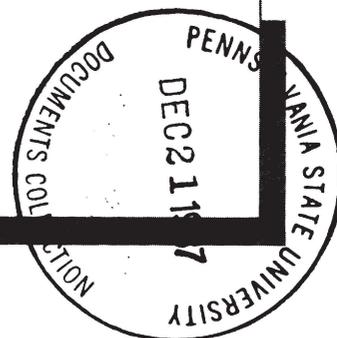


Statistical Brief

From the Bureau of the Census



Where The Children Are

Agencies that serve the needs of children must accommodate occasional abrupt changes in the size of their target populations. Over the last 30 years, school districts have had to adjust quickly as the numbers of students have surged, receded, and surged again. This Brief shows the latest changes in the numbers of preschool-age (under 5 years) and school-age (5 through 17 years) children for each State. The estimates cover the period from the 1980 census to July 1, 1986, and are computed from decennial census data, from birth and death records, and from information collected for administrative purposes such as school enrollment, income tax, and housing records.

Nationally, the preschool population has increased by over one-tenth.

Some States, however, have seen their preschool-age populations skyrocket. In Alaska, the number of children under 5 has grown by over one-half. In Florida, the State more commonly thought of as a haven for the elderly, the number of preschool-age children has increased by more than one-third in just 6 years. Arizona, California, Texas, and Nevada have all experienced an increase of at least one-quarter. These large increases in the

youngest age group reflect rapid growth in these States' total populations.

Contrary to the national trend, a number of States have experienced declines in their preschool-age populations.

The largest drop occurred in West Virginia where there are now one-sixth fewer young children than in 1980. Although no other State experienced a decline of that magnitude, Iowa, Kentucky, Indiana, and Idaho registered declines of more than 5 percent. Kentucky, Indiana, and Idaho lost preschool-age children even though the total number of people in each State increased.

For most States, the substantial downturn in births in the early 1970's is now visible as a sharp drop in the number of children of school age.

The decline of children 5 to 17 years old has been greatest in the Northeast. Six of the nine Northeastern States have experienced losses of over one-tenth of their school-age populations. Massachusetts led the Nation in the decline with one-sixth fewer school-age children. Four states outside the region registered losses of over one-tenth: Ohio, Michigan, Iowa,

and Maryland. Only one region, the West, experienced a net gain.

Utah and Alaska recorded large gains in the number of school-age children.

Both States had over one-fifth more school-age youngsters in 1986 than in 1980. For Utah, high birth rates were primarily the cause of the continued growth of this age group. Alaska's increase reflects the high level of immigration which increasingly includes entire families. Other States that experienced increases of 5 percent or more in their school-age populations were Texas, Arizona, and Wyoming.

For Further Information on State Population Estimates See: Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 1010. *State Population and Household Estimates, with Age, Sex, and Components of Change: 1981 to 1986*

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This is one of a series of occasional reports providing timely data on specific policy-related issues.

