH 8**  
27 days left



Economic factors play a big part in a child's successful development. When a family is financially stable, it gives them access to enough food, safe housing, healthcare and other necessities that allow them to be productive members of the community. When children experience economic stability, they thrive at home and in school. Supports that address families' economic gaps help to promote the success of children.

MARCH 9  
26 days left



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**) provides monthly benefits that help low income households buy the food they need for good health. SNAP is a federal program administered on the local level by the Mississippi Department of Human Services. Eligibility is primarily based on household size and income.



MARCH 10  
25 days left



The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides supports for families with children under 18 years old that meet MDHS requirements.

TANF average monthly payments in 2019:

**Per household = \$134.64**

**Per person = \$ 69.60**

MARCH 11  
24 days left

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Food banks and food pantries across Mississippi work to fill in the gap to feed food insecure families. **The Mississippi Food Network**, one of the largest of these organizations, feeds more than 150,000 Mississippians every month.

*\*Pre-COVID-19*

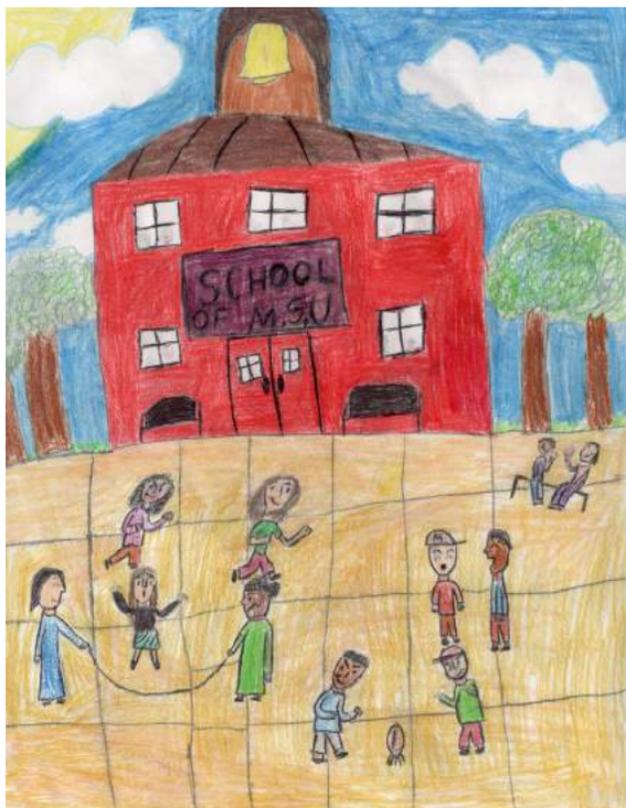
**MARCH 12**  
23 days left



**“Partnerships between early education advocates and the business community are vital to ensure that Mississippi’s children, families, businesses, and economy are strong.”**

–Report: MS Untapped Potential:  
*How Childcare Impacts Mississippi’s state Economy*





MARCH 15  
20 days left



The foundation of lifelong well-being is built in childhood. Providing supports for healthy development is vital to the future of Mississippi children. This week we will look at health risk indicators and how they affect the well-being of our children.

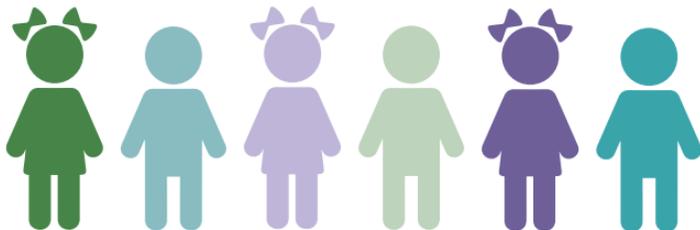
MARCH 16  
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Babies born at low birth weights are at greater risk for health issues. According to the CDC, in 2018, low birth weight was the second leading cause of infant death in the U.S. Access to prenatal care can help identify and address conditions that increase the risk of low birth weights.

**In 2018, 12.1% of babies in Mississippi were born at low birth weights.**



MARCH 17  
18 days left

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## Did you know?

The rate of teenagers giving birth is higher among those with less access to high-quality education and employment opportunities.



**In 2018, the rate of teens giving birth in Mississippi was 27.8 per 1,000 (female teenagers between ages 15 and 17).**

**MARCH 18**  
17 days left



Health insurance allows more opportunities for children to receive needed supports and services, including preventive and routine care. Improved health leads to improved outcomes for Mississippi's children and our communities as a whole.

