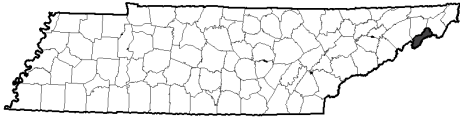
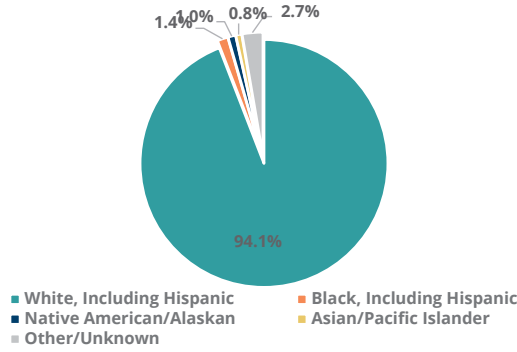


37th UNICOI

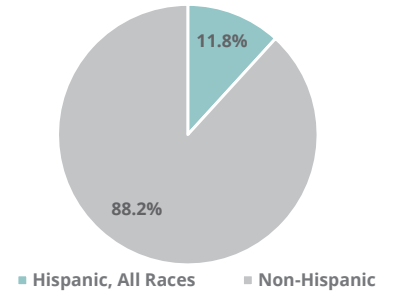
Population Under 18: 17.9%



Child Population by Race



Child Population by Hispanic Ethnicity



Published July 2024

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING 62ND

Metric	Rank	Previous Percent/Rate	Previous Rank
Children living in poverty 21.4% 2022	49th	22.0%	51st
Severe housing cost burden 9.4% 2018-2022	54th	8.5%	19th
Child care cost burden 31.5% FY2022-23	66th	27.5%	69th

EDUCATION 29TH

Metric	Rank	Previous Percent/Rate	Previous Rank
3rd to 8th grade reading proficiency 35.0% 2023-24	44th	31.6%	61st
3rd to 8th grade math proficiency 42.4% 2023-24	30th	36.9%	50th
Youth graduating high school on time 95.4% 2022-23	30th	92.6%	53rd

HEALTH 33RD

Metric	Rank	Previous Percent/Rate	Previous Rank
Kindergarten full immunization series 93.7% 2022-23	54th	97.9%	6th
Children who lack health insurance 4.4% 2021	26th	5.9%	40th
Babies born at a low birth weight 8.6% 2020-2022	50th	11.5%	92nd

FAMILY & COMMUNITY 53RD

Metric	Rank	Previous Percent/Rate	Previous Rank
Youth Crime Rate Per 1,000 9.9 2022	15th	5.2	7th
Children who are chronically absent 24.1% 2022-23	79th	25.2%	77th
Victims of abuse or neglect per 1,000 14.2 FY2022-23	57th	14.9	60th

Unicoi County

	Number	Rate	Tennessee Rate	County Rank	Year
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Demographics

Total population (state value is number not rate)	17,756	NA	7,126,489	72	2023
Population under 18 years of age (percent of total population)	3,180	17.9%	22.0%	88	2023

Economic Well-Being

Median Household Income	\$52,260	NA	\$65,231.00	64	2022
Youth unemployment	6	2.6%	9.8%	7	2023
Per capita personal income (state value is dollars not rate)	\$42,425	NA	\$58,292	55	2022
Median home sales price (state value is dollars not rate)	\$210,779	NA	\$325,000	67	2022
Children receiving Families First grants (TANF)	70	2.2%	1.5%	72	FY23
Children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)	715	22.5%	22.4%	36	FY23
Fair market rent (percent of monthly median household income)	\$1,107	25.4%	21.4%	64	FY23
WIC participation (percent of children under 5)	411	53.9%	29.0%	88	FY23

Education

School age special education services (age 3 to 21)	420	12.3%	8.0%	88	2022-23
TEIS participation (percent of children age 0 to 4)	42	5.5%	4.4%	77	2022-23
Economically disadvantaged students	699	34.0%	30.2%	53	2022-23
School suspensions	67	3.3%	4.6%	45	2022-23
Graduating seniors scoring 21 or better on the ACT at least once	62	31.0%	35.4%	51	2022-23
Young adult college enrollment (percent of graduating seniors)	NA	56.6%	54.3%	21	2022

Health

Neonatal abstinence syndrome (per 1,000 live births)	*	*	7.1	*	2022
Births to mothers who smoked during pregnancy	27	19.6%	9.1%	76	2021
Children on TennCare (Medicaid)	2,147	58.7%	53.1%	45	Dec-23
Total TennCare (Medicaid) enrollees	4,243	23.9%	23.0%	36	Dec-23
Births covered by TennCare (Medicaid)	93	65.0%	54.5%	56	2022
Children qualified for Medicaid/CHIP but uninsured	110	5.7%	6.1%	42	2021
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	*	*	6.2	*	2021
Neonatal death (per 1,000 live births)	0	0.00	3.2	1	2021
Child deaths (per 100,000 children age 1 to 14)	*	*	20.7	*	2021
Teen violent deaths (per 100,000 youth age 15 to 19)	0	0.0	69.7	1	2021
Adequate prenatal care	109	84.5%	73.9%	7	2021
Pediatric physicians (per 100,000 children)	1	31.4	76.1	39	2022-23
Children who are food insecure	640	19.6%	17.9%	20	2022
Teens with STDs (per 1,000 youth age 15 to 17)	*	*	16.1	*	2022
Confirmed elevated blood lead level (per 1,000 screened)	8	6.7%	4.7%	68	2019-23
Breastfeeding initiation at birth	106	77.9%	83.3%	58	2022
Individuals scoring for severe depression (all ages) PHQ-9 (per 100K)	53	70.1	44.8	87	2020-23
Individuals reporting frequent suicidal ideation (all ages) PHQ-9 (per 100K)	38	50.3	43.6	84	2020-23
Individuals scoring positive for PTSD (all ages) PTSD Screen (per 100K)	19	25.1	22.1	67	2020-23
Individuals scoring at risk for psychotic-like experiences PQ-B (per 100K)	31	41.0	27.7	87	2020-23

