



## The Children's Partnership

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# ARKANSAS

## Youth and Technology Fact Sheet

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A fact sheet for each of the 50 states can be viewed at  
<http://www.childrenspartnership.org/TPB/StateFactSheets/>

### The New Workforce: Benefits of Being Prepared With Technology Skills

- At present, over half (56%) of employed Americans over age 18 use a computer at work.<sup>1</sup>
- Between 2004 and 2014, jobs in the information technology fields are expected to increase by about 30%, for an addition of over 1 million jobs nationally.<sup>2</sup>
- 30 out of every 1,000 private sector workers in Arkansas are employed by high-tech firms (41st highest rate in the nation).<sup>3</sup>
- Arkansas ranks 39th in the U.S. for overall number of high-tech workers and 43rd for average high-tech wage.<sup>4</sup>
- In Arkansas, high-tech industry workers earn an average of \$20,396 more per year than other private sector workers.<sup>5</sup>

### How Wide is the Digital Opportunity Gap?

- 83% of households in Arkansas earning less than \$15,000 per year do not own a computer compared to 50% of all Arkansas' households and 38% of all households nationally.<sup>6</sup>
- 88% of households in Arkansas earning less than \$15,000 per year do not use the Internet at home compared to 58% of all Arkansas' households and 45% of all households nationally.<sup>7</sup>
- 12% of all Arkansas' households have broadband compared to 20% of all households nationally.<sup>8</sup>
- Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Arkansas ranks 50<sup>th</sup> in percentage of households with a computer, 50<sup>th</sup> in percentage of households with Internet access, and 46<sup>th</sup> in percentage of households with broadband access.<sup>9</sup>

### Are Schools Equipping Today's Youth? Where Arkansas Stands

- 19% of 4th graders and 36% of 8th graders in Arkansas scored below the basic level of math that is expected in their grade (national average is 19% and 30%, respectively).<sup>10</sup>
- There are 3.8 students for every Internet-connected computer in Arkansas' public schools; in high-poverty schools there are 3.8 students per connected computer (the national average is 3.7 and 3.8, respectively).<sup>11</sup>
- In 15% of schools in Arkansas, the majority of teachers (at least half) are "beginners" when it comes to using technology (the national average is 15%).<sup>12</sup>
- Arkansas is not among the 34 states that has education technology standards by grade level.<sup>13</sup>

### Arkansas' Young People Most in Need

- Of the 684,000 children in Arkansas, 149,000, or 22%, are living in poverty.<sup>14</sup> Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Arkansas ranks 7th in percentage of children living in poverty.<sup>15</sup>
- 36% of Arkansas' children live with parents who do not have full-time, year-round employment (the national average is 34%).<sup>16</sup>
- 9% of teens in Arkansas do not attend school and do not work (the national average is 8%).<sup>17</sup>
- Arkansas residents aged 20-24 have an unemployment rate of 8.9% (the state unemployment rate for all ages is 5.3%).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, *Computer Use and Internet Use in the United States: 2003*, Issued October 2005, Viewed March 5, 2008: 23-208 ([www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/p23-208.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/p23-208.pdf)).

<sup>2</sup> Jay Vesgo, *BLS Current and Projected IT Employment Figures by Detailed Occupation*, Computing Research Association, Revised January 13, 2006, Viewed March 10, 2008 (<http://www.cra.org/wp/index.php?p=71>).

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Covered Employment and Wages as reported in American Electronics Association, *Cyberstates 2007: A State-by-State Overview of the High-Technology Industry*. State rankings associated with footnotes #3-4 are based on data that includes Puerto Rico and Washington, DC, along with the fifty states. A ranking of #1 represents the best state; a ranking of #52 represents the worst. (Not available online.)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Calculation by The Children's Partnership.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey: Computer and Internet Use 2003*, special tabulation by the U.S. Department of Commerce. Calculation by The Children's Partnership. (2003 represents the most recent data available.)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. Calculation by The Children's Partnership.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. Calculation by The Children's Partnership.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Rankings calculated by The Children's Partnership. A ranking of #1 represents the best state; a ranking of #51 represents the worst.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), *2007 Mathematics Assessment*, as reported by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Profiles by State, March 11, 2008 (<http://www.kidscount.org/sld/profile.jsp>).

<sup>11</sup> Market Data Retrieval, "2005-06 Public School Technology Survey," and unpublished tabulations from MDR's Public School Technology Survey (2005), as reported in Education Week, *Technology Counts 2007: A Digital Decade*. This figure includes only computers that are available for student instruction. High-poverty schools refer to schools in which more than half the students are eligible for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program. March 6, 2008: 3 ([http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/tc/2007/AR\\_STR2007.pdf](http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/tc/2007/AR_STR2007.pdf)).

<sup>12</sup> *Education Counts Custom Table Builder*. Education Week, August 23, 2007 (<http://www.edweek.org/rc/2007/06/07/edcounts.html>).

<sup>13</sup> The Children's Partnership, review of the Department of Education Web sites for the 50 states, conducted December 2007.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey 2005 Annual Social and Economic Supplement*, Revised November 2, 2006, Viewed March 5, 2008 ([http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032005/pov/new46\\_100125\\_03.htm](http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032005/pov/new46_100125_03.htm)).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Rankings calculated by The Children's Partnership. A ranking of #1 represents the worst state (highest percentage of children living in poverty); a ranking of #51 represents the best (lowest percentage of children living in poverty).

<sup>16</sup> Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, *2007 Kids Count Data Book*, as reported by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, February 29, 2008: 51 ([http://www.aecf.org/upload/PublicationFiles/databook\\_2007.pdf](http://www.aecf.org/upload/PublicationFiles/databook_2007.pdf)).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Preliminary 2006 Data on Employment Status by State and Demographic Group*, March 5, 2008: 3-53 (<http://www.bls.gov/lau/ptable14full2006.pdf>).