**Only 3.8% of children in Mississippi were NOT covered by health insurance (2014 to 2018).**

*Source: American Community Survey*

MARCH 19  
16 days left

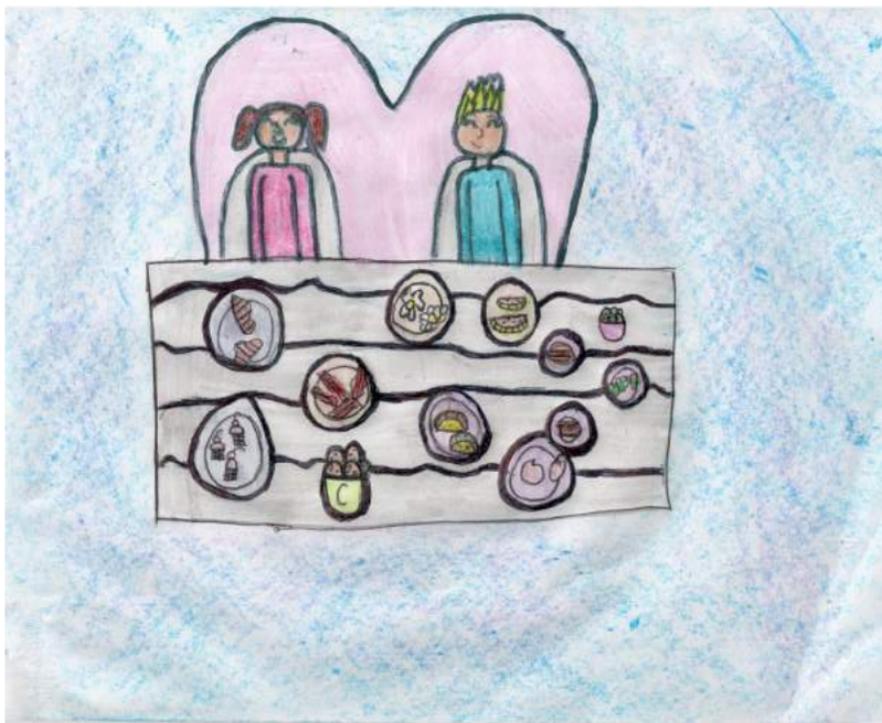


## Did you know?

**Infant mortality rates are markers of the overall health of communities. Infant mortality happens when an infant dies before their first birthday.**

**In 2018, Mississippi's infant mortality rate was 8.6 per 1,000.**

*Source: MS State Department of Health*





**MARCH 22**  
13 days left



Access to healthcare for Mississippi children is multidimensional. It involves factors such as health insurance coverage to help pay for care as well as access to primary and specialist providers. Understanding the reach of available resources for children's healthcare in Mississippi is an important part of understanding gaps and needs in our pediatric healthcare system.

MARCH 23  
12 days left

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## Do you know about PHRM/ISS?

The Mississippi State Department of Health's Perinatal High Risk Management/Infant Services System (PHRM/ISS) is a case management program for high-risk pregnant women and their babies less than one year old. PHRM/ISS provides enhanced access to healthcare, nutritional and psychosocial support, home visits, and health education. The purpose of PHRM/ISS is to help reduce the infant mortality rate and to help reduce the rates of low and very low birth weight infants in Mississippi.



MARCH 24  
11 days left



Screening is only one aspect of making sure that children meet developmental milestones. Other parts of a complete, effective system for supporting child development include:

- Referral systems
- Care coordination systems
- Interventions systems
- Medical "homes"

Read more in the policy brief– *Marking Children's Developmental Milestones: Findings from a Baseline Survey of Mississippi*, at [MississippiThrive.com](http://MississippiThrive.com)

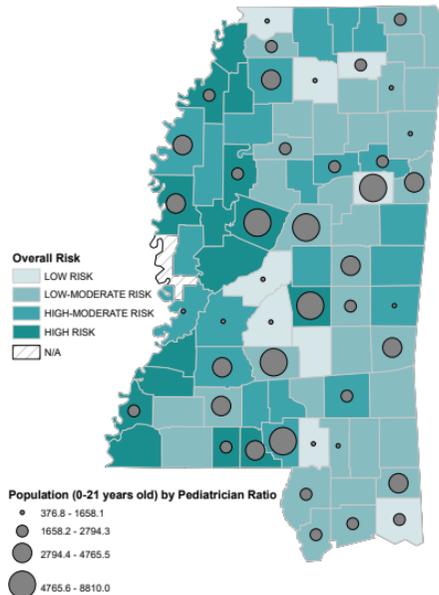
MARCH 25  
10 days left

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Pediatric care is more limited in rural areas and areas of concentrated poverty. The map shows the ratio of physician to child in each county. As of 2020, there were no registered pediatricians in 38 counties.

Total number of active Pediatricians by June 2020 with Overall Risk



MARCH 26  
9 days left



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**“The biggest environmental driver of poor health is poverty. The cycle of poverty in families, and the difficulty of rising above it without help, affects everyone in the state, not just those in poverty.”**

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-Dr. Mary Currier,  
*Former Mississippi State Health Office*





MARCH 29  
6 days left

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Children develop rapidly in their early years.  
Marking young children's milestones gives us  
important clues about their developmental health.

Findings from the 2018 Mississippi Child Health and Development Survey indicate that only



**3** out of every **10** children under 6 years of age have received a developmental health screening.

MARCH 30  
5 days left

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1 out of every 20  
children under 6 in Mississippi  
has been diagnosed with a  
developmental delay.

When young children's developmental delays are identified early, many can be addressed with regular interventions. When issues aren't spotted early, they become more difficult—and more expensive—to address.

*Source: 2018 Mississippi Child Health and Development Survey*

MARCH 31  
4 days left

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count

When we do what it takes for Mississippi's children to thrive, we equip tomorrow's neighbors, workforce, and leaders to do what it takes for Mississippi to thrive. To learn about supporting the early development of Mississippi's children, visit [ChildrensFoundationMS.org](http://ChildrensFoundationMS.org).



APRIL 1  
3 days left

CHILDREN'S  
FOUNDATION  
OF MISSISSIPPI

MISSISSIPPI  
kids  
count

The First Steps Early Intervention Program by Mississippi State Department of Health matches the needs of young children with developmental delays with Early Intervention services and resources with the community.



In FY 2020, 4,082 (4%) of Mississippi's children under age three received First Steps Services.

APRIL 2  
2 days left



Thank you for your  
service to our state  
and to the children of  
**Mississippi!**









