

South Jersey

Atlantic Burlington Camden Cape May
Cumberland Gloucester Ocean Salem

ACNJ Kids Count Report:

According to the [2016 ACNJ Kid's Count Report](#)^{**}, New Jersey ranked high to middling in all indicator categories, ranking as high as 2nd in Education and as low as 20th among the New Jersey 21 counties in Economic Well-Being. WRI reviewed and localized the Kids Count data relating to the eight South Jersey counties (Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean and Salem) and through our research, we found that the data profile of the South Jersey region is strikingly different than the state's.

8-County Regional Profile of South Jersey

The 2016 ACNJ Kids Count Report attributed mid to low overall county ranks to each of the eight counties in South Jersey; Burlington, Gloucester, and Ocean counties are ranked highest in the region at 9th, 10th, and 11th respectively. As displayed in the table below, South Jersey trends up or down in the same direction as the state but consistently ranks below it in all of the identified categories.

	Year	NJ	SJ	SJ % Change (5 Years)
Demographic				
Child Population	2014	2,012,081	550,908	-3%
Total Population	2014	8,938,175	2,430,669	0%
Economics				
% of Children in Poverty	2014	15.5%	18.2%	9%
Median Income of Families with Children	2014	\$89,020	\$73,886	4%
% Unemployed	2016	4.3%	6.8%	-4%
% of Households Spending More Than 30% of Income on Rent	2014	52.9%	57.9%	4%
% of Eligible Children Receiving Free/Reduced Price School Breakfast	2015	41.1%	43.9%	68%
Health & Safety				
% of Women Receiving Early Prenatal Care	2013	79%	78.9%	-5%
% of Births to Girls 10-19	2013	4.2%	5.0%	38%
Infant Mortality (Rate Per 1000 Live Births)	2013	4.5	4.8	-25%
% Children Under 18 Without Health Insurance	2014	4.6%	4.4%	-3%

^{**} ACNJ uses the most recent and reliable data available to compile their New Jersey Kids Count reports.

Child Abuse/Neglect Investigations ¹	2014	45	61	-6%
Children in Out-of-Home Placements ¹	2014	3.6	5.2	7%
Juvenile Arrests ¹	2014	12	17	-37%

1 - Rate per 1000 children under 18

Early Care and Education

% of Family Income Spent on Licensed Child Care for a Family with One Infant and One Preschooler	2014	23.6%	25.5%	--
Total public school enrollment (Pre-K to 12)	2015-16	1,368,930	359,312	-2%
% Students Chronically Absent	2013-14	10	11.5	--
Graduation Rates	2014-15	89.7	87.4	--

In 2014 South Jersey saw a decrease in total child population but increases in both the number and percentage of children living in poverty compared to 2010. This could be attributed to changes in the demographics of the region that happened in tandem to the drop in poverty. The demographic changes included both decreases in the number of white and black children that live in the region and an increase in all other race categories. Since 2010 the region has been moving in the wrong direction based on a number of economic factors, including the number of children eligible for free or reduced lunch, which increased by 68%; percentage of households that are paying more than 30% of their income on rent, which increased by 4%. Economic and income indicators that the region has improved in, includes the median income of families with children, which increased by 4%, and unemployment rates which decreased by 4% in South Jersey from 2012 to 2016.

According to the 2016 report, South Jersey has shown both progress and room for improvement in health and safety indicators, trending in a positive direction but still underperforming compared to the state in all the indicators. From 2009 to 2013, the region saw a 3% improvement in the percentage of women receiving early prenatal care, a 3% drop in births to girls aged 10-19, and a 17% decrease in infant mortality. There was also a 34% decrease in juvenile arrests between 2010 and 2014. Areas in need of improvement in region, based on the indicators related to children's health and safety include an increase in the rate of children in out-of-home placements (34%) and a decrease in the rate of children under 18 years of age with health insurance (-3%).

The 2016 ACNJ Kids Count Report changed the indicators related to school-age education. The report shifts the emphasis from test score performance to physical attendance. The 2013-2014 school year found students in South Jersey as slightly more likely to be chronically absent than students from across the entire state. Another school-age education indicator is graduation rate, in which the region is trending upwards. In terms of Kids Counts' childcare and early education indicators, South Jersey families with an infant and a preschooler in 2014 paid 2% more of their family income on childcare than the state average.

** ACNJ uses the most recent and reliable data available to compile their New Jersey Kids Count reports.