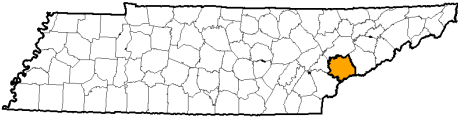
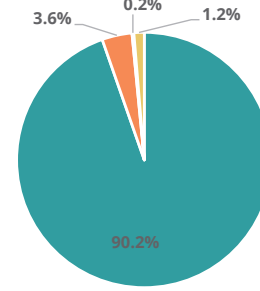


# 5th BLOUNT

Population Under 18: 19.7%

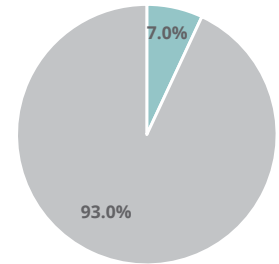


Child Population by Race



■ White, Including Hispanic ■ Black, Including Hispanic  
■ Native American/Alaskan ■ Asian/Pacific Islander

Child Population by Hispanic Ethnicity



■ Hispanic, All Races ■ Non-Hispanic

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## ECONOMIC WELL-BEING 12TH

Metric	Value	Rank	Previous Percent/Rate	Previous Rank
Children living in poverty	13.9%	8th	12.8%	8th
Severe housing cost burden	8.7%	23rd	9.2%	30th
Child care cost burden	23.4%	42nd	19.5%	18th

## EDUCATION 10TH

Metric	Value	Rank	Previous Percent/Rate	Previous Rank
3rd to 8th grade reading proficiency	43.6%	7th	37.3%	5th
3rd to 8th grade math proficiency	43.4%	13th	40.1%	8th
Youth graduating high school on time	94.2%	40th	94.6%	25th

## HEALTH 6TH

Metric	Value	Rank	Previous Percent/Rate	Previous Rank
Children who are food insecure	7.3%	5th	10.8%	5th
Children who lack health insurance	6.1%	45th	5.3%	59th
Babies born at a low birthweight	8.1%	28th	7.5%	23rd

## FAMILY & COMMUNITY 3RD

Metric	Value	Rank	Previous Percent/Rate	Previous Rank
Children living in single parent families	26.1%	17th	18.0%	9th
Children who are chronically absent	4.8%	1st	6.4%	10th
Victims of abuse or neglect per 1,000	12.2	40th	16.8	73rd

# Blount County

	Number	Rate	Tennessee Rate	County Rate as a percentage of State Rate	County Rank
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## Demographics

Total population (state value is number not rate)	137,602	NA	6,975,170	2.0%	11
Population under 18 years of age (percent of total population)	27,054	19.7%	22.0%	89.4%	70

## Economic Well-Being

Youth unemployment	226	8.2%	12.9%	63.6%	31
Per capita personal income (state value is dollars not rate)	\$52,596	NA	\$56,560	93.0%	11
Median home sales price (state value is dollars not rate)	\$284,450	NA	\$283,410	100.4%	12
Children receiving Families First grants (TANF)	297	1.1%	1.5%	73.6%	18
Children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)	4,181	15.5%	24.0%	64.3%	7
Fair market rent (percent of monthly median household income)	\$1,287	24.6%	21.1%	116.9%	63

## Education

School age special education services	2,170	12.2%	12.2%	100.6%	21
TEIS participation (percent of children age 0 to 2)	194	5.0%	3.8%	131.7%	87
Cohort high school dropouts (percent of class cohort)	38	3.0%	6.7%	44.4%	30
Event high school dropouts (percent of students grade 9 to 12)	68	1.2%	4.0%	31.2%	30
Economically disadvantaged students	2,671	15.1%	30.0%	50.2%	3
School suspensions	945	5.3%	5.1%	104.7%	62
Graduating seniors scoring 21 or better on the ACT at least once	564	46.2%	35.3%	130.6%	4
Young adult college enrollment (percent of graduating seniors)	3,906	54.1%	52.8%	102.5%	23

## Health

Neonatal abstinence syndrome (per 1,000 live births)	22	16.88	6.6	256.0%	32
Births to mothers who smoked during pregnancy	165	12.8%	9.1%	140.1%	30
Children on TennCare (Medicaid)	14,842	46.8%	55.3%	84.7%	10
Total TennCare (Medicaid) enrollees	26,207	19.0%	24.9%	76.5%	6
Births covered by TennCare (Medicaid)	673	51.7%	55.1%	93.8%	16
Children qualified for Medicaid/CHIP but uninsured	927	7.6%	7.6%	100.0%	60
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	*	*	6.2	*	*
Neonatal death (per 1,000 live births)	*	*	3.2	*	*
Child deaths (per 100,000 children age 1 to 14)	*	*	20.7	*	*
Teen violent deaths (per 100,000 youth age 15 to 19)	*	*	69.7	*	*
Adequate prenatal care	1,098	84.6%	73.9%	114.5%	6
Pediatric physicians (per 100,000 children)	18	66.5	76.5	87.0%	11
Public school students measured as overweight/obese	NA	39.5%	42.8%	92.5%	16
Teens with STDs (per 1,000 youth age 15 to 17)	52	10.8	16.6	64.9%	36
WIC participation (percent of children under 5)	2,445	36.6%	31.7%	115.6%	34
Dentists by county (per 100,000 residents)	51	37.1	41.4	89.4%	21

## Family & Community

Reported child abuse cases	1,308	4.8%	4.6%	105.3%	34
Commitment to state custody (per 1,000 children)	45	1.5	2.8	53.1%	16
Remaining in state custody (per 1,000 children)	183	6.1	5.3	114.5%	45
Juvenile court referrals	499	1.8%	1.8%	103.0%	49
Recorded marriages (per 1,000 residents)	957	7.1	6.6	107.6%	30
Recorded divorces (per 1,000 residents)	533	4.0	3.2	123.6%	73
Young driver accidents (percent of age 15-24 driver's licenses)	1,329	10.9%	12.3%	88.4%	78
Regulated child care spaces (percent of children age 0 to 12)	5,728	30.2%	28.9%	104.6%	22
Child care assistance (per 1,000 children age 0 to 12)	270	14.3	24.9	57.2%	59

# Blount

## Overall

At 5th, Blount County is in the top ten Tennessee counties in child well-being. The county's strongest area was Family & Community.

