

# Children In Disasters



**WRHSAC**

Western Region Homeland  
Security Advisory Council



# Basic Objectives and Goals

- Understanding special vulnerabilities
- Keeping kids safe during/after an event
- Re-unification with family
- Accommodating kids with complex needs
- Supporting disaster mental health
- Building partnerships to call upon during disasters



# Natural Disasters

- Flood
- Earthquake
- Hurricane
- Tornado
- Pandemic
- Between 1994 and 2013, EM-DAT recorded 6,873 natural disasters which claimed 1.35 million lives



# Technological Disasters

- Chemical/Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Emergencies
- Transportation Accidents
- Nuclear/Radiological Event
- Dam Failure
- Cybersecurity
- Power Outages





# Adversarial/ Human Caused Disasters

- Mass Shooting
- Act of Terrorism
- Fires
- War
- Genocide



# Number of Children in Western Massachusetts (18 years and under)

County	#
Berkshire	23,696
Franklin	13,234
Hampden	106,102
Hampshire	25,272
Total	168,304

# Number and Percent of Household Children by Type of Relationship in State of Massachusetts

## Households in Massachusetts with Children under 18 years:

784,853 - 30.8%

- Adopted children: 29,636 - 2.3%
- Stepchildren: 29,871 - 2.3%
- Biological children: 1,231,287 - 95.4 %



# Percent of Persons Under 5 Years Old in Western Massachusetts

County/State	Percentage/ Estimated Number
Berkshire	4.5 % / 5,792
Franklin	4.6% / 3,291
Hampden	5.9% / 27,577
Hampshire	3.6% / 5,794
State of Massachusetts	Average of 5.5% / 368,988



# Children with Special Healthcare Needs

In MA: 18.3% (261,475 children)

- In Western Massachusetts it is estimated at 25-30,000 children

“Children with special health care needs are those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”  
(AAP & MCH definition)

# Estimated Child Population by Race In State of Massachusetts

Race/Ethnicity	# of Children/% of population	
Native American	2,808	<5%
Asian	80,660	6%
African-American	110,562	8%
Hispanic or Latino	211,628	15%
White	964,046	68%
Two or More Race Groups	45,971	<5%
Other	563	<1%

# Child Population by Nativity/Immigrant Families in State of Massachusetts

**Definitions:** The share of children under age 18 who are foreign or native born.

Foreign-born is defined as either a U.S. citizen by naturalization or not a citizen of the U.S.

Native-born is defined as born in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or the Northern Marianas or born abroad of American parents.

Native Born: 1,239,162 - 96%

Foreign Born: 51,631 - 4%



# Languages Spoken at Home by Ages 5-18

County:	Berkshire	Franklin	Hampden	Hampshire
English Only	92.5 %	94.1%	74.9%	90.2%
Spanish or Spanish Creole	3.2%	1.9%	16.4%	3.2%
Indo-European Languages	3.1%	3.0%	6.5%	3.8%
Asian/Pacific Islands	.08%	.08%	1.5%	2.6%
Other	.04%	.02%	.07%	.02%

# Under Age 18 in Poverty

County	Number in Poverty	Percentage in Poverty
Berkshire	4,305	18.8 %
Franklin	2,263	17.7 %
Hampden	30,515	29.3%
Hampshire	2,978	12.1 %

# Berkshire County Schools and Early Education Programs



- 12 Public High Schools- 6,634 Students
- 7 Public Middle Schools- 3,479 Students
- 34 Public Elementary Schools- 9,708 Students
- 20 Public Preschools- 5,534 Students
- 1 Public Charter School- 305 Students
- 22 Private Schools- 2,149 Students
- 180 Early Ed Family Programs-1192 Students
- 53 Early Ed Child Care Centers- 2601 Students
- 19 Early Ed Residential Centers-278 Students



# Franklin County Schools and Early Education Programs



- 9 Public High Schools- 4,327 Students
- 4 Public Middle Schools- 1,390 Students
- 28 Public Elementary Schools- 4,894 Students
- 20 Public Preschools- 3,369 Students
- 1 Public Charter School- 210 Students
- 15 Private Schools- 2,272
- 235 Early Ed Family Programs- 882 Students
- 35 Early Ed Child Care Centers- 1344 Students
- 3 Early Ed Residential Centers- 46 Students

# Hampden County Schools and Early Education Programs



- 31 Public High Schools- 24,682 Students
- 35 Public Middle Schools- 18,596 Students
- 98 Elementary Schools- 37,360 Students
- 31 Public Pre Schools- 12,553 Students
- 6 Public Charter Schools- 3,563 Students
- 54 Private Schools- 5,079 Students
- 659 Early Ed Family Programs-4199 Students
- 294 Early Ed Child Care Centers- 11546 Students
- 81 Early Ed Residential Centers-412 Students

# Hampshire County Schools and Early Education Programs



- 31 Public High Schools -7,466 Students
- 11 Public Middle Schools- 4,297 Students
- 29 Public Elementary Schools- 8,049 Students
- 16 Public Preschools- 4,315 Students
- 3 Charter Schools – 860 Students
- 18 Private Schools- 1,905 Students
- 164 Early Ed Family Programs-910 Students
- 70 Early Ed Child Care Centers- 2654 Students
- 24 Early Ed Residential Centers-38 Students



# Pressing Issues During a Disaster

- Identification of the pre-verbal child
- Tracking the missing child or child sent to a distant hospital
- What if parents are killed or missing?
- May not have access to daily or as-needed medications



# Mental Health Needs

Effects of disaster trauma can impact a child's later life if poorly managed or not addressed

- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Depression
- Substance abuse
- Chronic health issues
- Learning difficulties/School challenges



# Mental Health Needs

- Need honest age-appropriate answers to their questions
- Need return to 'normal' or near-normal as soon as possible
- Back to school
- Back home or settled into a new home
- Need reassurance that they are safe
- Ongoing mental support after disaster



# ACE Study (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

- Adverse childhood experiences are common and strongly associated with personal alcohol abuse, depression and suicide later in life.
- Adverse childhood experiences would typically go undetected because of shame, secrecy and social taboo.
- When a tragedy begins as trauma in early life, it is not uncommon for people to seek comfort in behaviors that make them feel better, but harm their long term health. (Smoking, Drug abuse)

<http://www.cestudy.org/>

# The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) Resources

- Effective treatments for youth trauma
- Empirically supported treatments and promising practices
- Trauma-informed interventions: Clinical research evidence and culture specific information project

<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/parents-caregivers/treatments-that-work>











# References

## Statistics/Data

- U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey
- American Fact Finder table C05003 ([factfinder2.census.gov/](http://factfinder2.census.gov/)).
- Datacenter.kidscount.org **Data Source:** Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau.
- U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits
- US Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

## Daycares/Schools information

- EEC Licensing Manager