

Immigrant Children and Families

As stated earlier, Arkansas has made important advancements in improving the lives of children statewide. However, deep racial and ethnic disparities persist in children’s achievement levels, and laws at the local, state and federal levels continue to perpetuate long-standing inequity. In addition to the disparities we see for children of color, children in immigrant families in Arkansas are more likely to live in or near poverty than their peers in other states.

More than 80,000 children in Arkansas have parents who were born abroad or are immigrants themselves. More than two-thirds of those children — 69 percent — are growing up in low-income families, or those whose incomes are not higher than \$41,560 for a family of three. In comparison, 52 percent of Arkansas children whose parents were both born in the United States live in low-income families.

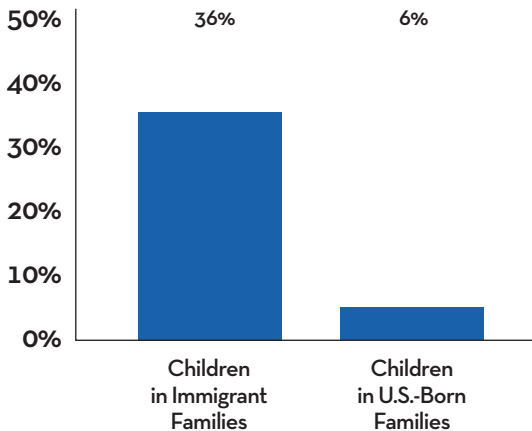
These gaps in economic security are made worse by policies that keep young people and their parents from participating fully in our economy, driving down wages for families in all ethnic and racial groups. We need all children in Arkansas to reach their full potential if we are to reach ours as a state.

What to Ask Candidates

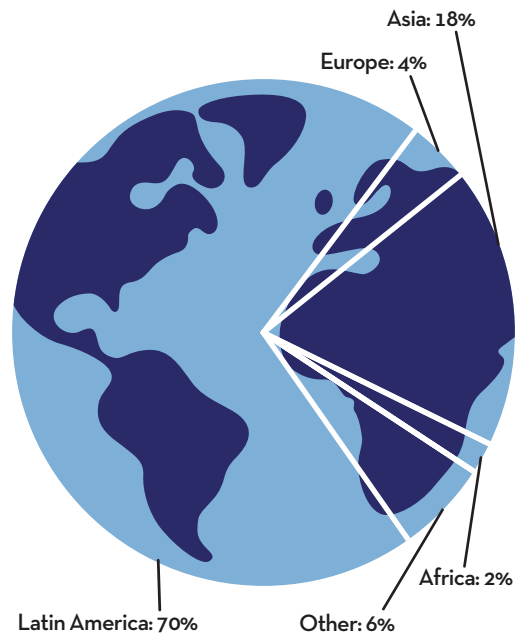
- Under federal law, adults who were born in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, who live and work lawfully in Arkansas, aren’t eligible for programs like Medicaid or SNAP (food stamps). How can Arkansas work to address disparities in family economic security?
- How would you approach changing the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, which protects young immigrants from deportation and allows them to work lawfully in the United States?
- Many working Arkansans, especially immigrants, are victims of “wage theft,” or the denial of wages owed an employee. What are your thoughts on legislation that would require employers to issue a paystub to workers, a policy in place in all but a few states, including Arkansas?

Nearly All (91%) of Arkansas’s Children in Immigrant Families are U.S. Citizens; Still Lack Advantages of Children in U.S.-Born Families

Arkansas Children Whose Parents All Have Less than a High School Diploma



Arkansas Children in Immigrant Families by Parent’s Region of Origin



Source: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#AR/2/0/char/3>