

Penobscot County, home to the city of Bangor in central Maine, is Maine’s third most populous county with approximately 26,920 children.

### Areas of Strength

Penobscot County had the third lowest rate for infants with low birth weights and the fourth lowest rate of children without health insurance. Practices that promote access to health care for pregnant women and young children help lay the foundation for their healthy development. Penobscot was the only county to show improvement on over 90% of the indicators. A strong economy and a healthcare system with adequate capacity helps families meet basic needs and stay healthy.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
Infants with low birth weights	3
Children without health insurance	4

### Areas of Challenge

Penobscot County had the third lowest percent of high-quality child care sites, rated at 4 or 5 stars in the Rising Stars system at 11.8% in December 2023. High quality early education is important to build a foundation for future learning. Although Penobscot’s rate of child poverty improved slightly, it exceeded the state rate in 2022. Penobscot’s rate of children in foster care and children with maltreatment were both above state rates.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
High-quality child care sites	14

The Maine Children’s Alliance is part of the national [KIDS COUNT](#)® network of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. In a user-friendly internet platform, KIDS COUNT® makes available the most recent, reliable data on the well-being of children in Maine and the nation.

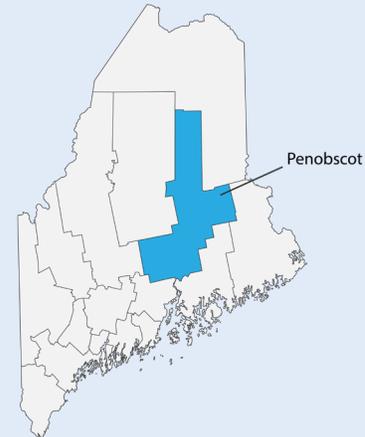
From the hundreds of indicators in the areas of health, education, and economic status on KIDS COUNT, the selected indicators in this County Profile are among those where county-level data is available where it is clear which direction we want the indicator to go to make improvements for Maine children. 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, demographic data, and then information on the fourteen indicators of child health and well-being for the current year, previous year, and in comparison to the state rate.



**DEMOGRAPHICS**

	Penobscot	Maine
<a href="#">Children under age 5, 2022</a>	6,661	62,120
<a href="#">Children ages 5 -17, 2022</a>	20,258	187,186
<a href="#">Total Children ages 0 -17, 2022</a>	26,919	249,306
<a href="#">Births, 2022</a>	1,349	12,081
<a href="#">Children of color, Census 2020 †</a>	3,971	41,514
<a href="#">Children in poverty, 2022</a>	4,012	29,991
<a href="#">Children ages 0 -18 participating in MaineCare, SFY 2023</a>	15,339	133,431
<a href="#">Children receiving SNAP, Dec 2023</a>	6,805	55,559
<a href="#">Economically disadvantaged students, under 185% of poverty, 2023-2024</a>	7,869	63,983



**HEALTH**

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
<a href="#">Children under age 19 without health insurance, 2021</a>	1,170	4.2%	4.9%		4.3%
<a href="#">Infants with low birth weights, 2022</a>	89	6.6%	7.7%		8.2%
<a href="#">Youth in evidence-based practices of HCT FFT or HCT MST*, rate per 1,000, September 2023</a>	11	0.84	0.46		1.04
<a href="#">Children in foster care, December 2023, rate per 1,000</a>	294	10.9	11.6		9.6
<a href="#">Substantiated child abuse, 2022, rate per 1,000</a>	368	13.8	18.0		15.8

**SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC**

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
<a href="#">Child poverty, 2022</a>	4,012	15.5%	15.7%		12.4%
<a href="#">Median household income, 2022</a>	N/A	\$60,761	\$56,261		\$69,485
<a href="#">Teens not in school and not working, 2018-2022</a>	297	3.4%	3.8%		4.2%
<a href="#">Unemployment Rate, 2022</a>	N/A	3.1%	4.7%		3.0%
<a href="#">All parents in workforce, children under 6, 2018-2022</a>	5,420	66.8%	66.8%		69.6%

**EDUCATION**

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
<a href="#">Four-year-olds in public preschool, 2023-2024</a>	870	61.8%	66.0%		48.5%
<a href="#">High school graduation rate, 2022</a>	1,418	87.6%	86.4%		86.1%
<a href="#">Chronic absenteeism in schools with 12th graders**, 2021-2022</a>	2,050	31.2%	36.0%		31.4%
<a href="#">High-quality child care sites (Rising Stars 4 or 5)††, December 2023</a>	18	11.8%	10.3%		17.7%

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

**Notes:**

Maine's standardized reading tests do not include proficiency determinations so academic achievement indicators are not included.

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

\* HCT-MST and HCT-FFT are the acronyms of two evidence-based intensive home and community mental health treatment services for families and youth to prevent institutional placements.

\*\* Secondary school chronic absenteeism (18 days or more) among all public schools that offer grades 9-12, including 60% publicly funded private schools and excluding technical schools.

†† As of March 2023, Rising Stars is Maine's method of assessing and encouraging quality early care programs. It is mandatory and licensed child care programs start at 2 stars.