Family & Community

Reported child abuse cases	198	6.2%	4.2%	84	FY23
Commitment to state custody (per 1,000 children)	76	21.7	2.5	94	FY23
Remaining in state custody (per 1,000 children)	21	6.0	5.1	44	FY23
Juvenile court referrals	0	0.0%	1.8%	1	2022
Child restraint use in crashes (age 0 -12)	NA	91.9%	NA	60	2023
Regulated child care spaces (percent of children age 0 to 12)	380	17.6%	29.8%	66	FY23

Overall

At 37th, Unicoi County is in the top half of Tennessee counties in child well-being. The county's strongest area was Education.

Strengths

Unicoi's strongest indicator is the rate of youth crime per 1,000, where the county ranks 15th. The county also performs well in the percent of children without health insurance at 26th.

Opportunities

The county's biggest challenge is the percent of chronic absenteeism among public school students, where it ranks 79th. There are opportunities for improvement in child care cost burden as well.

Policy/Practice/Program Options to Improve Outcomes

Many of these policies have multiple models for delivery, including public-private partnership, non-profit partners and community engagement.

Evidence-based strategies to address chronic absenteeism begin with early warning prevention and intervention systems, identifying students before their absences hit chronic levels and looking for underlying causes. Implementing positive and supportive engagement strategies to improve students' attendance at, connection to and success in school can help, while counselors who address individual students' challenges with regular attendance improve outcomes. Disciplinary measures that take students out of the classroom are a contributor to chronic absenteeism and not a solution.

Reducing the cost of child care is a difficult project for many local governments to launch. The best option may be to encourage unlicensed local child care businesses to pursue licensure by the Tennessee Department of Human Resources, as they have multiple programs supporting child care businesses, educators and client families associated with licensed facilities. Additionally, many individuals may be aware they are eligible for Smart Steps. Community events to provide education about the program and assist in enrollment can help reduce some of the cost burden. Beyond that, providing supervised recreation activities for older children during out-of-school hours and developing parent-led afterschool care programs can provide lower cost alternatives for families. Businesses interested in supporting families with child care cost burden can offer Dependent Flexible Spending Accounts. Businesses that provide on-site child care, partner with a third party to provide care or facilitate employees finding care are eligible for a federal tax credit of up to \$150,000 per year

Indicator Definitions and History

Children living in poverty - Percent of children living in a household below the federal poverty line. In 2022, the federal poverty level for a family of 3 was \$23,030. Source: US Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (2022).

Severe housing cost burden - Percent of households (including rented, owned and mortgaged) spending 50% or more of their income on housing. Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2018-2022). Table B25140.

Child care cost burden - Child care cost burden reflects the average estimate market-rate price for care for full-time care of an infant and 2+ year old but less than school age child as a percentage of the county's estimated median household income. The market-rate is calculated by taking an average of the median market-rate fee for licensed providers in the county. When available, this includes Child Care Centers, Group Homes, and Family Homes. In instances where the county does not have all three, the providers existing in the county averaged. In instances where there are no licensed providers providing care to that age group in the county, the statewide average of Tier 2 market-rates are used. This average rate for infant care and 2+ care is then combined to get the total cost of care. Source: Determining Child Care Market Rates in the State of Tennessee (FY2022-23).

3rd to 8th grade reading proficiency - Percent of third- to eighth-grade students who scored "on-track" or "mastered" on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) reading and language test. Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2023-24).

3rd to 8th grade math proficiency - Percent of third- to eighth-grade students who scored "on-track" or "mastered" on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment program (TCAP) math test. Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2023-24).

Youth graduating high school on time - Percent of ninth-grade cohort that graduates in four years. Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2022-23).

Kindergarten Immunization - Percent of public-school kindergarten students fully immunized for all required vaccine series at the time of survey completion. Required series includes: Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis vaccine (DTaP), Measles, Mumps, Rubella vaccine (MMR), Hepatitis A Virus vaccine (HAV)2 Hepatitis B Virus vaccine (HBV), Poliomyelitis vaccine (IPV or OPV), and Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine/credible history of disease. Source: Tennessee Department of Health Vaccine-Preventable Diseases and Immunization Program. Kindergarten Immunization Compliance Assessment. (2022-23).

Children who lack health insurance - Percent of children who lack health insurance. Source: US Census Bureau Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (2021).

Babies born at a low birth weight - Percent of live births where baby weighs less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds), averaged over three years. Source: Tennessee Department of Health (2020-22).

Youth Crime Rate Per 1,000 - Rate of reported crimes alleged to have been committed by someone under 18 to county population of youth 12 to 17. Source: Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (2022). Accessed May 28, 2024.

Children who are chronically absent - Children who are absent 10 percent or more of school days for any reason, including excused/unexcused absences and out-of-school suspensions. Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2022-23).

Victims of abuse or neglect per 1,000 - Child victims of abuse or neglect. In cases with multiple children each child is counted individually. The total is the number of children associated with substantiated cases of severe abuse and of determinations of "Services Court Ordered" or "Services Needed" in cases of non-severe abuse or neglect. The rate is per 1,000 children. Source: Tennessee Department of Children's Services (FY2022-23).