

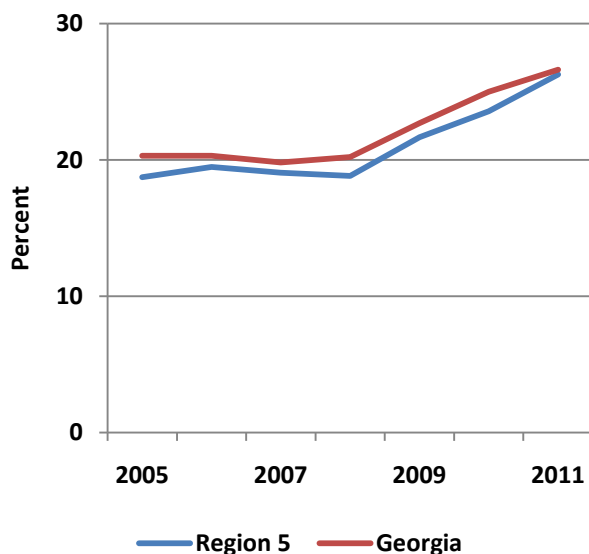
## Region 5: Challenges for Children and Families A Georgia KIDS COUNT Data Snapshot

Region 5 in Northeast Georgia is a diverse region, home to the University of Georgia, Lake Oconee and rural counties with an agricultural and manufacturing-based economy. The regional economy is based on education and health services, trade, transportation, utilities, and manufacturing. The children and families in Region 5 generally have a better quality of life and outcomes than the rest of the state. However, there are counties that are lagging the region and doing worse than state average. The Region 5 Family Connection communities collaborate with local, regional and state partners to develop and implement strategies to provide educational and economic opportunities across the region.

### POVERTY

- The number of Georgia children living in poverty has steadily increased for the past six years, with more than 650,000 children living in poverty in 2011.
- The rate of poverty in Region 5 (26.3%) is near the state rate (26.6%) with one in four children living in poverty in the region and has increased the last four years.
- Four counties in Region 5 have one-third or more of their children living in poverty.
- With so many children living in poverty, access to the school nutrition program is important. Statewide, over half of school children qualify for free and reduced school meals (58.7%). The Region 5 rate is nearly the same as the state rate (58.4%).

### Child Poverty



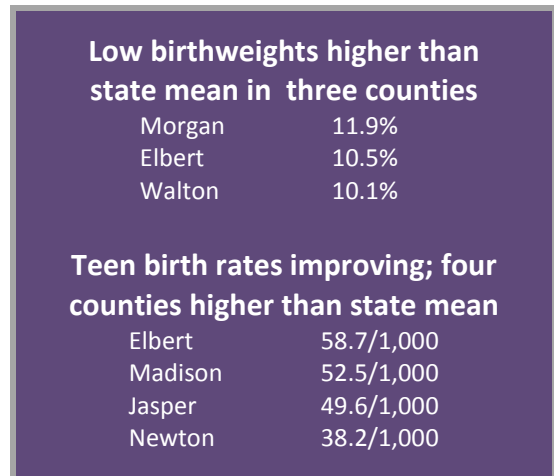
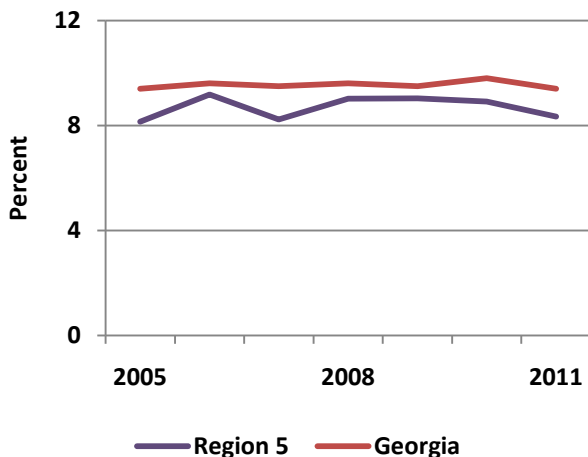
#### Region 5 Highest Child Poverty Rates

Greene	43.1%
Clarke	37.7%
Madison	35.5%
Elbert	34.0%

## LOW BIRTHWEIGHT and TEEN BIRTHS

- Georgia has the 5<sup>th</sup> highest rate of low birthweight (births weighing 5.5 pounds or less) at 9.7% compared to a national rate of 8.1%. A healthy birthweight is crucial for later growth and development.
- Region 5 rate is 8.3%, with slightly more than 600 births considered low birthweight in 2011. Oconee County, at 2.6%, has the best rate in the state.
- Access to preventive health care can help improve low birthweight and reduce teen pregnancy.
- The teen birth rate has improved nationally and in Georgia. Region 5 continues to have lower birth rates than other areas. The 2011 rate is 30.0/1,000 compared to 37.9/1,000 for the state.

### Low Birthweight

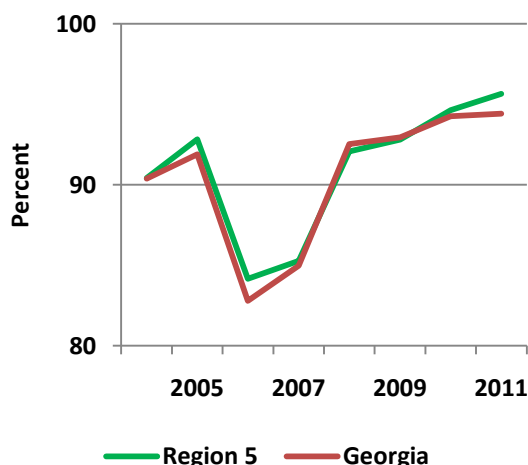


Source: Georgia Public Health, OASIS

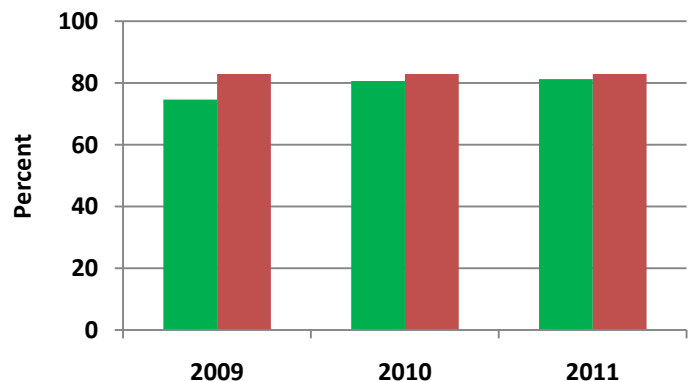
## 3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE READING / ADULT LITERACY

- The ability to read upon completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is a crucial predictor of later school success. Region 5 third-grade CRCT scores have remained near or better than the state average.
- Adult literacy rates are critical in recruiting industry and strengthening the local economy. Region 5 has 81.3% of adults with high school degree or higher, compared to 84% for the state.

### 3rd Grade Reading



### Adults with High School Degree or Higher



Sources: Georgia Department of Education and U.S. Census, ACS