

The State of Parenting in Texas

Making Texas the best place to raise a family.

Texas 2036 was founded to make Texas the best place to live and work — for the next generation of Texans, and the generations after them. Our team at Texas 2036, which includes parents of over two dozen children, is doing its part today to help raise tomorrow's generation of Texans.

We decided to take a look at how Texas parents are fairing, including where there are opportunities for the state to do better.



"I've tried to explain to my seven grandsons that I could not have been born in a better place, at a better time, than Texas in 1940.

If I had been born in any other place, I wouldn't have had the same opportunities."

—Texas 2036 Founder Tom Luce

What we know: Families with children under 18 make up a significant population in Texas — and that population is growing.

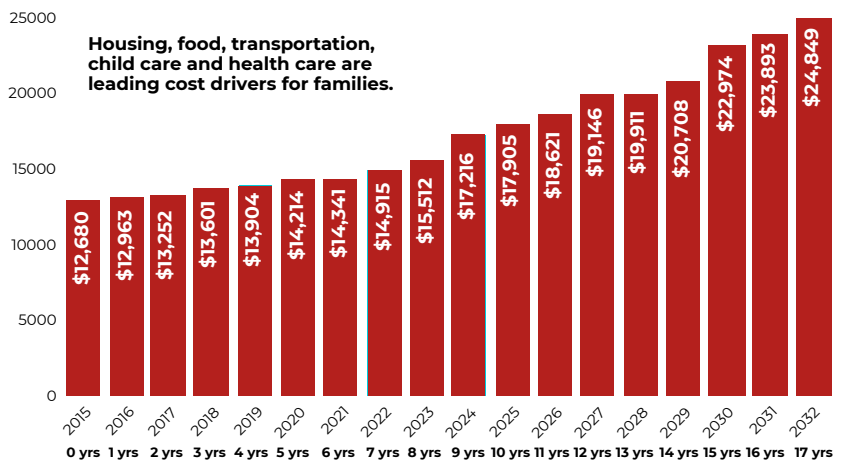
- Texas has the **second-largest population** of children under 18.
- **Nearly 1 out of every 3 households** in Texas is home to families with children under 18.
- **Every 90 seconds** a child is born somewhere in Texas.



Is being a parent really that expensive? Data says yes.

Nationally, it costs over **\$310,000** to raise a child born in 2015 from birth to age 17, according to a Brookings analysis.

The estimated annual costs of raising a child increase **from \$12,680 in 2015 when the baby was born to nearly \$25,000 by 2032 when the child will be 17 years old** due to a combination of inflation and increased expenses as that child matures.



MORE DATA: A 2021 UT Austin study calculated the cost for a single-parent family in Texas to raise a child at about \$12,400 per year, or about \$13,000 per year for a married-parent family.

What do parents earn in Texas?

The median family income in Texas is **\$86,000**. But actual income can change dramatically depending on a family's situation.

Nearly four in five Texas families (78%) have more than one child, and just over half of Texas families are dual income and earn a median income of **\$111,000**.

Meanwhile, households led by a single mother account for nearly a quarter of Texas families and earn a median income of only **\$33,000**.



What are the costs of child and health care?

The average annual cost of child care for toddlers in Texas is **\$8,718** — that's \$726 per month, a quarter of a single mother's income.

In the Texas Voter Poll last year, **70% of respondents — including 77% of mothers surveyed** — said that most working Texas parents do not have access to affordable child care options.



52% of surveyed mothers said in the same voter poll that they or a household member postponed or skipped care over anticipated medical bills.

Is there a K-12 parent perception gap?

More than half of Texas students are below grade level in **math**, and **nearly half of Texas students do not read on grade level**. This translates to about 1.5 million students in grades three through 10 who struggle with reading.

Nationally, only 10% of parents believe their child is below grade level, creating a child-parent perception gap.

How are parents preparing their children for life after high school?

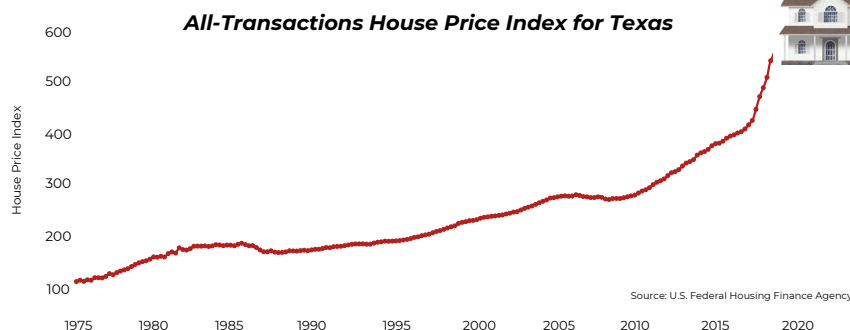
Parents are still involved in their children's lives after high school. As such, they are concerned about **rising higher education costs** over the years.

Here are the 2022 costs to pursue higher ed in Texas by type of institution:

- **\$51,236:** the average annual cost to attend a private four-year university in Texas.
- **\$18,807:** the average annual in-state cost to attend a public four-year institution in Texas.
- **\$2,859:** the average annual in-state cost to attend a public two-year institution in Texas.



Can Texas families afford to buy a home?



Texas families have been feeling the pinch from housing prices for years. Prices, mortgage rates and limited supply have led to some of the worst months for housing affordability in recent decades.

Meanwhile, the number of families in Texas experiencing homelessness is on the rise. According to federal data, the number of unhoused Texas families grew by 5% during 2023.

Did you know? The average cost to buy a home in Texas in 2023 was \$348,000 (Forbes Advisor).

Helping Texans earn family-sustaining wages

At Texas 2036, one of our key policy goals has been to **ensure more Texans have access to the skills and credentials that will help them earn family-sustaining wages**. We've also worked to support the state toward this shared goal.

Texas 2036 also continues to work in support of efforts to better align community college funding with the high-wage, high-demand jobs of the future.

Did you know? AARP found that **20% of adults ages 50+ have no retirement savings**, and more than half (61%) are worried they will not have enough money to support them in retirement.



Our 2023 Texas Voter Poll indicated 30% believe Texas children will have better opportunities than they did. We're working to fix this. Here's how.



texas2036.org