

## Child Nutrition

*1 in 5 children in*  
**GEORGIA**  
*1 in 6 children*  
**NATIONALLY** are  
*food insecure*

### Why we care:

Georgia's children are facing a critical challenge: 1 in 7 is affected by food insecurity, with many low-income families unable to access the nutritious food they need. For these kids, schools are a lifeline, yet weekends, summers, and rural areas often reveal gaps where children go hungry. With diet-related illnesses and obesity rising in communities where fresh food is scarce, it's clear we need a united effort to ensure every child has access to healthy meals. Let's rally together—schools, communities, and advocates—to build a future where no Georgia child has to wonder where their next meal will come from.

### Additional Resources:



<https://bit.ly/4iid3sR>

### Why we care:

Georgia leads the nation in sentencing juveniles to life without parole—a stark reality that raises urgent questions about justice and fairness for young people in our state. Under current law, minors can be tried as adults for serious offenses, facing the harshest sentences without consideration for their age, cognitive development, or capacity for growth and change. This practice is not only a moral issue but a call to action: it's time to advocate for a system that recognizes the unique potential in every young person and commits to justice that heals rather than condemns.

### Additional Resources:



<https://bit.ly/41ebGoY>

### Why we care:

Youth mental health in Georgia impacts the lives, education, and futures of young people across the state. With 1 in 6 Georgia youth experiencing a mental health disorder each year, the lack of access to necessary care—especially in rural areas—means too many are left to struggle alone. Untreated, these issues contribute to school dropouts, substance abuse, and even involvement in the juvenile justice system. Now is the time to advocate for meaningful investment in youth mental health services, from early intervention to school-based support, to build a brighter, healthier future for all Georgia's youth.

### Additional Resources:



<https://bit.ly/3ZkPxD5>

### Why we care:

Every year, 500-1,000 young people transition of Georgia's foster care system (TAY) without the stability of a permanent family or dependable support network, leaving them vulnerable to homelessness, job insecurity, and limited educational opportunities. These young adults face homelessness almost immediately, and by age 24, only half are employed. TAY often have higher rates of mental health challenges, incarceration, and early pregnancy. Our advocacy, mentorship, and support can help TAY find stable housing, job opportunities, and the community they deserve.

### Additional Resources:



<https://bit.ly/41gJO3I>

Juvenile Life  
Without Parole  
**GEORGIA** has highest  
rate of new JLWOP  
**28 states** have  
abolished JLWOP

Mental Health  
*1 in 5 children in* **GEORGIA**  
*have a mental illness*  
*1 in 4 have a*  
**behavioral, emotional,**  
**or developmental**  
*condition*

Transition Aged  
Youth  
**550-1000** youth in foster  
care turn 18 each year  
**less than 10 remain in**  
**care**

## Educational Budget

**GEORGIA** is 1 of 6 states that *does NOT allocate FUNDING* for students experiencing poverty

### Why we care:

Originally established in 1985 to ensure fair funding, Georgia's Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula, now falls short of meeting the needs of today's diverse classrooms, leaving gaps in essential areas like teacher pay, special education, support services, and creates inequities, especially for students in lower-income districts. Georgia remains one of only six states without a dedicated budget for students in poverty—despite our high child poverty rates that outrank the national average. By revising and fully funding QBE, we can ensure that every Georgia student has access to a quality education.

### Additional Resources:



<https://bit.ly/3BclEga>

Jail & Prison  
Family  
Communication  
Healthy consistent  
Parent-child  
communication  
improves **outcomes**

### Why we care:

The steep costs of prison and jail communications place a heavy burden on children of incarcerated parents, who rely on these connections for emotional support and stability. For these vulnerable children, staying in touch is a lifeline that nurtures their well-being, helping to reduce anxiety, depression, and academic struggles. When families can afford regular communication, the bonds between parent and child are strengthened, fostering resilience in children and aiding in family stability and successful reintegration post-release. Lowering these costs is essential to supporting the mental and emotional health of children and giving them a fair chance at a brighter future.

### Additional Resources:



<https://bit.ly/3OBxinO>

Maternal Health  
and Mortality  
More than 40% of  
**GEORGIA'S COUNTIES**  
are *maternal care*  
*deserts*

### Why we care:

The maternal mortality rate in Georgia is 33.9 deaths per 100,000 live births, one of the highest in the U.S. Contributing factors include a lack of healthcare access, with 17.7% of women of reproductive age uninsured, compared to a national average of 10.9%. Over 70% of maternal deaths occur postpartum, often within six weeks, yet barriers like financial constraints and limited postpartum care persist. Black women in Georgia face disproportionately high maternal mortality rates due to systemic inequities in healthcare and socioeconomic conditions. Full Medicaid expansion and targeted interventions remain essential to reducing disparities and improving outcomes for mothers and infants across the state.

### Additional Resources:



<https://bit.ly/3AYLB2R>

Medicaid  
Expansion  
Nearly **500,000**  
**GEORGIA** residents  
**DO NOT** have health  
insurance

### Why we care:

Expanding Medicaid in Georgia is crucial for nearly 500,000 uninsured residents, particularly in rural areas where hospitals are struggling or have already closed. Since 2013, seven rural hospitals have shut down, with more than half of the remaining ones at financial risk. Expanding Medicaid would reduce uncompensated care costs and allowing patients to seek preventive care rather than emergency room visits. Georgia remains one of 10 states yet to adopt full Medicaid expansion, leaving billions in federal funds unutilized while residents face worsening healthcare disparities.

### Additional Resources:



<https://bit.ly/49fILmH>