

# U.S. CHILDREN BY THE NUMBERS

I

HIGHLIGHTS OF GAO-18-41SP

## Assessing the well-being of U.S. children

The success of the nation depends in large part on how well families and society care for children so that they become healthy and productive adults.



### WHAT DID WE EXAMINE?

We collected and analyzed federal data in three categories:



### WHAT DID WE FIND?

minority

In recent years, the well-being of U.S. children has:

worsened in some areas
remained constant in some areas
improved in others



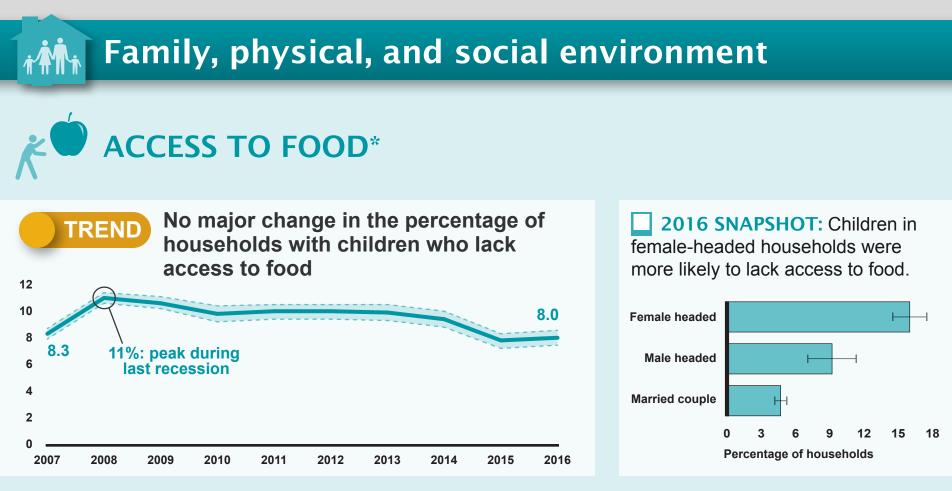
Well-being continues to be generally worse for children who are:

poor

from families headed by single mothers

### **BELOW ARE SOME OF OUR SPECIFIC FINDINGS.**

**How precise are these results?** Data ranges represented by  $\implies$  or  $\square$  indicate 95% *confidence intervals.* These mean that if agencies were to survey the entire population, there is a 95% chance that the result would be within the interval.



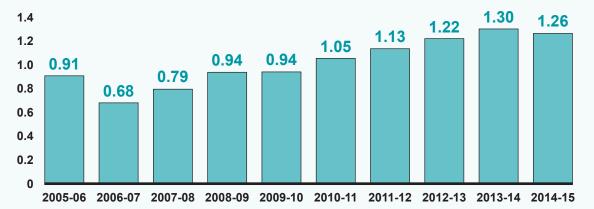
\*We are referring to food insecurity, which is a lack of access to adequate food for a healthy lifestyle for all household members. Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Dept. of Commerce's Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.





# Increase in number of students schools identify as homeless

Number of enrolled public school students who were homeless (in millions)



#### **2014-15 SNAPSHOT:**



>950,000 homeless students: "doubled-up" (living with others)

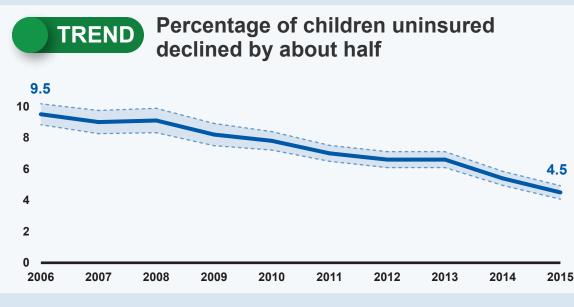
#### ~95,000 homeless students:

unaccompanied (not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian)

Source: U.S. Department of Education's Consolidated State Performance Report data from the National Center for Homeless Education.

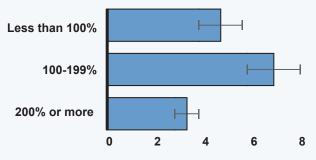
## Physical and mental health

# ACCESS TO INSURANCE



**2015 SNAPSHOT:** Among those considered "near poor," a higher percentage lacked insurance.

Percentage of children without insurance by percentage of the federal poverty level



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Health Interview Survey.

