

State of Florida



Cultural Indicators

**An in-depth record of
important social statistics
affecting the well-being of
families in Florida**



POPULATION • DEMOGRAPHICS • CRIME • EDUCATION • FAMILY • HEALTH • WEALTH • POVERTY • WELFARE • BUSINESS • GOVERNMENT

STATE OF FLORIDA Cultural Indicators

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FLORIDA FAMILY POLICY COUNCIL

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Executive Summary

State of Florida Cultural Indicators

The Florida Family Policy Council is pleased to present the *State of Florida Cultural Indicators*. This study tracks various Florida-specific and national measures of societal well-being dating back to 1960, as statistics are available. Chapters are devoted to vital statistics; crime; education; family; health; poverty and welfare; and business and government. Some highlights of the study include:

Vital Statistics

- Since 1960, Florida's population has increased 248% to 19,057,542 in 2011, making it the fourth largest state in the nation.
- Florida's birth rate has been below the national average for more than 50 years.

Crime

- Over the past 50 years, Florida's crime rate has increased 50%. The state's crime rate has remained about 36% above the national average since 1960.
- After peaking in 1990, Florida's violent crime rate has fallen 55%. Since 1960, the state's violent crime rate has been, on average, 36% above the national average.

Family

- In 2009, Florida had the 12th highest marriage rate and the ninth-highest divorce rate in the nation. Both have been above the national average for more than 35 years.
- Over the past 40 years, about 83,000 couples have divorced in Florida each year, splitting the homes of about 53,000 children every year.

- Over the past 50 years, births to unwed mothers in Florida have increased from 9.5% of all births to 48%; and out-of-wedlock births to women between the ages of 20-24 has increased even more to 72%.
- For every 2.8 births in Florida in 2012, there was one abortion.

Health

- The number of Medicaid recipients in Florida has increased from 478,500 in 1980 to almost 3.7 million in 2010.
- Florida has the fifth highest rate of HIV infection in the nation.

Poverty and Welfare

- In 2012, about one in every six Floridians received some amount of food stamps.

Foreword



John Stemberger
President and General Counsel
Florida Family Policy Council

In 1994, former Reagan-Bush administration official William J. Bennett published the first *Index of Leading Cultural Indicators* (ILCI). Bennett developed ILCI because he felt social and cultural trends should be monitored carefully just as fiscal trends were being tracked in the Index of Leading Economic Indicators.

Seeing the national conversation that developed around Cultural Indicators, a number of state policy organizations developed their own state-specific ILCI studies. For the Florida edition, we have chosen to follow not only the typical social trends, but several fiscal areas that have an impact on families as well. This extended focus is indicative of the desire of the Florida Family Policy Council to expand the scope of the organization to address financial issues as well as social concerns as they relate to the flourishing of Florida's families. Evidence concludes that strong marriages and families are critical to the success of both our economic and social future, and the interrelationship between the two. At the most fundamental level the institutions of marriage and family produce social order and fiscal stability in society. This human flourishing lessens the need for government's safety net and reduces the financial burden to the state caused by the fragmentation and breakdown of the family.

Though the picture painted by Florida Cultural Indicators isn't an overall pleasant

one, we can find hope in the fact that every problem measured in every metric in this publication can be reduced with one cultural change: Stronger families. In the cold facts of this document there is no traditional vs. libertarian, secular vs. religious, or Democrat vs. Republican divide. All can agree that weak family units lead to social maladies that are detrimental to the bottom line for government and for business. Strong families are indispensable to a prosperous state.

This document is intended to start a state-wide conversation, provide a benchmark for Florida's progress in various areas and make readily available research for others to use. By looking at an array of cultural trends in statistical and chart form, elected officials, community organizers, business leaders, pastors, and other concerned citizens can come together to chart a course for solving the problems that these numbers reveal.

The document you hold in your hands or review on your electronic device is your invitation to continue that conversation with us and to join us in developing the concrete solutions for reshaping our laws, our attitudes and our culture in a way that will lead to a Florida where more families thrive.

Thank you for your service to Florida and its families.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Stemberger". The signature is stylized, with a large, looped "J" and a prominent star-like flourish at the end.

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Population

As of 2010, **FLORIDA'S** population density of 350 persons per square mile is four times greater than the **NATIONAL AVERAGE** (87 persons per square mile).⁶

From 1960 to 2012, **FLORIDA'S** population increased 248%, from 4,952,000 to 19,317,568.¹ At the same time, the population of the entire **UNITED STATES** increased 75%, from 179.3 million to almost 314 million.²

4th

Florida is now the **fourth largest** state in the Union.¹

In 2012, the largest age group in Florida was 65 years of age and older (18.2% of the population), followed by the 45-54 population (14.2%), the 35-44 age group (12.5%) and those between 25-34 years of age (12.3%).³

Of Florida's 2012 population, about **76% was white** (14.7 million), **16% was black** (3.1 million) and **2.5% was Asian** (488,000).⁴ **Hispanics of any race, black or white, comprised 23%** (4.5 million) of the states' population; the largest proportion of these (1.3 million; 29%) were of Cuban descent, followed by those of Puerto Rican origin (913,000; 20%).⁵

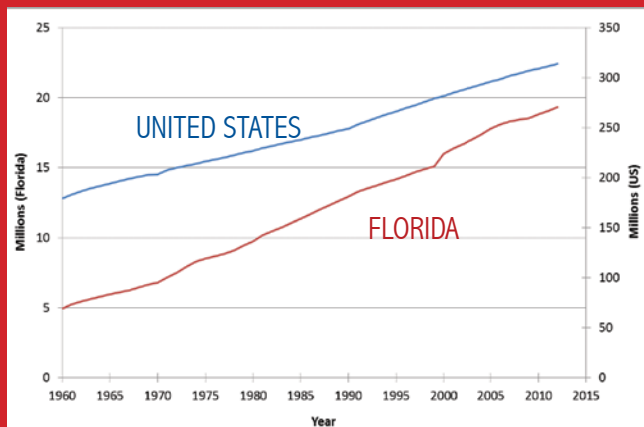
1/2

After accounting for births and deaths, approximately one half of the population growth in Florida from 2010 to 2012 was the result of **international migration**.⁷

3rd

It should be noted that these numbers include an estimated **740,000 illegal immigrants** living in Florida in 2010. After California (2.8 million) and Texas (1.8 million), Florida has the **third largest illegal immigrant population** in the nation.⁸

Population



Birth Rates

In 2012, approximately 8.6% of all births in Florida were low-weight births (birth weights of less than 2,500 grams / 5 pounds, 8 ounces), up from 8% in 2000.¹² In 2012, Florida had the **15th highest rank in low-weight births.**¹³

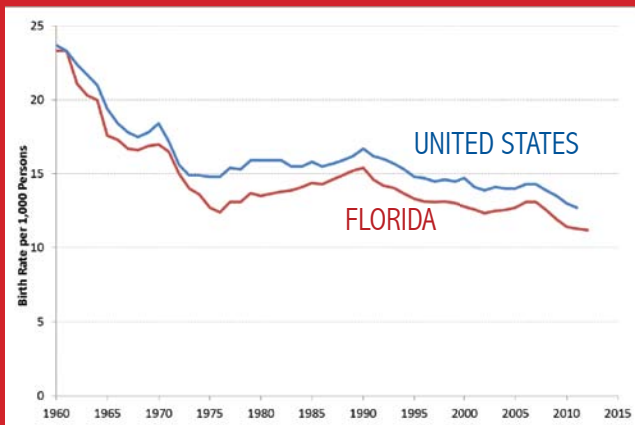


Since 1960, **FLORIDA'S** birth rate has fallen from 23.3 per 1,000 persons in 1960 to 11.2 per 1,000 in 2012, **a drop of 52%.** **NATIONALLY**, the birth rate fell from 23.7 per 1,000 persons in 1960 to 12.7 in 2011—the most recent year national data are available—a **decline of 46%.**⁹

Florida's birth rate has been below the national average for more than 50 years.

In 2012, there were 212,954 live births in Florida. Seventy-one percent of these were to white mothers (150,866), while 29% (61,327) were to blacks and other races. The resident birth rate for whites was 10.1 births per 1,000 population and 15.6 births per 1,000 population for blacks and other races.¹⁰ Mothers of Hispanic origin accounted for 27% of all resident live births.¹¹

Birth Rates (per 1000 persons)



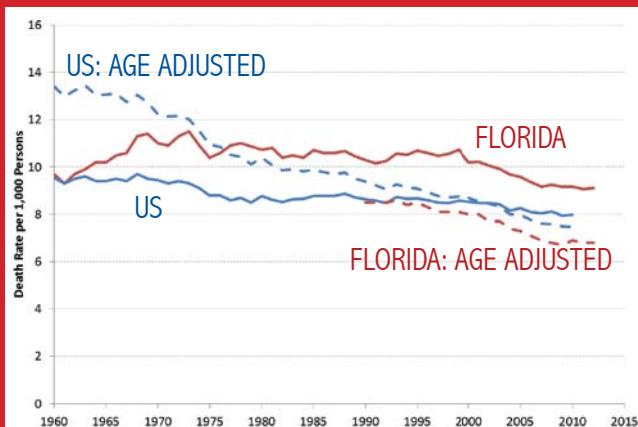
Death Rates



In 2012, there were 175,849 deaths in Florida, for an average death rate of **9.1 persons per 1,000 population**.¹⁴ Since 1960, Florida's death rate has fallen 6%. From 1960 to 2011, the national death rate has fallen 15.7%, from 9.5 to 8.1 persons per 1,000 population.¹⁵



Death Rates (per 1000 persons)



Age-adjusting a rate is a way to make fairer comparisons between groups with different age distributions. For example, a county having a higher percentage of elderly people may have a higher rate of death or hospitalization than a county with a younger population, merely because the elderly are more likely to die or be hospitalized. The same distortion can happen when comparisons are made between races, genders, or time periods. Age adjustment can make the different groups more comparable.¹⁶

When the death rates for Florida and the nation as a whole are age-adjusted, Florida's death rate in 2012 decreased to 6.8, while the national rate for 2011 dropped to 7.4.¹⁷



In 2011, the death rate for whites in Florida was almost double that of blacks and those of other races (10.2 versus 5.9, respectively).¹⁸ However, when age-adjusted death rates are compared, blacks and others die at a higher rate (7.5) than whites (6.8).¹⁹

Infant Mortality

The top four leading causes of resident infant deaths in 2012 were: perinatal period conditions; congenital malformations; accidents; and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). These causes accounted for about 80% of the 1,285 infant deaths in 2012.²³ Sixty-four percent of these deaths occurred within the first 28 days after birth, and 39% occurred within the first 24 hours after birth.²⁴



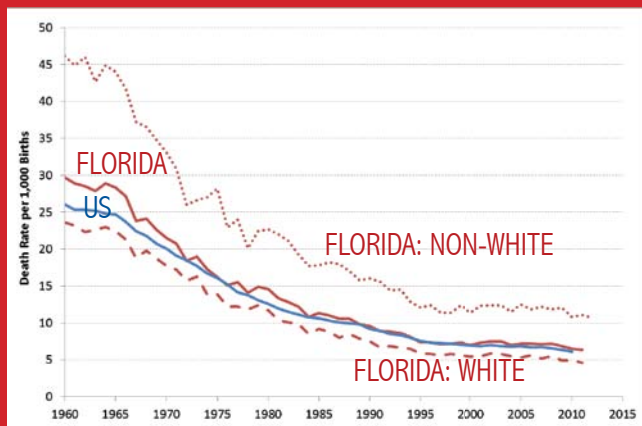
Since 1960, infant mortality rates in Florida have fallen 80%. In 1960, almost 30 of every 1,000 babies born in Florida died within the first year of their life. By 2011, that number had dropped to only 6 of every 1,000 babies.²⁰

Despite this progress, **Florida's infant mortality rate is slightly above the national average.** For 2010—the most recent year in which all states can be compared—Florida (6.54

deaths per 1000 births) ranked 25th out of 50 states and the District of Columbia. Compared to her neighboring states, Florida had a lower infant mortality rate than both Alabama (8.71) and Georgia (6.42).²¹

The infant death rate in Florida in 2012 for blacks and other races (10.7) was more than double that of whites (4.6). Most (71.1%) of infant deaths were to mothers of non-Hispanic and non-Haitian origin.²²

Infant Mortality (per 1000 births)



Teen Births



In 2012, **16,142** children were born to teenage mothers in Florida.