## Strengths

Blount's strongest indicator is the percent of chronic absenteeism among public school students, where the county ranks 1st. The county also performs well in the percent of children who are food insecure at 7.3%.

## Opportunities

The county's biggest challenge is the percent of children without health insurance, where it ranks 43rd. There are opportunities for improvement in the child care cost burden as well.

## Policy/Practice/Program Options to Improve Outcomes

Many of these policies have multiple models for delivery, including public-private partnership, non-profit partners and community engagement.

Most uninsured children in Tennessee qualify for either TennCare or CoverKids, so high rates of uninsured children can be improved with outreach to make sure families are aware of these insurance opportunities. According to Census Bureau estimates, Blount County has 927 children who qualify for these health insurance programs but who nonetheless lack insurance. Communities can utilize free outreach resources from the Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign at [InsureKidsNow.Gov](https://InsureKidsNow.Gov). Those insured by TennCare or CoverKids must keep current contact information with TennCare to prevent unnecessary breaks in coverage. Members can update information at [tenncareconnect.tn.gov](https://tenncareconnect.tn.gov) or by calling 855-259-0701.

Reducing the cost of child care is a difficult project for many local governments to launch. The best option may be to encourage unlicensed local child care businesses to pursue licensure by the Tennessee Department of Human Resources, as they have multiple programs supporting child care businesses, educators and client families associated with licensed facilities. Beyond that, providing supervised recreation activities for older children during out-of-school hours and developing parent-led afterschool care programs can provide lower cost alternatives for families. Businesses interested in supporting families with child care cost burden can offer Dependent Flexible Spending Accounts. Businesses that provide on-site child care, partner with a third party to provide care or facilitate employees finding care are eligible for a federal tax credit of up to \$150,000 per year.

## Indicator Definitions and History

**Children living in poverty** - Percent of children living in a household below the federal poverty line. Source: US Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (2021).

**Severe housing cost burden** - Percent of households spending 50% or more of their income on housing. Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2017-2021). New to the county profiles, it replaces Fair Market Rent. It is more closely aligned to a KIDS COUNT national indicator, does not apply only to rental housing, and is a rate rather than a dollar value.

**Child care cost burden** - Child care costs for a household with two children as a percent of median household income. Source: Produced by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute using The Living Wage Calculator (2022) and Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (2021). This is new to the rankings and replaces Median Household Income (MHI). We wanted an indicator expressed as a percentage rather than a dollar amount as well as one that related to a common family expense. Income is already somewhat measured in poverty estimates. In addition, this indicator uses MHI in its calculation.

**3rd to 8th grade reading proficiency** - Percent of third- to eighth-grade students who scored "on-track" or "mastered" on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) reading and language test. Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2021-22).

**3rd to 8th grade math proficiency** - Percent of third- to eighth-grade students who scored "on-track" or "mastered" on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment program (TCAP) math test. Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2021-22).

**Youth graduating high school on time** - Percent of ninth-grade cohort that graduates in four years. Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2021-22).

**Children who are food insecure** - Percent of children who sometimes lack access to adequate food. Source: Map the Meal Gap (2021). This is new to the rankings and replaces child and teen death rates, which, because the Department of Health has tightened its data suppression rules, is no longer available for all counties. We did not have an indicator for all counties to line up with overweight/obesity data in the national ranking, so we searched for an one related to nutrition and healthy eating.

**Children who lack health insurance** - Percent of children who lack health insurance. Source: US Census Bureau Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (2020).

**Babies born at a low birthweight** - Percent of live births where baby weighs less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds), averaged over three years. Source: Tennessee Department of Health (2019-21), with three counties estimated using American Community Survey 5-year data (2015-19, 2016-20, 2017-21). It has been in our county profiles from the beginning, though it was previously just one-year data. The Department of Health has tightened its data suppression rules, and dozens of counties' data were unavailable with one-year numbers. Three-year numbers still left three counties suppressed. Those were estimated from 5-year American Community Survey data.

**Children living in single parent families** - Single-parent households as a percent of all households with children. Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2017-2021). New to the county profiles, it replaces births to unmarried females, which in turn replaced teen births. As the Tennessee Department of Health tightened its data suppression rules, teen birth data was no longer available for all counties. Children born to unmarried females was always an attempt to roughly estimate teen births using different data. In moving from actual counts to ACS 5-year estimates, we decided to use this indicator over teen births as it affects families with parents of all ages.

**Children who are chronically absent** - Children who are absent 10 percent or more of school days for any reason, including excused/unexcused absences and out-of-school suspensions. Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2021-22). New to the county profiles, it replaces school suspensions, which have suppressed data for many counties.

**Victims of abuse or neglect per 1,000** - Child victims of abuse or neglect. In cases with multiple children each child is counted individually. The total is the number of children associated with substantiated cases of severe abuse and of determinations of "Services Court Ordered" or "Services Needed" in cases of non-severe abuse or neglect. Children with multiple cases during the year are counted only once. The rate is per 1,000 children. Source: Tennessee Department of Children's Services (2021). This has been in our county rankings from the beginning, but we have moved to counting children rather than cases.