SB-4-87 Issued October 1987

Five Top-Ranked States in Proportions of Children: 1986

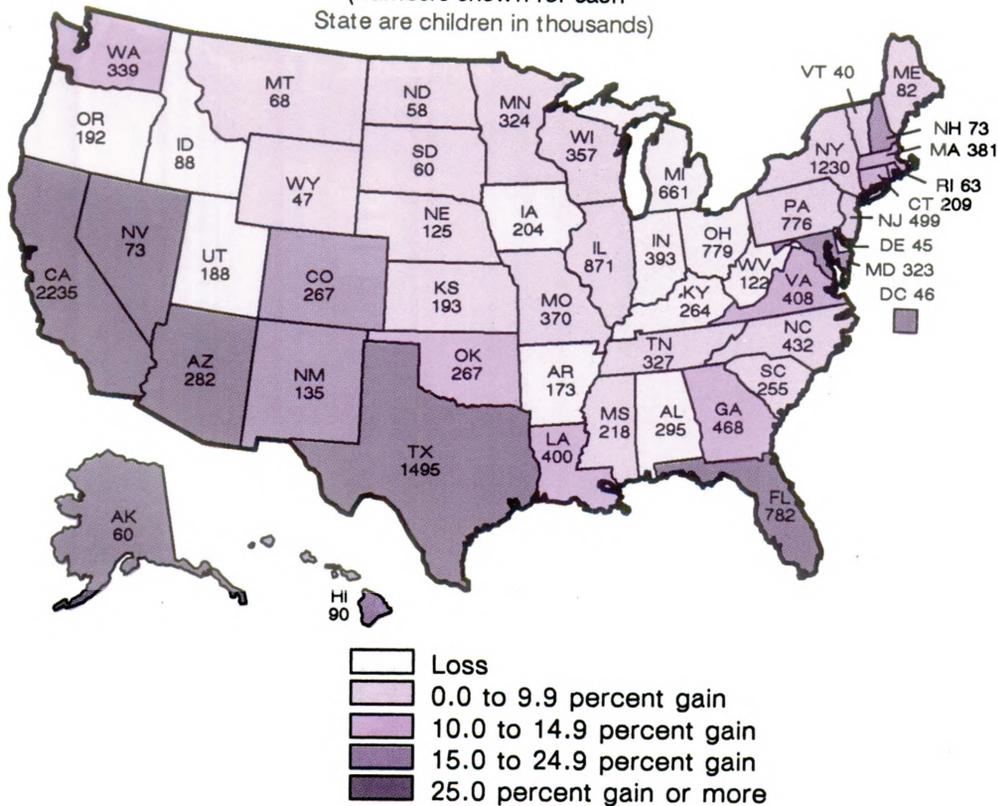


U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, U.S. Depository

Preschool (Under 5)		School Age (5 to 17)	
	Percent		Percent
Utah	11	Utah	26
Alaska	11	Idaho	22
Wyoming	9	Mississippi	22
New Mexico	9	Wyoming	21
Texas	9	Louisiana	21

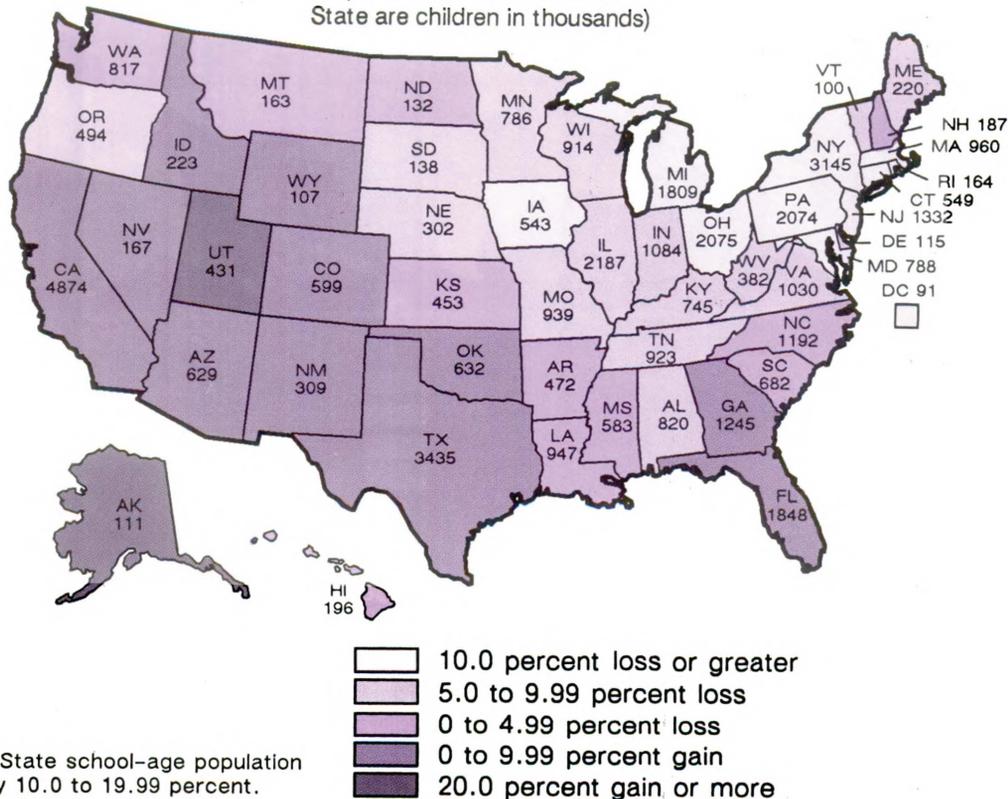
Change in Preschool-Age Population: 1980-86

(Numbers shown for each State are children in thousands)



Change in School-Age Population: 1980-86

(Numbers shown for each State are children in thousands)



NOTE: No State school-age population increased by 10.0 to 19.99 percent.