Since 1960, almost **1.25 million** children in Florida have been born into similar households.²⁵

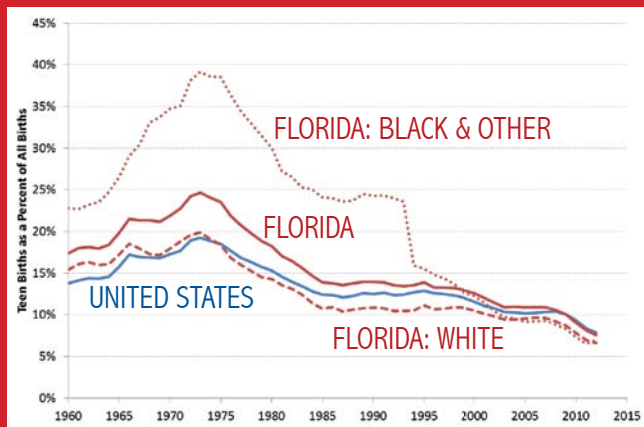
7.5%

In 2011—the most recent year state comparisons are available—Florida ranked 27th among the states regarding the birth rates of teenage mothers.²⁶ In 2011, about **7.5% of all births in Florida were to teenage mothers**, compared to about 7.8% nationwide.²⁷

In 2012, 91% (14,732) of teen mothers were unmarried. Of these, 88% of white teen mothers and 98% of black teen mothers in Florida were unmarried.²⁸



Teen Births



Crime Rates



Since 1960, Florida's crime rate, which takes into account population changes, **increased 50%**, from 2,704.6 crimes per 100,000 residents to 3,805.8 in 2012.

Since peaking in 1989, Florida's crime rate has **dropped by 56%**.³¹



In 2012, **FLORIDA** reported 725,944 Type I crimes—murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. This is down from the 1994 peak of 1.1 million crimes, but about 5.4 times as many as in 1960 (133,919).²⁹



In 2012, there were almost 10.2 million crimes reported in the **UNITED STATES**. This is down from the 1991 peak, when there were almost 14.9 million crimes.³⁰

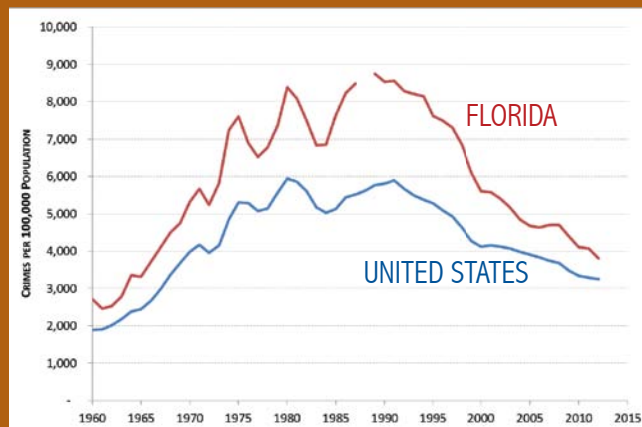
Since 1960, **FLORIDA's** crime rate has **averaged about 36% above** the national average.

From 1989 to 2012, the total **NATIONAL** crime rate declined 44%. But between 1960 and 2012, the total crime rate rose 72%.³²



While Florida's share of the overall national population increased from 2.8% in 1960 to 6.2% in 2012, its share of all crimes committed in the United States has risen at a faster rate, from 4% to 7.1%.³³

Crime Rates (per 100,000 population)



No data available for Florida for 1988



Violent Crime



In 2012, about **13%** of Florida's crimes were of a violent nature, compared to 12% for the nation as a whole.³⁶

In 2012, there were **93,965 violent crimes**—murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—reported in Florida. This is down from the peak of 161,789 in 1993, but it is almost 8.5 times as many as were reported in 1960 (11,061).³⁴

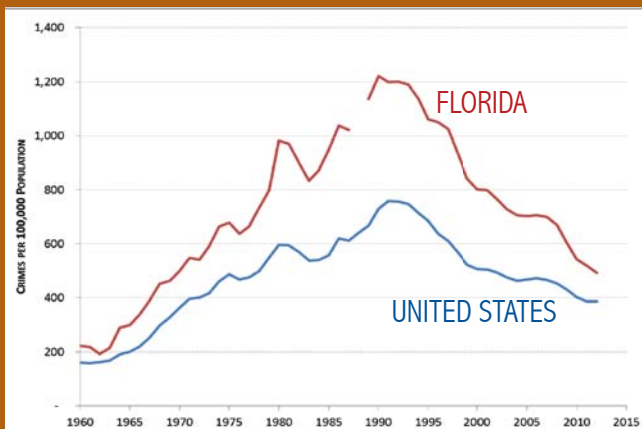
In 2012, Florida's violent crime rate was 492.6 per 100,000 population, down 5% from 2011. Since 1960, the state's violent crime rate has been, on average, **52% above the national average**.³⁵



Since 1960, Florida's violent crime increased 447%, from 223.4 crimes per 100,000 residents to 1220.9 in 1990, before decreasing to 492.6 in 2012. Overall, Florida's violent crime rate has increased 121% since 1960.³⁷



Violent Crime (per 100,000 population)



No data available for Florida for 1988

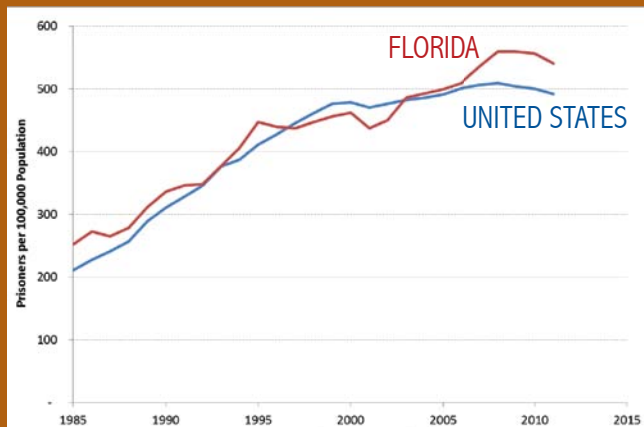
Prison Population



Since 1985, Florida's adult prison population sentenced to more than one year has **increased 260%**. At the same time, the U.S. adult prison population has risen 232%.³⁸



Prisoners (per 100,000 population)



In 2011, **1 of every 185 persons** (0.54%) of Florida's population was in a state or federal prison serving a sentence of one year or more, compared to 1 in every 195 (0.51%) of the national population. **Florida's incarceration rate is the ninth highest** in the nation.³⁹

In 2011, of the 103,055 prisoners in Florida, 93% (95,913) were male. Since 2000, the number of female prisoners has increased from 4,105 to 7,142. Approximately 0.2% (209) of all prisoners was under the age of 18.⁴⁰

According to the Florida Department of Corrections, of the prisoners in 2011, **25% were incarcerated for drug offenses**, 17.5% for burglary, 15.2% for theft, forgery or fraud, and 13.8% for violent personal offenses. Only 3.4% had been sentenced for murder, homicide or manslaughter.⁴¹

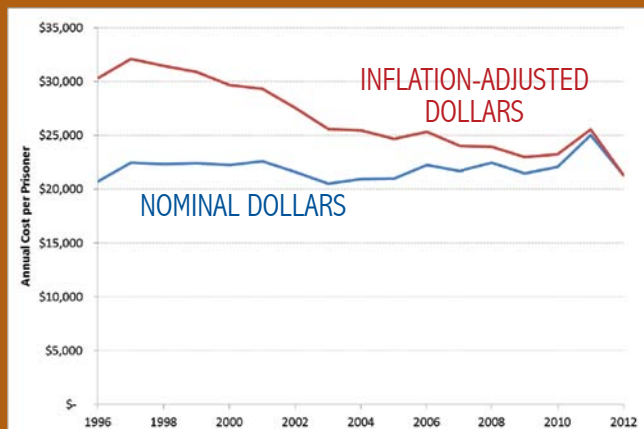
Cost of Imprisonment



In 2012, Florida taxpayers spent about **\$21,273 for each of the 100,527 inmates** in the state's prison system. This is down by about 16% from \$25,562 in 2011. Since 1996, Florida's cost per inmate has risen 2.6% after rising and falling several times. If these numbers are **adjusted for inflation, the cost per inmate has actually fallen 30% since 1996**.⁴² These numbers do not include the cost of capital improvements, such as new prisons or renovations.

In 2012, Florida's budget for corrections totaled \$2.14 billion, not including \$66.8 million for capital outlay. Of this amount, \$1.42 billion (65%) was for security and institutional operations, \$408 million (18.5%) was for health services, and \$217 million (10%) was for community corrections. Less than three percent was spent on administration (\$52.6 million), and education and programs (\$36.6 million).⁴³

Annual Cost per Prisoner



Child Abuse



Since 1990, the rate of substantiated cases of child abuse in Florida has **declined by 51%** and by 32% nationally.⁴⁸ In 2012, 59% of child abuse reports in Florida originated from professionals, such as legal and law enforcement personnel (16.7%), education personnel (16.6%), social services personnel (11.1%), and medical personnel (8.5%). Fewer than 14% of reports were from parents or other relatives, and less than one percent from alleged victims.⁴⁹



In 2012, there were 167,742 reports of child abuse in Florida involving 371,094 children. Not every report of child abuse or neglect is authentic; each report must be investigated to determine whether enough evidence exists to conclude that maltreatment occurred.⁴⁴



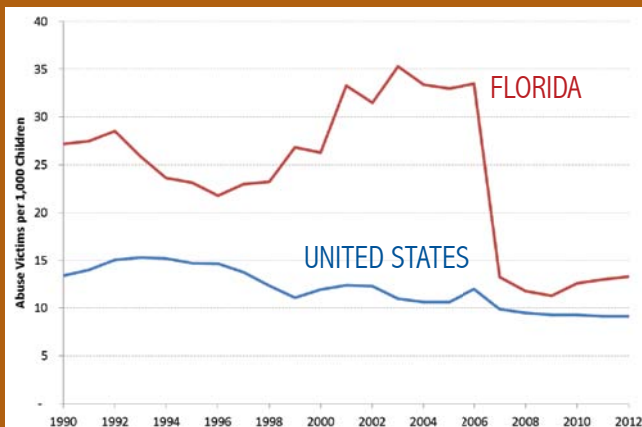
Of the child abuse cases reported in 2012, 53,341 were identified as actual victims—about one in 7. Specifically, about one in every 11 children in Florida was the subject of a child abuse investigation, but only **one in 75** was actually substantiated as a victim.



