

Somerset County is rural but has the eighth highest number of children of all 16 counties at 9,265 children.

### Areas of Strength

As of December 2023, Somerset County was among the three counties with the highest rates of high-quality child care sites using the Rising Stars quality system at 31.4% compared to 17.7% statewide. Quality early education prepares children to be successful in school and reach their potential. Additionally, Somerset had the fourth highest rate of youth in the evidenced-based community mental health service to avoid institutional placement, and the fifth highest rate of children with health insurance.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
High-quality child care sites	3
Evidenced-based mental health	4
Children without health insurance	5

### Areas of Challenge

Somerset County had the highest child poverty rate in the state at 19.0% in 2022, and the third highest unemployment rate. Somerset had the highest rate of child maltreatment, double the state rate, and the third highest rate for children in foster care. When economic conditions are not strong, financial stress can impact the caregiving relationship between parents and their children. Somerset high school graduation rate declined from 81.5% to 74.7% in 2022, the lowest in the state.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
Child poverty	16
Child maltreatment	16
High school graduation	16
Unemployment rate	14
Children in foster care	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.

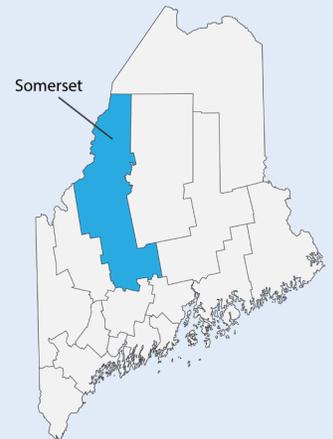
From the hundreds of indicators in the areas of health, education, and economic status on KIDS COUNT, the selected indicators in this County Profile are among those where county-level data is available where it is clear which direction we want the indicator to go to make improvements for Maine children. 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**

	Somerset	Maine
<a href="#">Children under age 5, 2022</a>	2,312	62,120
<a href="#">Children ages 5 -17, 2022</a>	6,953	187,186
<a href="#">Total Children ages 0 -17, 2022</a>	9,265	249,306
<a href="#">Births, 2022</a>	442	12,081
<a href="#">Children of color, Census 2020 †</a>	970	41,514
<a href="#">Children in poverty, 2022</a>	1,718	29,991
<a href="#">Children ages 0 -18 participating in MaineCare, SFY 2023</a>	6,630	133,431
<a href="#">Children receiving SNAP, Dec 2023</a>	3,017	55,559
<a href="#">Economically disadvantaged students, under 185% of poverty, 2023-2024</a>	3,808	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>	407	4.3%	5.7%		4.3%
<a href="#">Infants with low birth weights, 2022</a>	35	7.9%	8.3%		8.2%
<a href="#">Youth in evidence-based practices of HCT FFT or HCT MST*, rate per 1,000, September 2023</a>	7	1.55	1.78		1.04
<a href="#">Children in foster care, December 2023, rate per 1,000</a>	145	15.7	17.9		9.6
<a href="#">Substantiated child abuse, 2022, rate per 1,000</a>	296	31.7	29.8		15.8

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
<a href="#">Child poverty, 2022</a>	1,718	19.0%	19.2%		12.4%
<a href="#">Median household income, 2022</a>	N/A	\$55,093	\$51,040		\$69,485
<a href="#">Teens not in school and not working, 2018-2022</a>	162	7.3%	6.5%		4.2%
<a href="#">Unemployment Rate, 2022</a>	N/A	4.1%	6.3%		3.0%
<a href="#">All parents in workforce, children under 6, 2018-2022</a>	1,833	61.6%	57.7%		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>	289	60.6%	60.8%		48.5%
<a href="#">High school graduation rate, 2022</a>	446	74.7%	81.5%		86.1%
<a href="#">Chronic absenteeism in schools with 12th graders**, 2021-2022</a>	768	36.2%	37.7%		31.4%
<a href="#">High-quality child care sites (Rising Stars 4 or 5)††, December 2023</a>	16	31.4%	27.8%		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.