

FATHERLESSNESS IN UTAH

JACK BREWER | OCTOBER 2023

Fatherhood is foundational to strong families, and strong families are essential to a strong Nation. An absent father affects all aspects of a child's life, from socio-cognitive and socio-emotional development to academic performance and criminality—and unfortunately, the effects of fatherlessness are visible in **Utah**.

FATHERLESSNESS IN THE UNITED STATES

- Approximately **18.4 million** [children in the U.S.](#) live without a biological father, stepfather, or adoptive father present in the home.
- **23%** of children in the U.S. are raised by a single parent, which is more than three times the world average (**7%**) of [children raised by a single parent](#) and the highest rate of any country on Earth.
- Approximately **41%** of children are [born to unwed mothers](#). For women under age 30, the unwed birth rate increases to **53%**.
- Fathers are [absent in approximately 80%](#) of single-parent homes.
- Fatherless children are **more likely to suffer from** psychosocial development issues, live in poverty, drop out of school, engage in school violence, abuse substances, and enter the juvenile justice system.

FATHERHOOD AND FAMILY IN UTAH

- **167,000** Utah children, or 18% of all children in Utah, live in [single-parent households](#).
- **8,829** [births to unmarried women](#) occurred in Utah in 2020, accounting for **19%** of all births in the state that year.
- **1,363** [teen births](#) took place in Utah in 2020.
- **2,373** [children reside in foster care](#) in Utah.

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES IN UTAH

- **70%** of Utah 4th-graders [scored “below proficient”](#) in reading for their class level.
- **58%** of Utah 4th-graders [scored “below proficient”](#) in mathematics for their class level.
- **28.7%** of Utah [students](#) are considered “chronically absent” from school.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE IN UTAH

- **63,010** persons in Utah [receive supplemental nutrition](#) assistance.
- **115,000** children in families [are receiving public assistance](#) in Utah.
- Approximately **68,900** Utah [children live in poverty](#)—**8%** of all Utah children.