Cradle to Prison Pipeline® Campaign
of the Children’s Defense Fund

A Report of the
Children’s Defense Fund

America’s Cradle to Prison Pipeline℠
What Fuels the Pipeline?

• Pervasive Poverty
• Inadequate Access to Health Care
• Gaps In Early Childhood Development Programs
• Disparate Educational Opportunities
• Intolerable Abuse and Neglect
• Unmet Mental Health Needs
• Rampant Substance Abuse
• Overburdened and Ineffective Juvenile Justice Systems
The most dangerous place for a child to grow up in America is at the intersection of race and poverty.
Lifetime **risk** of a boy born in 2001 of going to prison:

- **Black boy: 1 in 3 chance**
- **Latino boy: 1 in 6 chance**
- **White boy: 1 in 17 chance**

Lifetime risk of a girl born in 2001 of going to prison:

• Black girl: 1 in 17 chance
• Latino girl: 1 in 45 chance
• White girl: 1 in 111 chance

Pervasive Poverty
Pervasive Poverty

Officially, a family is considered poor if it has an income below the Federal Poverty Line, which is established annually by the Department of Health and Human Services.

The FPL in 2008 is $21,200 for a family of four with two children.

Pervasive Poverty

A baby is born into poverty in America every 35 seconds.

That is 2,483 children each day.

Almost 13 million children (1 in 6) live in poverty.

Pervasive Poverty

Between 2000 and 2006, the number of poor children increased by 1.2 million.

Most of the increase—about 900,000—was among children living in extreme poverty.

Child Poverty in America: Quiz

1. True or False?

In America, more White children are poor than children from any other racial or ethnic group.
Answer: TRUE

In number, the 4.2 million White children who are poor exceed the 3.8 million Black and the 4.1 million Latino children who are poor.

However, Black and Latino children are more likely to be poor than White children:

• 1 in 3 Black children is poor,
• 1 in 4 Latino children is poor,
• 1 in 10 White children is poor.

2. True or False?

More poor people live in cities than in suburbs.
Answer: FALSE

In 2005, the number of poor living in suburbs outnumbered those living in cities by at least 1 million.

3. True or False?

The FPL is based each year on an analysis of the minimum amount a family needs for their basic necessities.
Answer: FALSE

The FPL— in 2008 representing $21,200 for a family of four with two children—is rarely enough to meet all basic necessities such as housing, food, child care, education, and health care.

Source: Federal Register / Vol. 73, No. 15 /2008 for a four person family - Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia.
4. True or False?

With the institution of the new minimum wage, a single parent with 2 children working full-time at the minimum wage will have an income in 2008 at the FPL.
Answer: FALSE

A full-time, minimum-wage worker in 2008 will earn about $13,000, whereas the FPL for a family of 3 this year is $17,600.

Source: Federal Register / Vol. 73, No. 15 /2008 for a four person family - Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia.
Minimum annual budget for a family of four in selected cities in 2004 compared to the FPL

Basic Family Budget
2004

Monthly costs for a family with 2 parents and 2 children in New York, NY needed for a safe yet modest standard of living:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>$1,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>$1,195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>$321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>$514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other necessities</td>
<td>$449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>$747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monthly Total  $4,888
Annual Total   $58,656

35% of people in New York, NY (1,106,000 people) had incomes below the annual level required for that city in 2004.

Pervasive Poverty

• Obtaining a high-school diploma is among the most important strategies to prevent poverty in adulthood.

• The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) lifts more children out of poverty than any other program.
Inadequate Access to Health Coverage

Devante Johnson
1993-2007
Inadequate Access to Health Coverage

• There are 9.4 million uninsured children in America.

• Latino children are 3 times as likely and Black children are almost twice as likely to be uninsured as White children.

Inadequate Access to Health Care

• The U.S. ranks 25th among industrialized nations in infant mortality rate and 22nd in the percentage of babies born at low birthweight.

Inadequate Access to Health Care

• One in 12 babies born in the U.S. is born at low birthweight, a rate that has been growing steadily since 1984.

• Black babies are about twice as likely as Hispanic or White, non-Hispanic babies to be born at low birthweight.

Inadequate Access to Health Care

• A child born at low birthweight is about 50 percent more likely to score below average on measures of both reading and mathematics at age 17.

• A child’s ability to succeed in the classroom depends on his or her healthy development.

Gaps in Early Childhood Development Programs
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Studies have shown that the quality of early childhood development programs has broad impacts on the well-being of children, including reduced rates of teen pregnancy, better health, lower drug use, reduced criminal activity, and increases in lifetime earnings.

Only about 3 percent of eligible infants and young children (0-3) are enrolled in Early Head Start.

Sources: W. Steven Barnett and Clive Belfield, "Early Childhood Development and Social Mobility," Future of Children 16, no. 2 (Fall 2006): 85; National Head Start Association; and National Women’s Law Center.
Gaps in Early Childhood Development Programs

A U.S. Department of Education study of 22,000 kindergarteners (class of 1998-1999) found that Black and Hispanic children were substantially behind when they entered kindergarten.