By comparison, about 1 in every 19 children nationwide was the subject of an investigation, and **1 in every 109** was actually substantiated as a victim.⁴⁵

In 2012, of Florida's child abuse victims **47% were white, 29% were black, and 17% were Hispanic.**⁴⁶ By comparison, Florida's total youth population in 2012 (4,002,480) was 45% non-Hispanic white, 20% black, and 28% Hispanic.⁴⁷

Abuse Victims (per 1,000 Children)



Academic Achievement

The fewer degrees an adult holds, the less their earning potential. According to data collected in 2012 by the U.S. Census Bureau, possessing a high school diploma raises personal income for Florida residents by **\$7,000** (\$24,512) and a bachelor's degree by almost **\$24,400** (\$41,876).⁵⁴



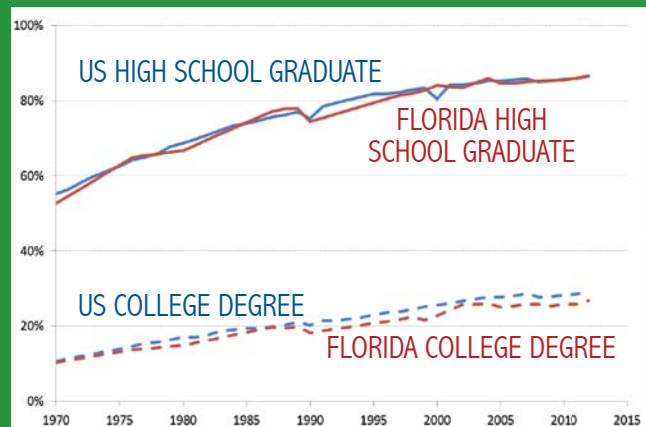
Since 1960, the percentage of Florida residents age 25 and older with a high school diploma has increased 64%, while the percentage of adults with at least a four-year college degree has risen by 157%. By comparison, the percentage of adults nationwide with at least a high school diploma or a college degree have risen 56% and 172%, respectively.⁵⁰

In Florida, **academic gains have been greatest among blacks**. Between 1970 and 2012, the percentage of blacks with at least a high school diploma increased from 24% to 80%, a gain of 229%. By comparison, the percentage of whites with at least a high school diploma rose by 68%, from 52% to 88%.⁵¹

In 2012, Florida ranked 34th in the nation in the percentage of adults age 25 and older with at least a high school diploma or its equivalent⁵² and 31st for adults holding at least a bachelor's degree.⁵³



Academic Achievement



SAT Scores



Since 2000, Florida students' SAT reading score has declined by 6 points, while its math score has fallen by 10 points.

The state's reading and math scores are 4 points and 24 points below the national average, respectively.⁵⁶

Male test takers in Florida scored higher on reading (494) and math (506) than did females (491 and 476, respectively). In the category of writing, though, females scored better (481) than males (467).⁵⁷

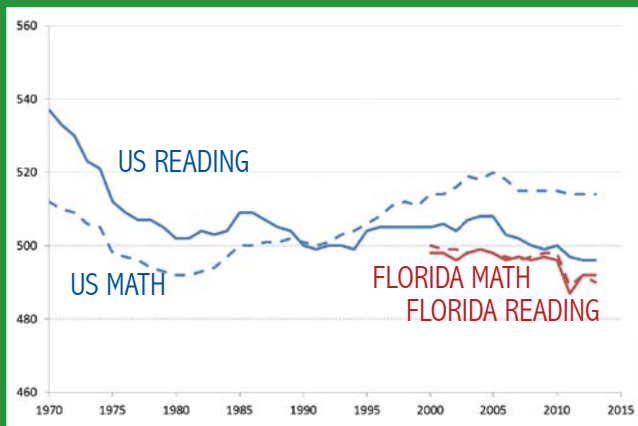
Ethnicity is a significant predictor of SAT scores in Florida. For reading, white students had the highest average score (523), followed by Asians (515) and American Indians or

Alaska natives (501). By comparison, blacks scored lowest (430), followed by Mexicans or Mexican Americans (450) and Puerto Rican students (467). Similar relationships were found for math: Asians scored highest (556), followed by whites (520) and American Indians or Alaska natives (491). Again, blacks' scores were the lowest (421), followed by Mexicans or Mexican Americans (456) and Puerto Ricans (457).⁵⁸

Parental education levels were also a significant predictor of the outcomes of SAT takers: the average reading score of a student whose parent(s) had no more than a high school education was 473, while those whose parent(s) had at least a bachelor's degree scored an average of 519.⁵⁹

In 2013, 112,554 high school students in Florida—of which 74,649 were seniors—took the SAT. Of these, out of a maximum score of 800, the average reading score was 492 and the average math score was 490.⁵⁵

SAT Scores



NAEP Scores

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) was mandated by Congress in 1969 to monitor the knowledge, skills, and performance of the nation's school children. One form of monitoring has been national, standardized tests in mathematics, science, reading, geography, and other subjects. NAEP uses a scale of 0 to 500 for its mathematics and reading tests. In 2011, all 50 states and the District of Columbia participated in the mathematics and reading exams.⁶⁰

27th

In the past 20 years, the average reading and math scores in Florida have grown faster than the national average. In 2013, **Florida's 4th grade math students ranked 27th** in the nation with an average score of 242, one point above the national average. Forty-one percent of Florida's students scored at or above proficiency, **the same as the national average.**⁶¹

35th

In the same year, **Florida's 8th grade math students ranked 35th** in the nation with an average NAEP score of 281, with 31% at or above proficiency.⁶² By comparison, the national average was 284, with 34% at or above proficiency.⁶³

8th

In 2013, **Florida's 4th grade students ranked 8th** in the nation in reading with an average score of 227, six points **higher than the national average.**⁶⁴ Thirty-nine percent of Florida's students scored at or above proficiency,⁶⁵ as compared to 34% of students nationwide.⁶⁶

33rd

During the same year, **Florida's 8th grade students ranked 33rd** in the nation in reading with an average score of 266, **the same as the national average.**⁶⁷ Thirty-three percent of Florida's students scored at or above proficiency,⁶⁸ as compared to 32% of students nationwide.⁶⁹

NAEP Scores (Scale of 1 to 500)

	Mathematics				Reading			
	4th Grade		8th Grade		4th Grade		8th Grade	
	Florida	US	Florida	US	Florida	US	Florida	US
1990	--	213	255	264	--	--	--	--
1992	214	220	260	268	208	217	--	260
1994	--	--	--	--	205	214	--	260
1996	216	224	264	272	--	--	--	--
1998	--	--	--	--	206	215	255	263
2000	--	228	--	273	--	--	--	--
2002	--	--	--	--	214	219	261	264
2003	234	235	271	278	218	218	257	263
2005	239	238	274	279	219	219	256	262
2007	242	240	277	281	224	221	260	263
2009	242	240	279	283	226	221	264	264
2010	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2011	240	241	278	284	225	221	262	265
2013	242	241	281	284	227	221	266	266



K-12 Spending Per Pupil

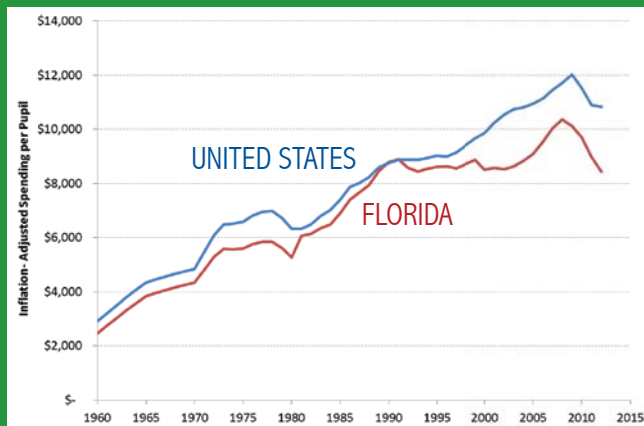


For the 2011-12 school year, public schools in **FLORIDA** spent an average of **\$8,436 per student**. This is a 6% decrease over the amount spent in 2010-11 (\$8,980).⁷⁰ By comparison, **NATIONAL** spending per student fell 0.5% after adjusting for inflation from \$10,890 to \$10,834.⁷¹

Despite occasional income shortfalls, Florida's public elementary and secondary schools have received a large increase in revenue in the past 50 years. Since 1960, real (inflation-adjusted) spending per student in Florida has increased 242%, compared to 272% for the nation as a whole.⁷²

In the 1969-70 school year, Florida's per-student outlays for K-12 public education were 15% less than the national average. By the 2011-12 school year, this gap had expanded to 22%.⁷³

Inflation-Adjusted Spending per Pupil



Marriage

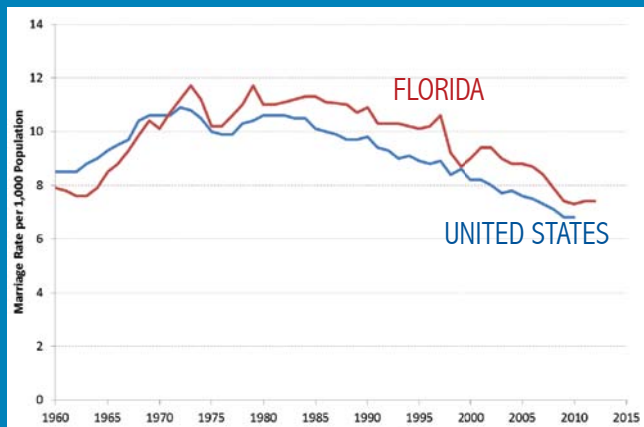
75%



49.7%

Nationally, the marriage rate decline has affected how the “traditional” American family is defined. In 1960, married couples made up about 75% of all households. By 2010, that number had fallen to 49.7%.⁷⁸

Marriage Rate (per 1000 population)



In 2012, there were 140,467 marriages in Florida, a 0.3% decrease from 140,900 marriages in 2011. This translates to a marriage rate of **7.4 marriages per 1,000 population**.⁷⁴

12th

In 2009—the most recent year for which national data is available—Florida's marriage rate was 8.8% higher than the national average of **6.8 marriages per 1,000 population**. Florida's 2009 marriage rate was the **12th highest** in the nation.⁷⁵ Florida's marriage rate has been above the national average since before 1960.⁷⁶

Florida's highest marriage rate of 11.7 marriages per 1,000 population was achieved in both 1973 and 1979. Since then, the state's marriage rate has fallen by 37%.⁷⁷



Divorce

While many of the costs of divorce are borne by the divorcing couple, it has been estimated **taxpayers in Florida pay at least \$1.95 billion annually** in divorce-related costs. These include anti-poverty programs, criminal justice costs, education programs, and lost tax revenues because of reduced opportunities as a result of being more likely to live in poverty.⁸⁴

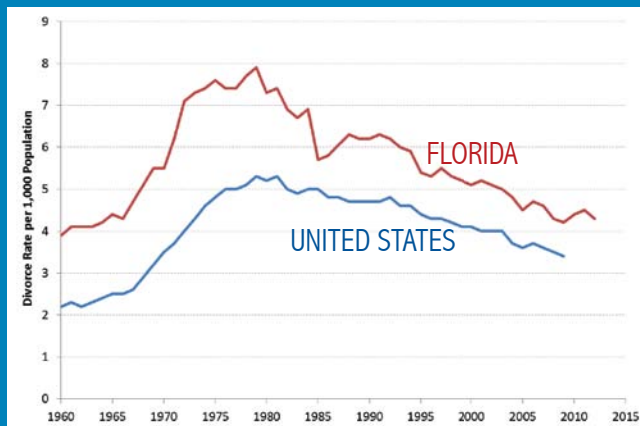


9th In 2009—the most recent year national data are available—Florida had 79,900 divorces.⁷⁹ Florida's divorce rate was **4.2 per 1,000 population**, approximately 23.5% higher than the national average of 3.4, giving it **the ninth highest divorce rate in the nation** among the 45 states and the District of Columbia that provided divorce data that year.⁸⁰

In 2012, approximately 81,490 marriages were dissolved in Florida, down 4% from 84,785 in 2011, for a divorce rate of **4.5 per 1,000 population**. Florida's divorce rate has been above the national average for more than 50 years.⁸¹

