

Aroostook County is the most northern and remote county in Maine, with approximately 12,200 children.

Areas of Strength

Aroostook County continued to have the highest rate of children enrolled in public preschool, though still lower than before the pandemic. An estimated 77.8% of four-year-olds attended public preschool in 2021-2022, compared to 92.9% in 2019-2020. Aroostook improved from the previous year in several economic measures, including a lower child poverty rate, a higher percentage of parents with children under age 6 working, and a lower percentage of teens not in school and not working.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
Public preschool	1

Areas of Challenge

Aroostook County had the highest rate of children in foster care and the third highest rate of substantiated child maltreatment. Aroostook also had the second highest child poverty rate; the second lowest median household income in the state at \$45,523; and the third highest unemployment rate. Jobs that pay a living wage and income supports such as the Child Tax Credit promote safe, financially stable families.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
Children in foster care	16
Child poverty	15
Median household income	15
Unemployment rate	14
Child maltreatment	14

Maine KIDS COUNT®, a project of the Maine Children’s Alliance, has been part of the national KIDS COUNT® network, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF), since 1994. KIDS COUNT puts together in a user-friendly internet platform the most recent, reliable data available on the well-being of children in Maine and in the nation.

From the hundreds of available indicators in the areas of health, education, and social and economic status on KIDS COUNT, the selected indicators in this County Profile are among those with county-level information, where it is clear which direction we want the indicator to go. By understanding the data and making informed policy decisions in response, we can help ensure children and families in Maine have the best opportunity to thrive.

Each County Profile includes a summary of the county’s strengths and challenges, some demographics, and then the 14 indicators of child health and well-being for the current year, previous year and in comparison to the state rate.



DEMOGRAPHICS

	Aroostook	Maine
Children under age 5, 2020	3,148	63,380
Children ages 5 -17, 2020	9,053	184,572
Total Children ages 0 -17, 2020	12,201	247,952
Births, 2021	650	12,001
Children of color, Census 2020 †	1,704	41,514
Children in poverty, 2020	2,211	30,612
Children ages 0 -18 participating in MaineCare, SFY 2022	7,994	128,221
Children receiving SNAP, Dec 2021	3,581	50,410
School children eligible for free and reduced meals, 2021-2022	8,908	59,291



HEALTH

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
Children under age 19 without health insurance, 2020	884	7.2%	6.3%		5.6%
Prenatal care in first trimester, 2020	523	89.4%	90.6%		90.2%
Immunization rate, ages 24-35 months, CY 21, Q4	705	75.6%	78.4%		72.0%
Children in foster care, 12/31/21, (rate per 1,000)	193	15.8	19.2		9.0
Substantiated child abuse CY 2021, (rate per 1,000)	341	26.7	32.3		16.9

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
Child poverty, 2020	2,211	18.8%	20.2%		12.8%
Median household income, 2020	N/A	\$45,523	\$40,675		\$59,145
Teens not in school and not working, 2016-2020	86	2.7%	4.1%		3.7%
Unemployment Rate, 2021	N/A	5.7%	5.1%		4.6%
All parents in workforce, children under 6, 2016-2020	3,700	65.9%	59.6%		70.1%

EDUCATION

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
Four-year-olds in public preschool, 2021-2022	465	77.8%	73.8%		42.5%
High school graduation rate, 2021	628	87.7%	86.2%		86.1%
Secondary school students who were chronically absent, 2020-2021*	not available	28.6%	26.8%		20.9%
Child Care sites at QRIS level 3 or 4, Dec 2021	10	16.1%	12.0%		17.7%

= Better, = Worse, = No change (defined as less than 1% change) compared to county data from prior year.

Note: MEA reading tests were not conducted 2019-2020 school year, due to Covid-19 school closures. The 2020-2021 reading test was new and did not include proficiency determinations.

†See [Census 2020 Children by race/ethnicity](#) for the numbers and percents for children of each race and ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino; and among Non-Hispanic children of the following races: American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian or Pacific Islander; Black or African American; Two or More Races or Some Other Race; and White.

*Chronic absenteeism is based on eighteen or more excused or unexcused absences and is an unweighted average of secondary schools, not taking into account the number of students per school.