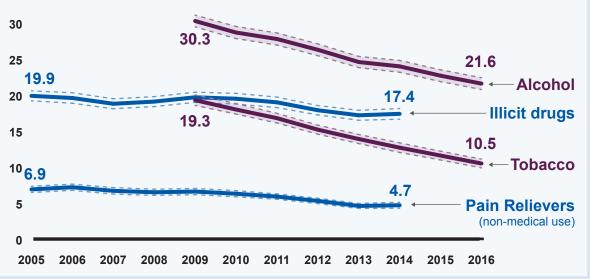
# ALCOHOL, SMOKING, AND DRUG USE



# Illicit drugs and use of pain relievers: Slight decrease

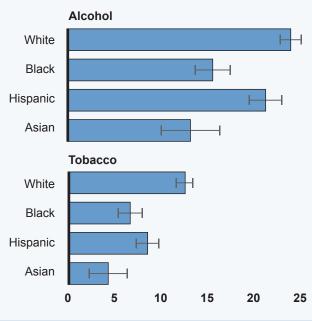
Percentage of youth age 12-17 reporting use of each substance in the last year

TREND



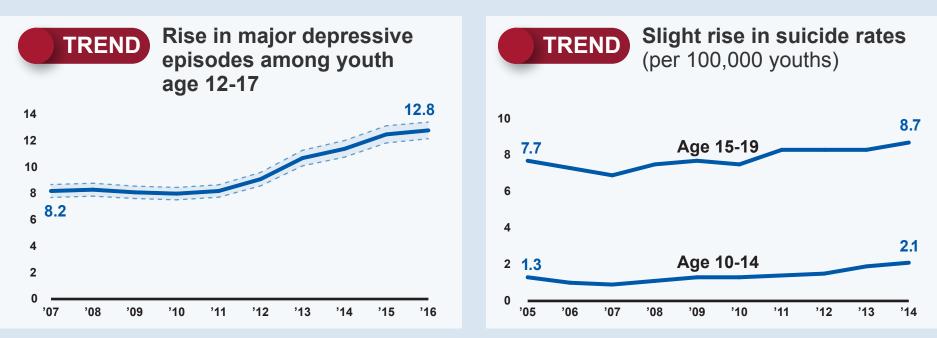
**2016 SNAPSHOT:** There were variations in substance use by race.

Percentage of youth age 12-17 reporting use

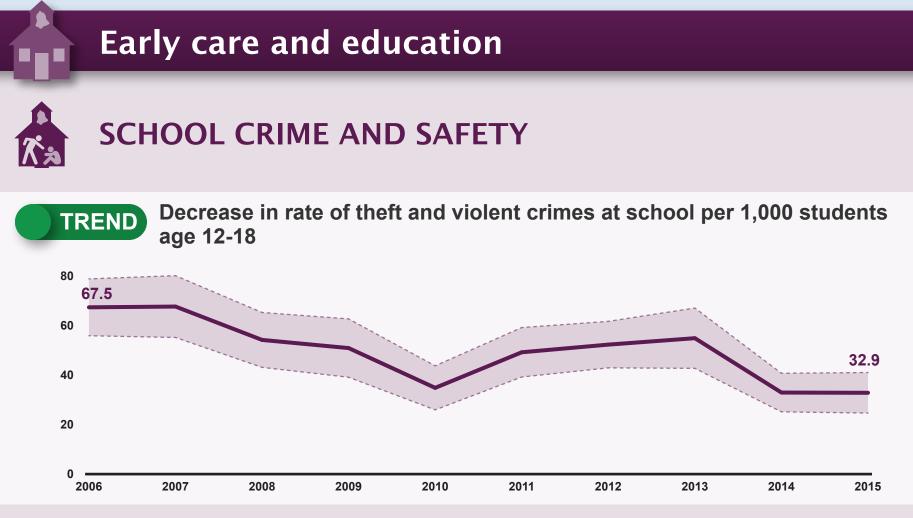


Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

**DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE** 



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Survey on Drug Use and Health and National Vital Statistics System.



Source: U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey.

#### For notes on data definitions and methodology, see full report.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING OUR RECOMMENDATION, see GAO-18-41SP at GAO.GOV.



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