Since 1960, Florida's divorce rate rose from 3.9 divorces per 1,000 persons to 7.9 in 1979, before descending to 4.3 in 2012.⁸² In 2011, the **average length of marriage before divorce was 10 years**.⁸³

Divorce Rate (per 1000 population)



Children Affected by Divorce

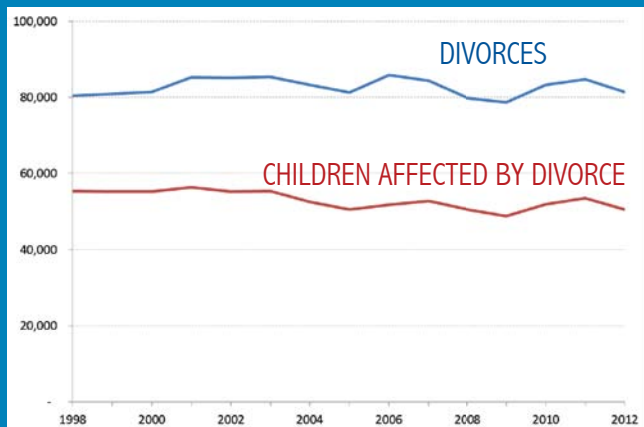


Perhaps the greatest tragedy of divorce is its effect on the children involved. Since 1998, about 83,000 couples have divorced in Florida each year, **splitting the homes of about 53,000 children annually.**⁸⁵

If none of these divorces had involved a second divorce (or more) for one of the parents, almost 800,000 children in Florida have been directly affected by divorce since 1998. This, of course, does not include all the children (and adults) who are indirectly affected.⁸⁶



Children Affected by Divorce (in Florida)



Index of Belonging and Rejection

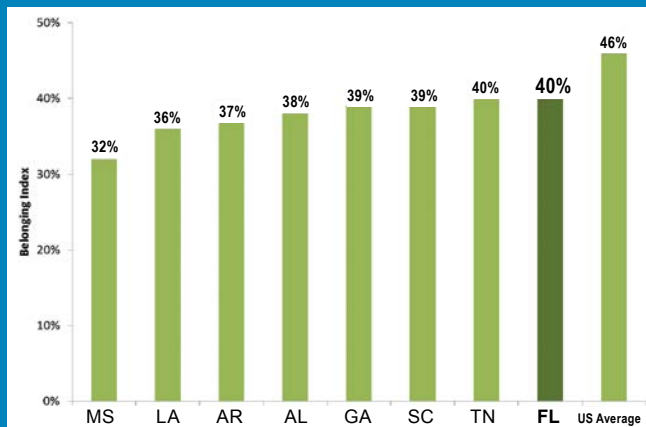


In February 2014, Patrick Fagan of the Family Research Council published the fourth annual Index of Family Belonging and Rejection to measure the social health of American children. “Belonging” was defined as the percentage of children ages 15-17 who had grown up “with both their birth mother and their biological father legally married to one another since before or around the time of the teenager’s birth,” and “rejection” as the percentage of children in households where at least one of their biological parents was no longer in the home. Of the 13.1 million teens in the United States at the time of the study (2008-2011), **more than 7 million—54%—had spent their childhood in without at least one of their biological parents in an intact family.**⁸⁷

Despite having a reputation for strong families, the southeastern United States—including Florida—fared poorly: its score of 40% means that there were **60% of teens in Florida (289,000 of 722,000) had not grown up with both biological parents.** Nevertheless, seven other southern states and the District of Columbia (17%) scored the same or lower than Florida.⁸⁸

The most recent version of the Index also includes race-specific measures of belonging. Intact biological families among whites were less common in Florida (48%) than the nation as a whole (54%), while the state’s black population was slightly better off (20%) than the national average (17%); Hispanics in Florida (41%) mirrored the national average of belonging (41%).⁸⁹

Index of Belonging



Births to Unwed Mothers



Since 1960, the number of births in Florida that were out of wedlock jumped from 9.5% to 48% in 2012.⁹⁰

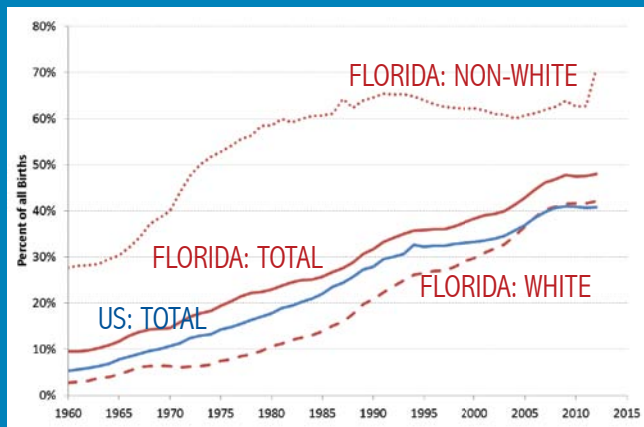
Over the past 50 years, more than 2.2 million children in Florida and more than 45 million children nationwide have been born to an unmarried mother.⁹¹

In 1960, less than 3% of births to white women in Florida were out of wedlock. That amount increased thirteen-fold to 42% of all births by 2012.⁹² By comparison, the percentage of births in Florida to non-white

unmarried women increased 126% from 28% of all births in 1960 to 62% in 2012.⁹³

While the problem of unwed parents is usually discussed as it pertains to teenagers, **adult out-of-wedlock births are increasing at a faster rate than teens.** Since 2000, the percentage of out-of-wedlock births to females ages 15-19 has increased from 80% of all births to 91% in 2012. By comparison, the percentages of out-of-wedlock births to women between the ages of 20-24 has increased from 55% in 2000 to 72% in 2012; and the percentage for women ages 25-29 increased from 28% in 2000 to 44% in 2012.⁹⁴

Births to Unwed Mothers



Abortion Rates



More than half of pregnancies among American women are unintended, and about four in 10 of these are terminated by abortion. From 1973 to 2008, about 50 million legal abortions have been performed. Forty-five percent of all abortions are to women who have never married and are not cohabiting.⁹⁵



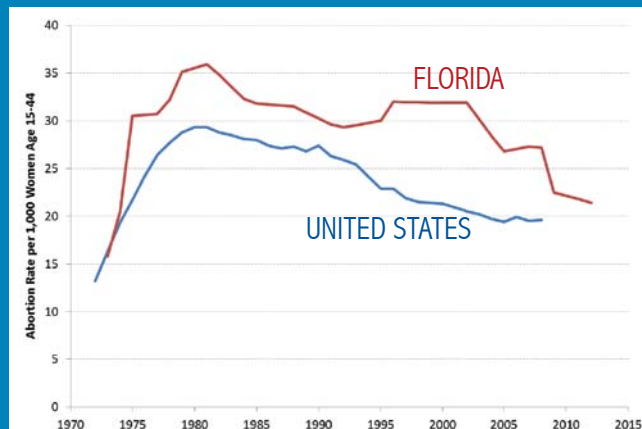
According to Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration, there were approximately 76,151 abortions performed in the state in 2012, or **about one abortion for every 2.8 births**.⁹⁶ Of the 355,000 abortions performed in Florida between 2008 and 2012, very few were performed because of a life-endangering

physical condition (357; 0.1%); a serious fetal genetic defect, deformity, or abnormality (2,417; 0.7%); the emotional or psychological health of the mother (676; 0.2%); or rape (4,859; 1.4%). Instead, **the overwhelming majority of abortions were either elective** (318,107; 89.6%) **or for social or economic reasons** (27,902; 7.9%).⁹⁷



In 2008 (the most recent year for which national data are available), 1.21 million abortions were performed, down from 1.31 million in 2000. Florida's abortion rate of 27.2 per 1,000 population of women ages 15-44 was **the seventh highest in the nation**, and higher than the national average (19.6). Florida's abortion rate was also higher than its neighboring states (Alabama, 12.0; Georgia, 19.2).⁹⁸

Abortion Rates (per 1000 Women Age 15-44)



Since 1972—the year before *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion—the national abortion rate spiked from 13.2 abortions per 1,000 women ages 15-44 to 29.3 in 1980-1981 before declining to 19.6 in 2008. Florida's historical abortion rates have mirrored the national average, jumping from 15.8 in 1973 to 35.9 in 1981, and declining to 21.8 in 2011.⁹⁹

Single-Parent Families

A signal indicator of cultural decline is the rise in the number of single-parent families. A growing number of studies show that virtually every social ill is directly related to **fatherless families**.

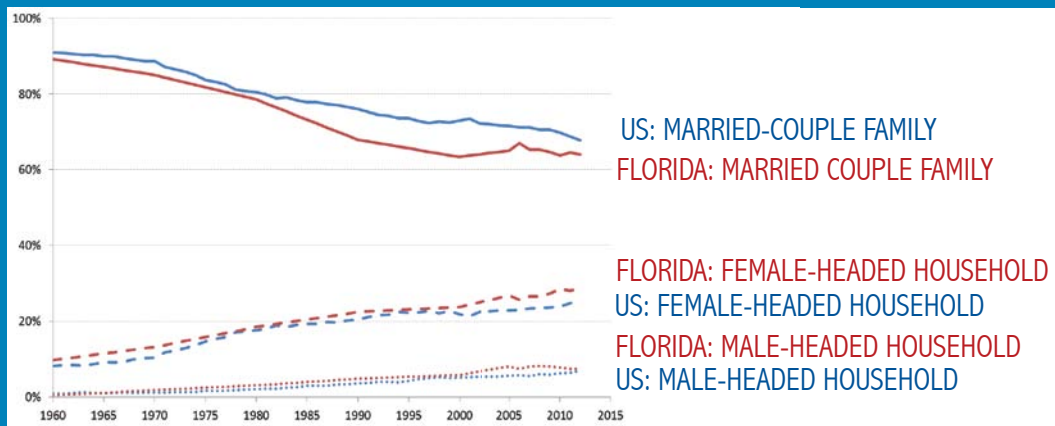
36%

In 2012, 36% of all Florida families with children under the age of 18 were single-parent homes, compared to about 31.2% nationwide.¹⁰⁰

Since 1960, the percentage of families headed by a single parent in Florida and the nation as a whole have increased by 260% and 255%, respectively.¹⁰¹

The extent to which family composition has changed can be seen using national data from the 1960 census, when 89% of all families in Florida with children were married couples, 10% were single-parent, female-headed households, and fewer than one percent were male-headed, single-parent households. By 2012, only 64% of Florida families with children were married couples, 29% were headed by a single, female parent, and 7% were single-parent, male-headed households.¹⁰²

Single-Parent Families



Living Arrangements of Children



Since 1960, the percentage of children in Florida living in two-parent families declined by 28%, while the percentage of children living with a single mother rose by 260%.¹⁰³

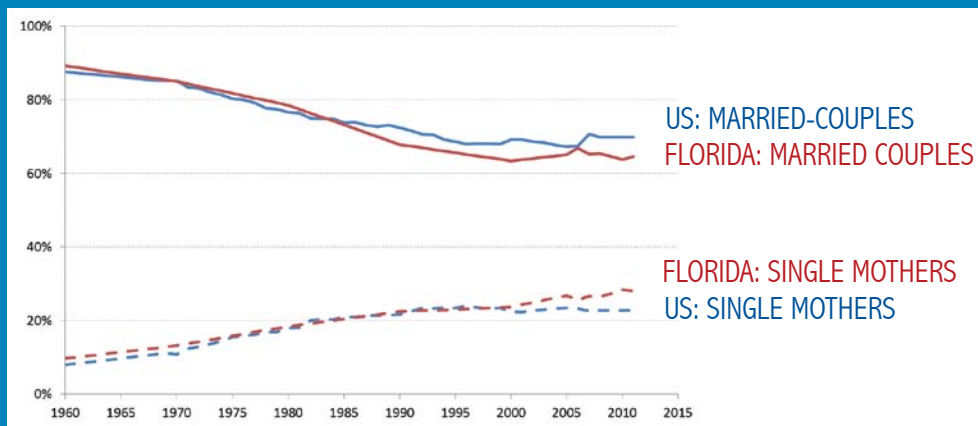
In 2012, 36% of children in Florida families lived in a home with a single biological parent.¹⁰⁴ Add to this the number of children who are in married-couple families where only one biological parent lives, those living with a grandparent or relative, those in institutions or group homes, and Florida has an remarkable number of children who have not experienced the stability of the same two-parent home for their entire childhood.



