

Waldo County is a central, coastal county in Maine with approximately 7,160 children.

### Areas of Strength

Waldo County had the second highest rate of high-quality child care sites in the Rising Stars system, at 36.7% in December 2023. Communities that have quality early education programs help their children reach their full potential. Additionally, there were improvements in child poverty and an increase in median household income, and concurrently, Waldo saw a reduction in child maltreatment in 2022 and improved from ranking fifteenth to seventh among Maine’s counties. Families thrive when their economic needs are met.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
High-quality child care sites	2

### Areas of Challenge

Waldo County had the highest rate in the state of chronic absenteeism among secondary students at 41.2% in 2022-2023 and its high school graduation rate was below the state average. Having a positive school climate and empowering students to graduate high school and pursue education and careers helps youth thrive as adults. Waldo also had the second lowest rates of four-year-olds in public preschool as well as the third highest rate of children without health insurance.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
Chronic absenteeism	16
Public preschool	15
Children without health insurance	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**

	Waldo	Maine
<a href="#">Children under age 5, 2022</a>	1,769	62,120
<a href="#">Children ages 5 -17, 2022</a>	5,392	187,186
<a href="#">Total Children ages 0 -17, 2022</a>	7,161	249,306
<a href="#">Births, 2022</a>	304	12,081
<a href="#">Children of color, Census 2020 †</a>	802	41,514
<a href="#">Children in poverty, 2022</a>	1,118	29,991
<a href="#">Children ages 0 -18 participating in MaineCare, SFY 2023</a>	4,416	133,431
<a href="#">Children receiving SNAP, Dec 2023</a>	1,770	55,559
<a href="#">Economically disadvantaged students, under 185% of poverty, 2023-2024</a>	1,989	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>	402	5.4%	6.6%		4.3%
<a href="#">Infants with low birth weights, 2022</a>	30	9.9%	9.5%		8.2%
<a href="#">Youth in evidence-based practices of HCT FFT or HCT MST*, rate per 1,000, September 2023</a>	1	0.29	1.15		1.04
<a href="#">Children in foster care, December 2023, rate per 1,000</a>	42	5.9	8.9		9.6
<a href="#">Substantiated child abuse, 2022, rate per 1,000</a>	128	17.6	28.0		15.8

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
<a href="#">Child poverty, 2022</a>	1,118	16.2%	18.2%		12.4%
<a href="#">Median household income, 2022</a>	N/A	\$63,619	\$58,262		\$69,485
<a href="#">Teens not in school and not working, 2018-2022</a>	88	4.9%	4.9%		4.2%
<a href="#">Unemployment Rate, 2022</a>	N/A	3.2%	4.7%		3.0%
<a href="#">All parents in workforce, children under 6, 2018-2022</a>	1,311	69.0%	71.5%		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>	118	32.3%	29.6%		48.5%
<a href="#">High school graduation rate, 2022</a>	190	85.2%	85.2%		86.1%
<a href="#">Chronic absenteeism in schools with 12th graders**, 2021-2022</a>	408	41.2%	45.3%		31.4%
<a href="#">High-quality child care sites (Rising Stars 4 or 5)††, December 2023</a>	18	36.7%	36.0%		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.