

Investing in public programs matters: How state policies impact children's lives ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf ^[2]

Summary ^[3]

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Investing in Public Programs Matters: How State Policies Impact Children's Lives, focuses on the results of the 2012 STATE Child Well-Being Index (CWI) - a comprehensive state-level index of child well-being modeled after the Foundation for Child Development's (FCD) NATIONAL CWI.

The STATE CWI draws from the most comprehensive set of data used to form a state index of child well-being. With these data, the STATE CWI ranks children's well-being in seven different domains for each state and compares them across states. In addition to state rankings, this report includes new findings about the strength of relationships between state policies and selected economic and demographic factors indicative of child well-being.

The key findings from this study are:

- **Higher State Taxes Are Better for Children.** States that have higher tax rates generate higher revenues and have higher CWI values than states with lower tax rates.
- **Public Investments in Children Matter.** The amount of public investments in programs is strongly related to CWI values among states. Specifically, higher per-pupil spending on education, higher Medicaid child-eligibility thresholds, and higher levels of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits show a substantial correlation with child well-being across states.
- **A Child's Well-Being Is Strongly Related to the State Where He or She Lives.** Child well-being varies tremendously from state to state, ranging from a 0.85 index value for New Jersey, the highest ranked state, to a negative 0.96 index value for New Mexico, the lowest-ranked state. The six states that had the highest CWI values were New Jersey, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Utah, Connecticut, and Minnesota. On the other end of the spectrum, Arizona, Nevada, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and New Mexico were found to have the lowest index values.

Region: United States ^[4]

Tags: outcomes ^[5]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/12/02/investing-public-programs-matters-how-state-policies-impact>

Links

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