Nationally, the number of children in married, two-parent families was slightly better (68%), while the percentage of children in single-mother families was somewhat lower (32%).¹⁰⁵



Living Arrangements of Children

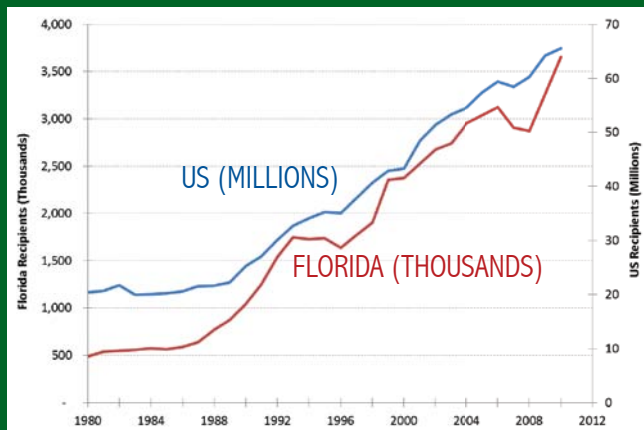


Medicaid Benefits

Begun in 1970, Medicaid pays for medical care and nursing home care for the poor.



Medicaid Benefits Recipients



Since 1980, inflation-adjusted Medicaid spending in Florida has increased 1,455% to almost \$17 billion

in 2010. At the same time, the number of Medicaid recipients increased 650%, from 487,500 in 1980 to almost 3.7 million in 2010.¹⁰⁶

Much of the growth in Medicaid benefits has been in the last 10 years. From 2000 to 2010, the number of Medicaid recipients increased 54% in Florida, and 51% nationwide. At the same time, inflation-adjusted spending on Medicaid increased 71% in Florida and 36% for the rest of the nation.¹⁰⁷

In 2010, approximately 65.5 million Americans received some level of Medicaid assistance, the total cost of which was approximately \$338.8 billion.¹⁰⁸ Of this amount, \$49 billion was spent on nursing home care, \$38 billion was spent on in-patient hospital expenses, and \$26 billion was spent on prescription drugs.¹⁰⁹



Medicare

Medicare was established in 1965 as a means of establishing a health insurance program for aged persons to complement the retirement, survivors, and disability insurance benefits under Title II of the Social Security Act. When it was implemented in 1966, Medicare covered most persons aged 65 or older. Since then, it has expanded to include persons entitled to Social Security or Railroad Retirement disability cash benefits, most persons with end-stage renal disease, and those with Lou Gehrig's disease.¹¹⁰



Since 1966, enrollment in Medicare in **FLORIDA** has risen from 11.7% of the state's population to 18.7% in 2011, **an increase of 61%.**¹¹¹

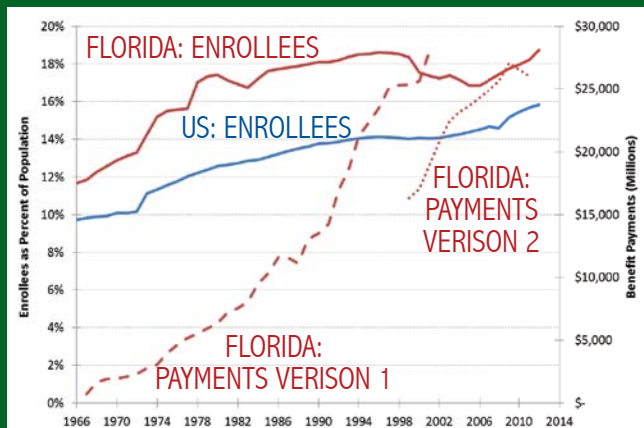


NATIONALLY, enrollment has risen from 9.7% to 15.8%, an **increase of 63%.**¹¹²



In 1999, the Social Security Administration changed the way in which it reported data on recipients of its medical care programs, making some comparisons between earlier and later data impossible. Nevertheless, national data show that **Medicare payments have rapidly increased.** Since 1967, the national amount of Medicare payments has risen from an inflation-adjusted \$29.1 billion in 1967 to almost \$347.6 billion in 2011, **an increase of 1,093%.**¹¹³

Medicare



Sexually-Transmitted Diseases



In women, chlamydial infections, which usually have no symptoms, may result in damage to a woman's reproductive organs, including pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)—a major cause of infertility—ectopic pregnancy, and chronic pelvic pain.¹¹⁴ Since 1991, **Florida's chlamydia infection rate has increased 1,214%, while the national rate has increased 159%.**¹¹⁵ One of the reasons for these large increases appears to be because of improvements in screening techniques.¹¹⁶ In 2011, Florida had the 28th highest rate of chlamydia in the nation.¹¹⁷

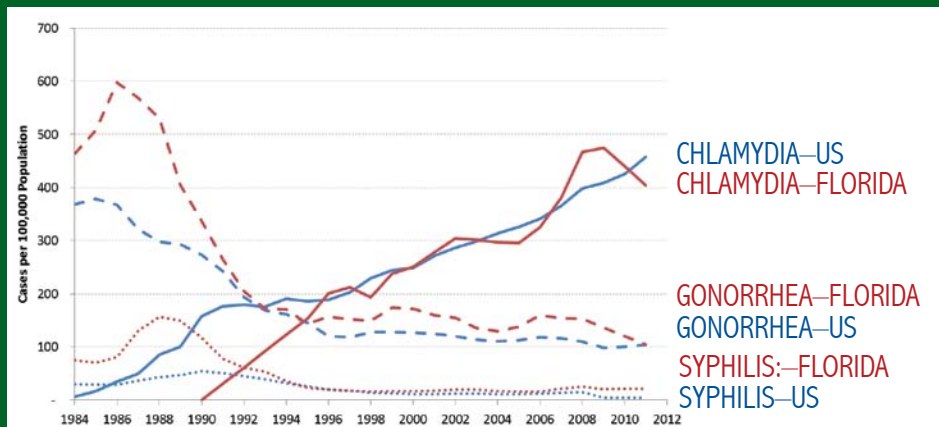


While chlamydia has become the new leader in sexually transmitted diseases in both Florida and the United States, **gonorrhea and syphilis are on the decline.** As with chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis produce PID, abdominal pain, and ectopic pregnancies.¹¹⁸ Since 1984, the gonorrhea infection rate in Florida and the United States has decreased by 72% and 77%, respectively.¹¹⁹



Syphilis is a bacterial infection that is particularly dangerous to unborn children. If untreated, many children of mothers with syphilis are stillborn or die shortly after birth.¹²⁰ Syphilis rates have fallen by 85% and 71% for the nation as a whole and Florida, respectively, since 1984. In 2011, **Florida had the seventh highest rate of syphilis** in the nation.¹²¹

Sexually-Transmitted Diseases Cases (per 100,000 population)





Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection (HIV) is a disease of the immune system. While the disease can be managed through antiretroviral therapy, which can help patients achieve near-normal life expectancies, there is no cure for HIV.¹²² If left untreated, about half of all persons with HIV eventually developed Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) within ten years of infection.¹²³

5th

In 2011, there were 49,273 diagnoses of HIV infection in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Of these, 5,408 (11%) were in Florida. The rate of HIV infection in 2011 was **15.8 per 100,000 population** nationally and 28.4 in Florida, giving Florida the **fifth highest infection rate** in the nation. Since 1997, the HIV infection rate has increased 203% nationwide and 114% in Florida.¹²⁴

In 2011, the most common age for new diagnoses of AIDS was 20-24 years old (36.4 per 100,000 population), followed by 25-29 year olds (35.2).¹²⁵

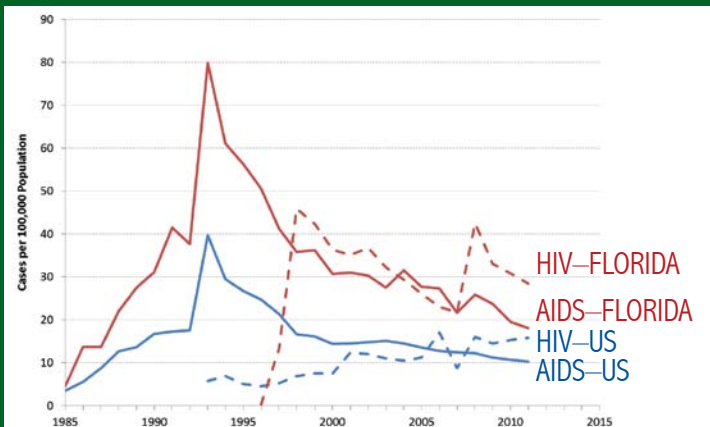
At the end of 2010, there were 870,096 persons living with HIV in the United States. Of these, **94,897 lived in Florida**.¹²⁶ Nationwide, the plurality of those living with HIV are black (43%), followed by whites (34%) and Hispanics (19%).¹²⁷



Among males, most came into contact with HIV via male-to-male sexual contact (78%), injection drug use (6%), or both (4%). For females, the primary sources of contact were heterosexual contact (86%) and injection drug use (14%).¹²⁸

The reason for the increase in AIDS rates in 1993 is because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revised its AIDS surveillance case definition to include adolescents and adults with low CD4 (T-cell) counts, but were not manifesting any signs of illness.¹²⁹

HIV / AIDS Cases (per 100,000 population)



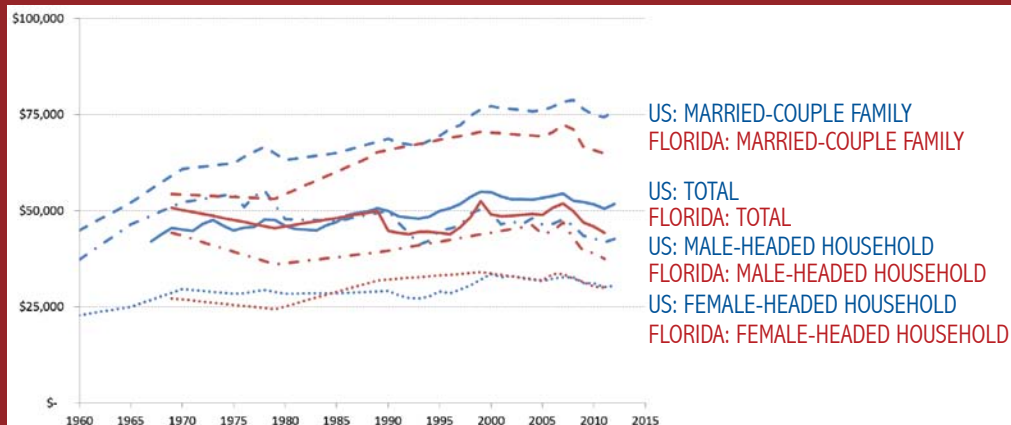
Median Household Income

Since 1970, the inflation-adjusted, average household income for Florida residents has actually decreased 10%, while the national average has increased almost 15%. In 2012, the **typical Florida household earned \$45,040**, while the **typical American household earned \$51,731**.¹³⁰

