

Penobscot County, home to the city of Bangor in central Maine, is Maine’s third most populous county with 27,000 children.

Areas of Strength

Penobscot County had the second highest rates in the state for both prenatal care in the first trimester and the rate of young children receiving all their immunizations. Penobscot also had the second lowest rate of uninsured children. Practices that promote access to health care for pregnant women and young children help set the stage for their healthy development.

Areas of Challenge

Penobscot County had the second lowest percentage of high-quality child care sites in the QRIS system. Attention to the educational, social and emotional needs of children under age five is important to build a foundation for success. Additionally, Penobscot’s rate of children in foster care was above the state rate. Children need safe and supportive families to thrive.

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
Prenatal care in first trimester	2
Young child immunizations	2
Uninsured children	2

INDICATOR	STATE RANK
Quality child care	15

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

	Penobscot	Maine
Children under age 5, 2020	6,923	63,380
Children ages 5 -17, 2020	19,771	184,572
Total Children ages 0 -17, 2020	26,694	247,952
Births, 2021	1,301	12,001
Children of color, Census 2020 †	3,971	41,514
Children in poverty, 2020	3,401	30,612
Children ages 0 -18 participating in MaineCare, SFY 2022	14,981	128,221
Children receiving SNAP, Dec 2021	6,293	50,410
School children eligible for free and reduced meals, 2021-2022	7,595	59,291



HEALTH

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
Children under age 19 without health insurance, 2020	1,345	4.9%	6.1%		5.6%
Prenatal care in first trimester, 2020	1,146	95.3%	93.6%		90.2%
Immunization rate, ages 24-35 months, CY 21, Q4	1,345	78.4%	76.8%		72.0%
Children in foster care, 12/31/21, (rate per 1,000)	309	11.6	11.9		9.0
Substantiated child abuse CY 2021, (rate per 1,000)	500	18.0	20.9		16.9

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
Child poverty, 2020	3,401	13.1%	13.9%		12.8%
Median household income, 2020	N/A	\$52,079	\$50,702		\$59,145
Teens not in school and not working, 2016-2020	271	3.0%	2.0%		3.7%
Unemployment Rate, 2021	N/A	4.7%	5.0%		4.6%
All parents in workforce, children under 6, 2016-2020	8,355	67.0%	67.1%		70.1%

EDUCATION

	Current number	Current rate	Previous rate	Better or Worse?	State rate
Four-year-olds in public preschool, 2021-2022	773	53.4%	41.0%		42.5%
High school graduation rate, 2021	1,359	86.4%	86.7%		86.1%
Secondary school students who were chronically absent, 2020-2021*	not available	26.6%	24.4%		20.9%
Child Care sites at QRIS level 3 or 4, Dec 2021	14	10.9%	7.6%		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.