

ABOUT CHILDREN & FAMILIES...

In 2022, **Texas ranked 45th in the nation** for overall child well-being. The state continues to rank in the bottom half in all four child well-being categories: economic well-being, education, health, and family and community.

	U.S.	TEXAS
Minimum Wage	\$10.70	\$7.25
Poverty Rate	11.50%	14%
% of Children in Poverty	16%	20%
% Families with Food Insecurity	12.80%	16%
Health Care Uninsured Rate	10.20%	11.80%
% Children Health Care Uninsured	5.30%	11.80%
Teen Birth Rate per 1,000 Teens	13.9	20.3
Pre-K-12 Per Pupil Spending	\$14,347	\$6,160
Median Price of Home	\$273,992	\$342,400

UNDER DEMOCRATS

Democratic policies ensure more American families will have the resources and opportunities they need. By raising the minimum wage, supporting affordable housing, preserving critical nutritional assistance programs, increasing access to high-quality health care and education, protecting Social Security, and continuing efforts to create well-paying jobs here at home, In his 2024 budget, President Biden proposed **\$600 billion in spending on child care and early education.** Biden's *American Families Plan* proposes universal preschool and ensures that no household spends more than 7% of its income on child care. It also includes allocating \$225 billion to help families with children up to age 13 pay for child care. Democrats support free, universal pre-K for three- and four-year-olds nationwide.

- The U.S. is one of only a few wealthy countries in the world that does not guarantee paid leave at the national level. Biden's budget plan for fiscal year 2024, contains a **\$325 billion commitment to a comprehensive, permanent paid family and medical leave program.** This program would provide workers up to 12 paid weeks off to bond with a new child, care for a family member or heal from their own serious illness.
- Biden continues to urge Congress to **raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour.** Democrats will work to guarantee equal pay for women and make it easier for working families to benefit from targeted tax breaks, including the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit.
- Democrats will increase funding for assistance to first-time purchasers and homeowners by creating a **new tax credit of up to \$15,000 to help first-time homebuyers,** and will make the tax credit refundable and advanceable, so buyers can get assistance at the time of purchase, instead of having to wait until they file their taxes.
- In June 2023, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded more than \$68.5 million through cooperative agreements in 29 states and Puerto Rico to support the **Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program.**

UNDER REPUBLICANS

Republicans believe that federal assistance programs actually keep families dependent on the government. Their platform emphasizes the need for work requirements, arguing that "opportunity" should replace "handouts."

- The Trump administration **excluded nearly 5 million children from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps)** benefits and has proposed cutting SNAP by 30% over the next decade, which would affect the 9.2 million SNAP households with children.
- Republicans want to **eliminate the Head Start program.** They will prioritize funding for home-based childcare, not universal day care. Republicans support the **use of taxpayer money to fund vouchers** to private schools. This will take away millions of dollars from public schools.
- Republicans plan to **repeal the Affordable Care Act.** They will also make deep cuts to Medicaid. The result will be that millions of Americans will have higher health care costs or even lose their health insurance entirely.

- Each year that Trump was in office, he proposed **massive cuts to federal affordable housing programs**. In 2019, he sought to slash the budget for the Department of Housing and Urban Development by 18%. Trump proposed to reduce housing benefits by increasing rents and imposing work requirements on some of the country's poorest families who are lucky enough to receive federal housing assistance from PHAs and private owners who are subsidized by HUD.
- The Trump administration **slashed more than \$200 million from the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program** without warning. Now teen birth rates are on the rise in Texas for the first time in 15 years. The Texas teen birth rate is now 50% higher than the national average. Sexually transmitted infections are also on the rise.
- In June 2021, Texas' Republican-led legislature passed a bill that would **prevent cities and counties from requiring employers to provide certain benefits, such as paid leave**.
- During his 2016 campaign, Trump **suggested raising federal minimum wage to at least \$10 but did not move to do so** while in office. Trump has now stated that he would "consider" raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour if he's re-elected but said he'd also strongly prefer to let states decide for themselves.

TEXAS CHILDREN

- Texas **teenagers are giving birth** at a rate that is 46% higher than the national average. Texas has the highest rate of "repeat teen births" - more than 1 in 6 teenagers who gave birth in Texas in 2020 already had a child. Texas does not require sex education and has the strictest abortion law in the nation.
- **One out of five Texas children goes hungry**. Ours is the second-most food-insecure state in the U.S., just ahead of Arkansas. Texas republicans have declined \$450 million in federal money that would have helped provide food for 3.8 million low-income Texas children this summer. If it had, qualifying families would have received \$120 per child through a pre-loaded card for the three summer months.
- The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services **Foster Care Program** has been under the supervision of court-appointed monitors since 2019. U.S. District Judge Janis Jack now has to decide whether DFPS should be held in contempt of court orders for the third time for failing to fix deficiencies noted by the court. There are the roughly 9,000 children currently in permanent state custody. Judge Jack issued a strong rebuke of state foster care officials, saying that *"children removed from their parents and given over to the state leave the system more damaged than when they entered it."*

TEXAS FAMILIES

- The official **poverty rate** in the U.S. in 2022 was 11.5%, or 37.9 million people, including over 9 million children. In Texas, despite a reduction in the poverty rate from 17.9% to 14% over the past decade, the state still has the 10th worst poverty rate in the nation.
- The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** (formerly food stamps) provides food benefits to low-income families to supplement their groceries. In the U.S., 12.5% of the population, or 41.2 million people (21.6 million households) rely on monthly SNAP benefits. In Texas, 3,406,000 people (1,137,919 households) receive SNAP.
- On average, it costs **\$12,000 to give birth** to a child in Texas. **Child care** is one of the biggest expenses families face. The average annual cost of child care for an infant in Texas is \$9,324 (\$777 a month); for part-time care for school-age children, it's \$6,055 (\$504 a month).

TEXAS WORKERS

- Although Texas doesn't have a state income tax, it's one of the most expensive states to live in when it comes to **property taxes**. Texas' tax system ranks as the second most regressive in the nation. This means that working residents pay a larger share of their income in taxes compared to the state's wealthiest residents.
- Texas has the 5th highest rate of people experiencing **homelessness** (77,723 in 2023).
- Most employers in Texas do not offer **paid parental leave** to their workers. 74% of working Texans – 10.8 million workers – do not have access to paid family leave and 64% of them do not even have access to unpaid leave.
- After decades of **widening inequality**, Texas's richest households have dramatically bigger incomes than its poorest households. The richest 5% of households have average incomes 30 times as large as the bottom 20% of households and 4.8 times as large as the middle 20% of households.