In both Florida and the nation as a whole, improvements in earnings were greatest among **married-couple families**. In 2012, the average married-couple family in Florida earned \$65,932, almost 22% more than in 1970, after adjusting for inflation. By comparison, the average American married-couple family earned \$76,035, about 25% more than in 1970 (after adjusting for inflation).¹³¹



Median Household Income



Adequate Housing

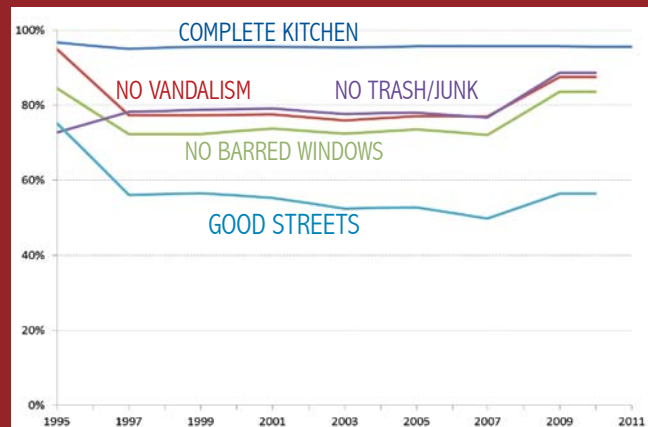


Every two years, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts a survey of housing units across the country and in selected metropolitan areas. When it comes to appliances, safety equipment, and heating, the overwhelming majority of American households have all of these conveniences. According to the most recent national survey of housing in 2011, almost 96% of homes have a fully equipped kitchen (including a sink, refrigerator, and oven or burner), 93% have at least one working smoke detector, 42% have at least one working carbon monoxide detector, and 90% have a furnace, hot water or steam system, or built-in electric heat pump or heater.¹³²

Another way to measure the adequacy of housing is by rating the quality and safety of their surroundings. In 2009, more than 80% of all homes in the United States were not near vandalized buildings (87%), free of trash or junk on the streets (89%), or not near buildings with bars on their windows (83%). On the other hand, almost 40% noted that the streets near their home were in need of at least minor repairs.¹³³

Note: The large changes between 1995 and 1997 in the percentages of housing units without vandalism, barred windows, trash or junk nearby, and bad streets are the result of the 1995 survey data on these factors coming exclusively from multi-unit housing.

Adequate Housing



Families in Poverty



Marital status is a significant predictor of whether a family is in poverty. Compared to married couples with children, **female-headed households are more than four times as likely to live in poverty.**¹³⁶



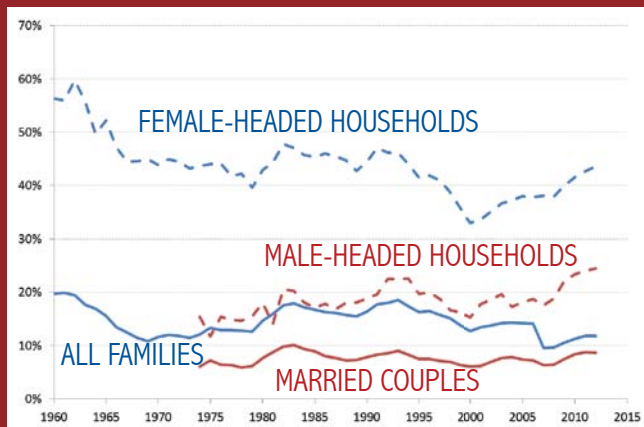
Since 1960, the percentage of families with children in poverty has fallen by **40%** nationwide.

During this period, the poverty rate among female-headed households has declined by 22%. Since 1974—the first year detailed data are available—the number of all families in poverty has dropped two percent, the number of married couples in poverty has increased 43%, the number of male-headed households has increased 58%, and the number of female-headed households in poverty has decreased by less than one percent.

In 2012, about **one in every 5.5 families with children lived at or below the poverty line.**¹³⁴

The Census Bureau updates its estimates of poverty annually using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The Bureau's definition of poverty counts money income before taxes and does not include capital gains and non-cash benefits, such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps.¹³⁵

Families in Poverty




AFDC / TANF Recipients in Florida



Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) was a cash assistance program primarily **intended for women with children in their household**. In most circumstances, if recipients married, they would lose their benefits.

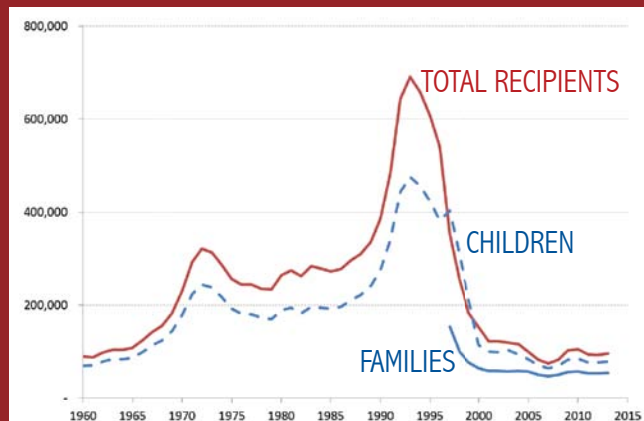
Originally called Aid to Dependent Children, this program was originally created under the New Deal to assist widows (or wives of disabled men) and their children. It was a Federal-State program, in which the Federal government generally paid about 80% of the cost for state recipients. With the advent of the Welfare Reform Act in 1996, AFDC was replaced with TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), which gives

states the flexibility to structure the program as they see fit.

 After peaking in 1993, the total number recipients and children receiving benefits in Florida dropped 73% and 80%, respectively.¹³⁷ Nationally, there were about 3.8 million TANF recipients in 2013. This is 73% lower than the 14.2 million individuals on AFDC in 1993.¹³⁸

Prior to 1997, the number families receiving AFDC was not published on a state-to-state level. Since then, the number of families, individual recipients, and children on TANF has dropped by 65%, 73%, and 80%, respectively.¹³⁹

AFDC / TANF Recipients in Florida



Food Stamps

The current food stamp program began as a pilot program in 1961, was made a permanent program (operated at states' option) in 1964, and was made a mandatory program for all states in 1974.

Since 1980, the inflation-adjusted cost of the program in Florida and the nation as a whole has increased by 394% and 208%, respectively.¹⁴⁰

In 2012, 47.6 million Americans received food stamps, at a cost of more than \$76 billion. Of these, 3.5 million were Florida residents, at a cost of almost \$6 billion.¹⁴¹ Since 1970, the number of program participants in Florida has **increased 24,000%**, while national participation has increased almost tenfold (998%).¹⁴²

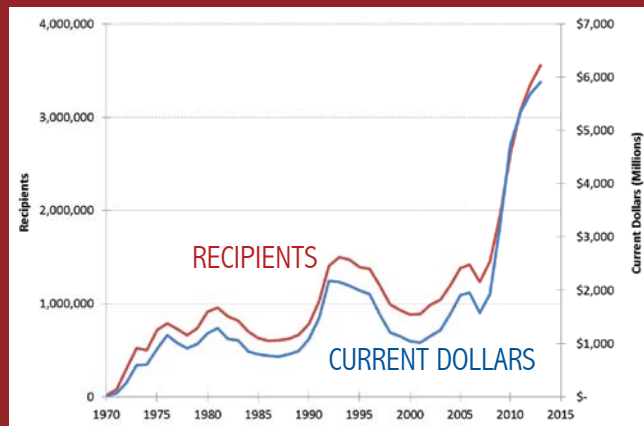


The number of food stamp recipients in Florida decreased substantially at two points: between 1982 and 1988; and between 1993 and 2000. Since then, the number of participants has almost quadrupled, from 882,000 to 3.5 million in 2012, when about **one in every 6 Floridians** received some support from food stamps.¹⁴³



Nationally, the number of program participants has increased 177%, from 17.2 million in 2000 to 47.6 million in 2012.¹⁴⁴ The number of Americans on food stamps has increased during this twelve-year period from one in 16 to about **one in 7**.¹⁴⁵

Foods Stamps



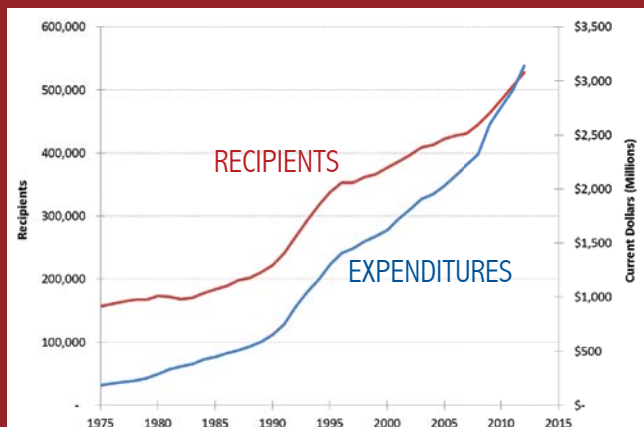
SSI Benefits

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides payments to the aged, blind, and disabled who are poor. Prior to its implementation as a Federal program in the mid-1970s, individual states operated programs to assist people in these categories.

Since 1975, the inflation-adjusted cost of SSI for Florida residents has increased 296%. In 2012, payments to the 527,000 recipients of SSI in Florida totaled **\$3.1 billion**.¹⁴⁶

During the last 30 years, **SSI has changed from mainly serving elderly individuals to being a disability program**. The largest category of SSI payments in Florida in 2012 was to **persons claiming blindness or disability** (410,000; 77%).¹⁴⁷

SSI Benefits

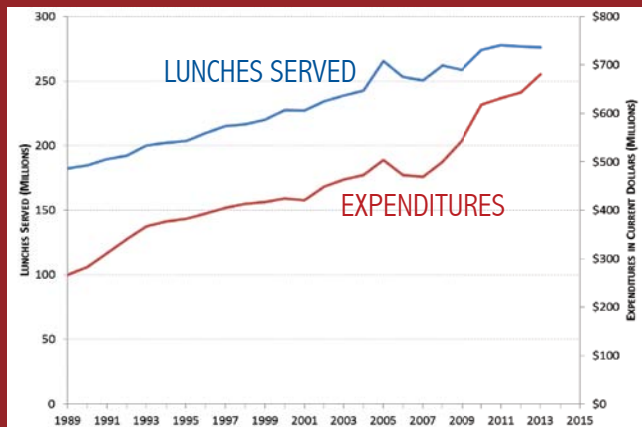


School Lunches

The National School Lunch Program began as a Depression-era program to provide surplus agricultural commodities to schools. In 1946, it was made a permanent federal program, and in 1962, funds were authorized for free and reduced-price meals.



School Lunches



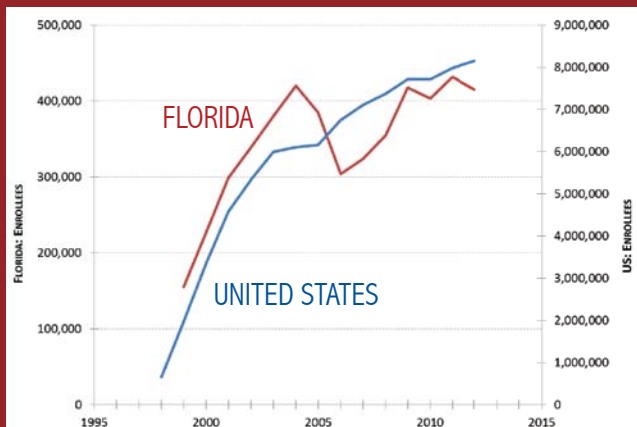
During the 2013 school year, approximately 1.6 million Florida public school students were served **almost 276 million free and reduced-priced meals**. Nationally, almost 5.1 billion meals were served during the same school year.