Disparate Educational Opportunities
Disparate Educational Opportunities

- Poor children tend to be in schools with limited resources.
- States spend on average nearly three times as much per prisoner as per public school student.

Disparate Educational Opportunities

- Black children are almost twice as likely as White children to repeat a grade.

- The suspension rate among Black public school students is three times that for White students.

Disparate Educational Opportunities

86 percent of Black, 83 percent of Latino and 58 percent of White fourth graders cannot read at grade level.

• Examples of fourth grade words include:

  Emergency  Office
  Mayor      Weight
  President  Length
  Ambulance  Inches
  Eyeglasses  Foot
  Volunteer  Public
  Library    Museum

Disparate Educational Opportunities

89 percent of Black, 85 percent of Latino, and 59 percent of White 8th graders cannot perform math at grade level.

An example of an eighth grade math problem is:

\[2x - 7 = 13\]

Disparate Educational Opportunities

According to a report by the Harvard Civil Rights Project and the Urban Institute, in 2001 only 50 percent of Black, 53 percent of Latino, and 75 percent of White students graduated from high school on time with a regular diploma.

When Black children graduate from high school, they have a greater chance of being unemployed and a lower chance of going to college full-time than White high school graduates.

Disparate Educational Opportunities

Only 48,000 Black males earn a bachelor’s degree each year.

But…

An estimated 1 in 3 Black males ages 20-29 is under correctional supervision or control.

Approximately 579,000 Black males are serving sentences in state or federal prison.

Zero Tolerance Policies
Zero Tolerance Policies

Would you call the police if...

- A 10-year old elementary school student took a pair of scissors out of her backpack during class?
- A 6-year old child had a temper tantrum?
- A 5-year old boy was misbehaving in school?
- Two 4-year olds refused to take their nap?

All these events actually happened.

Intolerable Abuse and Neglect
Intolerable Abuse and Neglect

• A child is confirmed as abused or neglected every 36 seconds – almost 900,000 each year.

• Four in ten of the children who are abused or neglected get no help after the initial investigation.

Intolerable Abuse and Neglect

Black children are at particularly high risk of being in foster care. Although they comprise only 16 percent of all children, Black children represent 32 percent of the foster care population.

Unmet Mental Health Needs
Unmet Mental Health Needs

• A Congressional study found **15,000 children in juvenile detention facilities**, some as young as 7 years old, solely because community mental health services were unavailable.

• Studies have reported that about two-thirds of incarcerated youths have mental health disorders and about 1 in 5 has a severe disorder.

Rampant Substance Abuse
Rampant Substance Abuse

• The streets are open and available to our children 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

• Alcohol and substance abuse treatment for youth and for parents are in too short supply.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2006 results, at http://oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k6NSDUH/2k6results.cfm
Ineffective Juvenile Justice Systems
Ineffective Juvenile Justice Systems

• Black juveniles are at high risk of incarceration.

• Black juveniles are about four times as likely as their White peers to be incarcerated.

• Black juveniles are almost five times as likely and Latino juveniles about twice as likely as White juveniles to be incarcerated for drug offenses.

Moments in America for All Children
Moments in America for All Children

- **Every second** a public school student is suspended.
- **Every 10 seconds** a high school student drops out.
- **Every 17 seconds** a public school student is corporally punished.

Source: Calculations by the Children’s Defense Fund. 2008. Based on calculations per school day (180 days of seven hours each).
Moments in America for All Children

• **Every 9 minutes** a child is arrested for a violent crime.
• **Every 18 minutes** a baby dies before his or her first birthday.
• **Every 3 hours** a child or teen is killed by a firearm.

Moments in America for All Children

- Every 5 hours a child or teen commits suicide.
- Every 6 hours a child is killed by abuse or neglect.
- Every 14 hours a woman dies from complications of childbirth or pregnancy.

America’s Cradle to Prison Pipeline Campaign® Video


Summary:

Lifetime risk of a child born in 2001 of going to prison:

**Black boy:**
1 in 3 chance

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**Black girl:**
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A Call To Action
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The urgent challenge for each of us and for our nation is to prevent this waste of our children’s lives and our nation’s capabilities.
A Call To Action

We must end child poverty through investments in high quality education for every child, livable wages for families, income supplements, job training and job creation, and work supports.
A Call to Action

We must make early childhood development programs accessible to every child by ensuring such programs are affordable, available and of high quality.
A Call to Action

We must ensure our schools have adequate resources to provide high quality education for every child, to help each child reach his or her full potential and succeed in work and life.
A Call to Action

We must expand prevention and specialized treatment services for children and their parents, connect children to caring permanent families, improve the quality of the child welfare workforce and increase accountability for results for children.
A Call to Action

We must reduce detention and incarceration by increasing investment in prevention and early intervention strategies such as access to quality early childhood development and education services and to the health and mental health care children need for healthy development.
For those children who do get caught in the deeper end of the Pipeline, we must accelerate reforms of juvenile justice policy at the federal, state and local level to ensure that troubled youth get the integrated services needed to put them on a sustained path to successful adulthood.
You Can Help Dismantle the Pipeline.
“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

~Anne Frank