

## Economic Well-being

Arkansas is ranked:

47th



Economic well-being represents the financial health of families, the quality of jobs available, and who is working and not working. Arkansas still struggles with key areas of economic well-being.



27% of Arkansas kids live in poverty



34% of kids have parents who don't have secure jobs



29% of kids live with parents who spend too much on housing



9% of teens are not in school or working

## Education

Arkansas is ranked:

35th



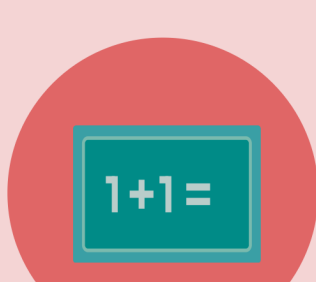
Arkansas is far behind other states in educational investment and success for multiple age groups and subjects.



52% of our kids don't go to preschool



68% of 4th graders are behind on reading



75% of 8th graders are behind on math



15% of high school students do not graduate on time

## Family & Community

Arkansas is ranked:

45th



Family and community metrics measure the ability of neighborhoods to foster positive, nurturing environments to help kids reach their full potential.



36% of our kids live in single-parent families



14% of kids have a head of household that lacks a high school diploma



16% of kids live in high-poverty areas



There are 38 teen births per 1000 every year

## Health

Arkansas is ranked:

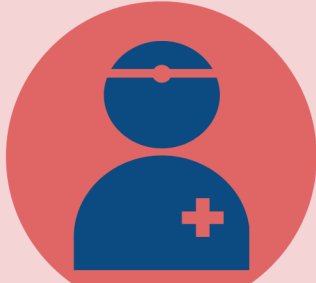
47th



Healthy communities lead to more productive and successful futures. Health care in the early years is especially important for kids to maintain lifelong positive outcomes, but Arkansas has a long way to go to catch up with other states.



9.2% of Arkansas babies are born low-birthweight



5% of kids don't have health insurance



Each year, there are 34 child and teen deaths per 100,000



6% of our teens abuse alcohol or drugs

We can move toward #1 with these smart policies:

## Economic well-being policies

### Reinforce tax credits



A state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) would expand the federal version that currently lifts 57,000 Arkansas kids out of poverty and is proven to help their parents obtain better jobs.

### Protect anti-hunger programs



The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps keep thousands of kids in Arkansas from going hungry. We must keep photo ID requirements, food restrictions, and other barriers from hindering this program.

### Improve tenant rights



Arkansas has the worst tenant laws in the nation. We can help lower-income renters by not allowing criminalization of late payments, and requiring landlords to meet basic safety requirements for their rentals.

## Education policies

### Invest in early education



Pre-K is the foundation of a successful education. We must improve the quality of early childhood programs through increased funding and coordination with the K-12 system.

### Help kids after school, too



Funding the Youth Development Grant Program Act would cost \$5 million and provide valuable community-building after-school and summer programs for kids. These programs are proven to help working families, reduce juvenile crime, and establish workforce habits.

### Improve school discipline



We should adopt research-based discipline policies that keep kids in the classroom and reduce racial disparities.

## Family and community policies

### Continue to improve the foster care system



The Division of Children and Family Services received a much-needed \$26.7 million increase in funding in 2017. The number of children in the foster care system is at an all-time high and we must continue to invest in our kids during difficult times.

### Improve the juvenile justice system



There is ample evidence that community-based alternatives for juvenile offenders are often more cost effective than secure confinement. Arkansas has already shown we can reduce secure confinement of low-risk offenders, save money, and reinvest the savings in more effective programs.

## Health policies

### Maintain access to affordable care



With over 300,000 Arkansans enrolled and millions of federal dollars helping the state budget, protecting our Medicaid Expansion program (Arkansas Works) is a key priority. We should make sure enrollment caps, work requirements, and high costs do not keep people from getting the care they need.

### Take final steps to include Marshallese children



In 2017 lawmakers worked to address a longstanding issue that kept Marshallese kids legally residing in Arkansas from enrolling in ARKids First. Bipartisan majorities overwhelmingly passed a resolution to encourage the Governor to extend coverage to these kids, which he said he would do. This is just the first step; more action is necessary at the state and federal level.