Since 1989, the number of meals served in Florida has **increased by 51%**.¹⁴⁸

For the 2013 school year, estimates of the total cost of the school lunch program **in Florida are \$276 million** and \$11 billion nationwide.¹⁴⁹ Since 1989, the total, inflation-adjusted amount spent on school lunches in Florida and nationwide has increased 156% and 94%.¹⁵⁰

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP, also known as the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP), is a program administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to provide matching funds to states **to help provide health insurance to families with children**. It was created in 1997 to assist children in families with incomes that are low, but too high to qualify for Medicaid.¹⁵¹

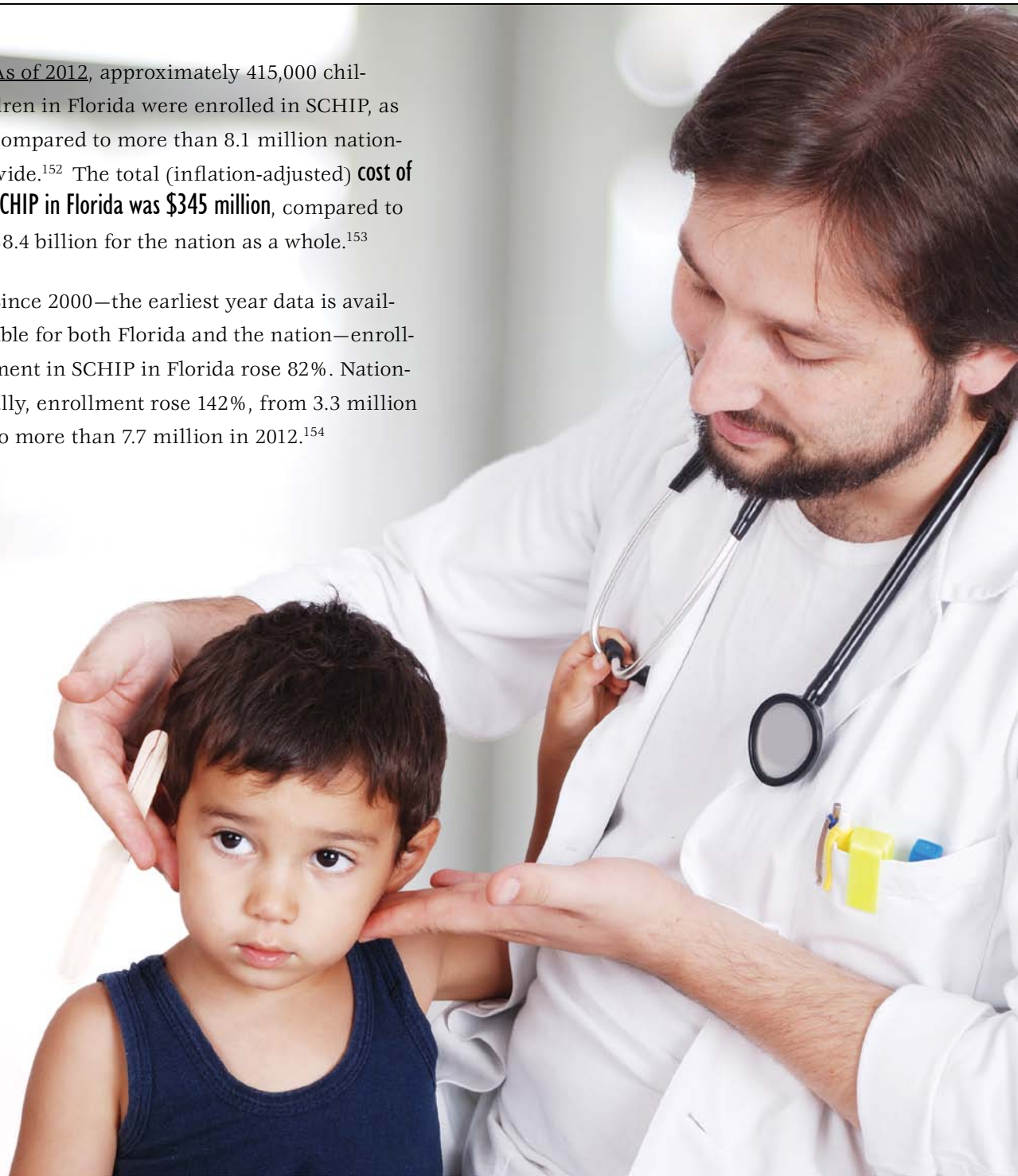
SCHIP Benefits Enrollees



SCHIP Benefits

As of 2012, approximately 415,000 children in Florida were enrolled in SCHIP, as compared to more than 8.1 million nationwide.¹⁵² The total (inflation-adjusted) **cost of SCHIP in Florida was \$345 million**, compared to \$8.4 billion for the nation as a whole.¹⁵³

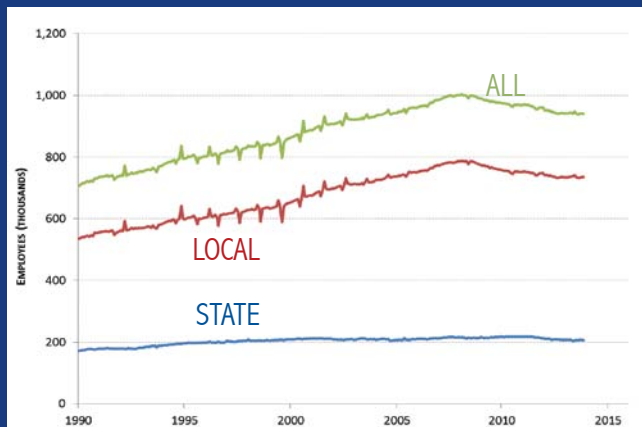
Since 2000—the earliest year data is available for both Florida and the nation—enrollment in SCHIP in Florida rose 82%. Nationally, enrollment rose 142%, from 3.3 million to more than 7.7 million in 2012.¹⁵⁴



State Employees



State and Local Employees



Since 1990, Florida's population has increased by about 49%. At the same time, the numbers of state and local government employees, has increased by 20% and 38%, respectively. As of November 2013, preliminary data show Florida with **940,200 state and local government workers**.

Of these, 205,500 are state and 734,700 are local. It should be noted that local government employees include teachers and other public education employees.¹⁵⁵

Since 2000, the number of state employees has **declined** by 1.9%, while the total number of **local government employees rose** by 12.4%, for a net gain of 9%.¹⁵⁶

State Budget

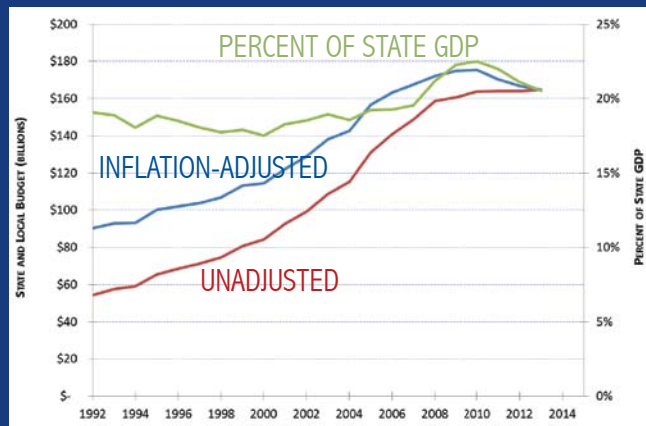


In fiscal year 2013, Florida's combined **state and local expenditures totaled \$164.8 billion**, up \$110.5 billion since 1992 (\$74.4 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars). Since 1992, Florida's total state and local expenditures have **increased 204%** (82% after adjusting for inflation).¹⁵⁷

In 1992, Florida's combined state and local budget of \$54.3 billion equaled about 19% of the state's gross domestic product (GDP) of \$285 billion. By 2013, the estimated budget of \$164.8 billion is **20.5% of the state's GDP of \$803 billion**.¹⁵⁸

In 1992, the three largest components of Florida's state and local budgets were education (\$14.9 billion; 27.4%), health care (\$8.3 billion; 15.2%), and protection services such as police, fire, and corrections (\$6.4 billion; 11.8%). In 2013, **education** (\$41.2 billion) took a slightly larger share than in 1992 (25%), as did **health care** expenditures (\$33 billion; 20%). **Protection services** remained in third place with \$15.6 billion of the state's budget (9.5%).¹⁵⁹

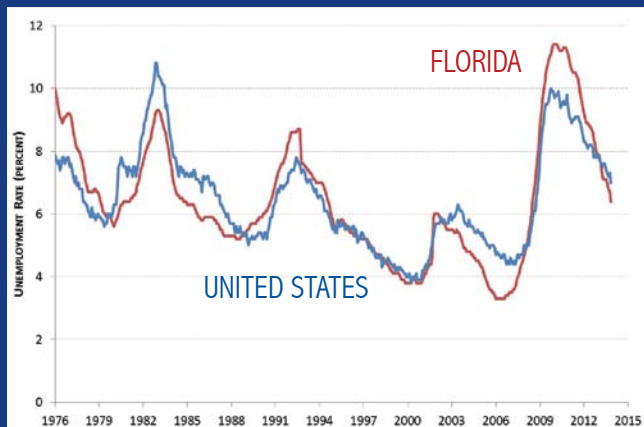
State and Local Budget



Unemployment



Unemployment Rate



Since 1976, the unemployment rates for the United States and Florida have closely mirrored each other. As of November 2013, preliminary data showed Florida with an unemployment rate of 6.4%, 0.6 percentage points lower than the national average of 7%.¹⁶⁰

Since August 2006—when Florida's unemployment rate was 3.3%—the rate has climbed 94% and 49% at the national level.¹⁶¹

Between November 2012 and November 2013, preliminary data show that Florida gained 183,100 total non-farm jobs, for a total of 7.6 million jobs.¹⁶² The sectors with the greatest gains were construction (7%), trade, transportation, and utilities (3.7%), and professional and business services (3.6%), while the largest loss was in government (-0.5%).¹⁶³

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¹⁶² BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, *Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject: State and Area Employment, Hours, and Earnings* http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/SMS120000000000000001?data_tool=XGtable (last viewed Jan. 1, 2014).

¹⁶³ BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, *Economy at a Glance: Florida*, (Dec. 20, 2013), www.bls.gov/eag/eag.fl.htm.

Points to Consider

All Roads Lead to Family

“ One of the most stable predictors of whether an individual will become involved in a crime is family disruption. ”

Vital Statistics & Family

Marriage has a significant effect on mortality rates. According to a review of the literature by medical students at Cardiff University in Wales, mortality rates are generally 10 percent to 15 percent lower among married adults in seven European countries. The researchers credit the effect of marriage as “a positive influence on lifestyle,” which leads to both better mental health and longer life.¹

One of the strongest predictors of sexual activity and pregnancy among adolescent girls is whether their biological father lives in the same house with them. A 2003 study of girls in both the United States and New Zealand found that teen pregnancies were seven to eight times greater among girls whose fathers were absent early in their childhoods and two to three times higher among those whose fathers were not present later in their childhood. These results remained significant even when differences in family background were controlled for.²

Girls who begin sexual activity at an earlier age are far more likely to have many sexual partners, and are more likely to have abortions. According to a representative sample of 10,000 women between the ages 15 to 44 who participated in the 1995 National Survey of Family Growth, girls who had voluntary sexual activity at ages 13 or 14 had an

average of 13 or more voluntary non-marital sex partners throughout their lives, while those who began sexual activity in their 20s had, on average, less than three partners. Likewise, nearly 30 percent of those who became sexually active at age 13 or 14 had had an abortion, while only 12 percent of those who began sexual activity at 21 or 22 had had an abortion.³

Crime & Family

One of the most stable predictors of whether an individual will become involved in a crime is family disruption, according to a 2005 meta-analysis of over 200 studies by criminal justice professors Travis Pratt of Washington State University and Francis Cullen of the University of Cincinnati.⁴

Likewise, children raised in single-parent homes are more likely to be delinquent, possibly because single-parents, especially single mothers, expect less of their children, spend less time monitoring them, and use less effective techniques to discipline them.⁵

Fatherhood & Family

According to data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, the children of black mothers spend, on average, only 34 percent of their childhood living with both their biological father and mother, compared

“ The absence of two married parents in the home is the primary cause of children living in poverty. ”

to 72 percent for the children of white mothers and 64 percent for Hispanic mothers.⁶

More than half of all marriages today are preceded by cohabitation.⁷ While couples who cohabit before marriage tend to believe they are improving their chances for marital success, a number of studies suggest that cohabitation increases the odds of divorce by between 50 percent and 100 percent.⁸ Even among couples that remain married after cohabiting, their quality of life—in terms of marital satisfaction, successful conflict management, and perceived risk of separation—was worse than those who had not cohabited prior to marriage.⁹

Even though the national marriage rate may be declining, three of every four marriages started in 1990 and later have made it to their tenth anniversary, and more than half had lasted past their fifteenth anniversary, according to data posted by the U.S. Census Bureau in May 2011. This is good news, considering that children tend to copy the marriage trajectories of their parents.¹⁰

Health & Family

Family structure has a significant effect on whether teenagers become involved in substance abuse. According to research examined by The Heritage Foundation, teens in

intact families were less likely in their later years to involve themselves in substance abuse than those in single-parent homes.¹¹ Other research has found that teenagers in two-parent families had lower rates of smoking and drinking than those in single-parent homes.¹²

Family structure plays a significant role when it comes to physical health. According to a 2009 study conducted by Mary Elizabeth Hughes at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Lindar J. Waite at the University of Chicago, people who get married and stay married tend to have better health than those who have never married. At the same time, those who have ever been divorced have worse health in terms of depression, mobility limitations, and chronic conditions.¹³

Poverty and Family

The absence of two married parents in the home is the primary cause of children living in poverty. According to data from the U.S. Census' 2008 American Community Survey, being raised in a married couple family reduces the probability that a child will live in poverty by about 80 percent. In 2008, the poverty rate for children living with a single parent was 36.5 percent, while the same rate for married couples was 6.4 percent. Some

“ The median family income of single men is three-fifths of the median married-family income; for single women, it’s two-fifths. Even among single-income married families, the median family income is still higher than that of unmarried individuals. ”

of this effect is due to the fact that single parents generally have less education than married couples, but even when families with identical levels of education are compared, the married poverty rate remained 75 percent lower.¹⁴

Marriage is a significant predictor of whether a woman lives in poverty. Women who are or have ever been married are less likely to be poor than their peers who have never married—regardless of race, family disadvantage, non-marital birth status, or high-school dropout status. The harmful effect associated with a disadvantaged family background is completely offset by marrying and staying married.¹⁵

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey for 2010, the median family income of single men is three-fifths of the median married-family income; for single women, it's two-fifths. Even among single-income married families, the median family income is still higher than that of unmarried individuals.¹⁶

Finance and Family

On average, married couples have greater net worth than other household types. According to data collected from the Survey of Income and Program Participation, the average net worth of married couples was

\$187,100, much higher than cohabitating couples (\$77,000), single-male headed households (\$92,000), and female-headed households (\$48,700).¹⁷

In the same way, children from single-parent families are significantly more likely to achieve less in both education and their occupations than those from married-couple families.¹⁸

¹ Thaddeus Baklinski, “Marriage Significantly Helps Longevity, Mental Health, Study Finds.” LifeSiteNews.com (web), January 31, 2011. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3e5pca9>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

² Bruce J. Ellis, John E. Bates, Kenneth A. Doge, David M. Fergusson, John L. Horwood, Gregory S. Pettit, and Lianne Woodward, “Does Father Absence Place Daughters at Special Risk for Early Sexual Activity and Teenage Pregnancy?” *Child Development*, vol. 74.3, 2003, pp. 801-821. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3khsk2k>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

³ Robert Rector, Kirk Johnson, Shannan Martin, and Lauren Noyes, “The Harmful Effects of Early Sexual Activity and Multiple Sexual Partners among Women: Charts,” *Heritage Foundation WebMemo No. 303*, June 23, 2003. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3vambna>. Access verified June 7, 2011.

⁴ Travis C. Pratt and Francis T. Cullen, “Assessing Macro-Level Predictors and Theories of Crime: A Meta-Analysis.” *Crime and Justice*, vol. 32, 2005, pp. 373-450. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3jtt4xq>.

⁵ R.L. Simmons, L. Simons, and E. Wallace, *Families, Delinquency, and Crime: Linking Society's Most Basic Institution to Antisocial*

Behavior (Los Angeles: Roxbury, 2004).

⁶ David M. Blau and Wilbert van der Klaauw, "A Demographic Analysis of the Family Structure Experiences of Children in the United States." *Review of Economics of the Household*, vol. 6.3, 2008, pp. 193-221. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3ztm2zz>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

⁷ Larry Bumpass and Hsien Hen Lu, "Trends in Cohabitation and Implication for Children's Family Contexts in the United States," *Population Studies*, vol. 54, 2000, pp. 29-41.

⁸ For a review of the literature, see Pamela J. Smock, "Cohabitation in the United States: An Appraisal of Research Themes, Findings, and Implications." *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 26, 2000, pp. 1-20.

⁹ John R. Hill and Sharon G. Evans, "Effects of Cohabitation Length on Personal and Relational Well-Being." *Alabama Policy Institute*, August 2006. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3cox6xy>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

¹⁰ "Good News on Lasting Marriages." *The Heritage Foundation, The Foundry (Blog)*, May 20, 2011. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/42kxn5g>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

¹¹ Christine Kim, "Top 10 Findings on Family Structure and Teen Substance Abuse." *The Heritage Foundation*, video recorded May 5, 2008. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3ejs9en>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Mary Elizabeth Hughes and Linda J. Waite, "Marital Biography and Health at Midlife." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, September 2009, vol. 50.3, pp. 344-358. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/6enkfo8>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

¹⁴ Robert Rector, "Marriage: America's Greatest

Weapon against Child Poverty." *The Heritage Foundation, Backgrounder No. 2465*, September 16, 2010. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/29dvubu>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

¹⁵ Daniel T. Lichter, Deborah Roempke, and J. Brian Brown, "Is Marriage a Panacea? Union Formation Among Economically Disadvantaged Unwed Mothers," *Social Problems*, vol. 50, 2003, pp. 60-86

¹⁶ "Married Couple Families Have Higher Incomes." *FamilyFacts.org (blog)*, 2011. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3d57t3z>. Access verified June 6, 2011.

¹⁷ Michal Grinstein-Weiss, Yeong Hun Yeo, Min Zhan, and Charles Pajarita, "Asset Holding and Net Worth among Households with Children: Differences by Household Type." *Children and Youth Services Review*, vol. 30.1, 2008, pp. 62-78. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/3qfnqf2>. Access verified June 6, 2011., pp. -

¹⁸ Timothy J. Biblarz and Adrian E. Raftery, "Family Structure, Educational Attainment, and Socioeconomic Success: Rethinking the 'Pathology of Matriarchy.'" *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 105.2, September 1999, pp. 321-365. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/6k2q5sn>. Access verified June 7, 2011.

What's Next?

Initial Recommendations

As stated at the outset, *State of Florida Cultural Indicators* is intended as a simple, user friendly, visual presentation of facts that will hopefully encourage a statewide conversation on the health of our society and what is needed to help marriages and families thrive. Nevertheless, a number of basic solutions are worth considering.

1 Begin a statewide conversation that crosses party, race, ideology and region. Florida Family Policy Council and other statewide groups have initiated conversations, but the dialogue must be expanded. The common belief and focus of such a dialogue would be that the family is the foundation of society. John Paul II once said, “As goes the family, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live.” Policy makers, media, entertainment professionals, opinion leaders and faith leaders should be part of this dialogue.

2 Build on faith communities. People of faith, loosely defined, can contribute greatly to the conversation and solutions about family fragmentation. Martin Luther King, Jr. often said that eleven o'clock on Sunday morning was the most segregated hour of the week. Unfortunately, this is still true for most parts of the state, but according to the Pew Research Center,

Floridians have a stronger, more active faith than citizens in many other states. From city streets to country crossroads, Florida is home to thousands of vibrant churches that could be agents of change if we work together.

3 Promote marriage as desirable and special. A large volume of research shows that married couples are happier, healthier and more financially secure. The children of loving, two-parent families do better in school, are less likely to experiment with drugs or face other encounters with the law. Healthy Marriage Initiatives have been in place in other states for years, but Florida has yet to take advantage of them. Tax policy should always be drafted to benefit married couples and encourage marriage.

4 Resist divorce as inevitable. The initial shock of separation need not lead to dissolution, especially when children are involved. The effects of divorce on children are lifelong. Do our state laws encourage reconciliation (like Parental Divorce Reduction acts) or do they encourage quick and unilateral divorce with “no fault”?

5 Teach marriage and parenting education. Parenting is clearly more difficult alone. Programs for positive parenting are not a substitute for a spouse, but they

can be helpful in a society where families do not enjoy the passing down of lessons from past generations as they once did. Marriage and parental education should be encouraged by the state. Many people spend years educating themselves preparing for a career but how much time do we spend preparing for the most complex and challenging of all human relationships—being a spouse or a parent?

6 Recognize the fiscal-moral connection. A recent study conducted by the Institute for American Values showed that broken families cost taxpayers and our state government \$1.9 billion per year. There is virtually no state domestic policy issue which is not directly affected by the strength and or weakness of marriage and family structures.

7 Understand poverty. Poverty contributes to the fracturing of families and vice versa. To reverse negative societal trends, Florida lawmakers and opinion leaders should learn from those who work with the poor and understand the survival mentality that blinds many in our communities to the opportunities that are available to them. Again, one of the greatest weapons for fighting poverty is marriage.

Core Values

of the Florida Family Policy Council



For Life, Marriage, Family and Liberty

Florida Family Policy Council's Mission

To strengthen Florida's families through public policy education, issue research, and grassroots advocacy.

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Life. The Florida Family Policy Council believes that mankind was created in the image and likeness of God and therefore human life is special and sacred. The right to life is one of the most fundamental of all political rights.

Marriage. The Florida Family Policy Council believes that marriage and family are fundamental to the basic social order of any civilization and that government has a compelling interest in the definition and promotion of marriage as an institution.

Parenting. The Florida Family Policy Council believes that mothers and fathers must seek to build character and teach children the values that are important to them. Parents should be active, strategic and loving as they seek to block out the bad influence and build in good influences into their children's lives.

Education. The Florida Family Policy Council believes that learning is critical to success in life, and that whether parents send their children to public, private, or home-schools, they, and not the state or the church are ultimately responsible for their child's education and so government should always favor local control of schools over centralization.

Religious Liberty. The Florida Family Policy Council believes that religious liberty is our first liberty and it should be defended and protected for all citizens of all faiths.

Commerce. The Florida Family Policy Council believes that private enterprise, not government, is the engine of economic progress. Only people can create wealth. Government can only redistribute it. Entrepreneurship and hard work should be taught as a positive value and celebrated.

Culture. The Florida Family Policy Council believes that there are strong relationships between politics, policy, culture and faith. In the same way we need clean air and water, families also deserve a clean society that treasures life, truth, justice and beauty.

Faith. Believing that God is the author of life, liberty and the family, the Florida Family Policy Council promotes the Christian worldview as the basis for a just, free and stable society. Religious liberty is one of our first liberties and should be defended for all citizens and all faiths.



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