Cradle to Prison Pipeline Kentucky



Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

Poverty is the largest driving force of the Cradle to Prison Pipeline crisis.

- In Kentucky, among all children, **2 in 9** (22.5 percent or 215,901) **were poor**.
  - For **Black** children **1 in 3** (32.4 percent or 27,685) was poor.
  - For **Latino** children **3 in 10** (30.1 percent or 6,908) were poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **2 in 9** (21.2 percent or 173,613) were poor.
  - For **Asian** children **1 in 25** (4.0 percent or 322) was poor.
- In Kentucky, a **baby is born poor** every **39 minutes**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **6 hours**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **13 hours**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **49 minutes**.
  - An **Asian** baby is born poor every **3 weeks**.

Health Care

Disadvantages in health care increase the risk that poor children and particularly poor children of color will be trapped in the pipeline.

- In 2005, an estimated **91,000 children (8.8%)** were **uninsured** in Kentucky.
- In 2004, **4,872 babies (8.8%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Kentucky. This included:
  - 13.3% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 7.2% of Latino babies; and,
  - 8.4% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **28.9%** of two-year-olds in Kentucky **did not receive** all recommended **immunizations** in 2005.

Early Childhood

Children who do not participate in high-quality early education have higher rates of juvenile delinquency, arrests, and juvenile court petitions.

- In the 2004-2005 school year, **29.4% of 3-year-olds** and **62.1% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in **Kentucky**.
- In 2005, **16,071 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in **Kentucky**. Of these:
  - 18.9% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 4.7% were Latino; and,
  - 71.3% were White, non-Latino.

Child Welfare

Children in foster care or with a history of abuse and neglect are at higher risk of being trapped in the pipeline.

- In 2003, there were **6,895 children in foster care** in Kentucky.
- In 2004, there were **19,186 victims of child maltreatment** in Kentucky.

Education

Educational disadvantages make it more likely that children will enter the juvenile justice system.

- In 2005, **a disproportionate number** of Black and Latino **fourth graders could not read at grade level.** In Kentucky:
  - 85% of Black, non-Latino and
  - 67% of White, non-Latino fourth graders could not read at grade level.
- **Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely than their peers to drop out of school altogether.** In Kentucky:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 12.3 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 3.5 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 5.9 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 3.4 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 1.9 suspensions.
- In Kentucky, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Christian County (38 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - Paducah Indiana (25 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Covington Indiana (19 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Kentucky, **11.6% of youth ages 16 to 19 were neither enrolled in school nor high school graduates**.

Juvenile Justice System and Incarceration

Children of color are disproportionately represented in both the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

- In Kentucky, there were **13,857 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **837 youth in residential placement in Kentucky** in 2003:
  - 288 (34.4%) were Black, non-Latino and
  - 528 (63.1%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **186 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Kentucky**.**
- Kentucky spends **3.2 times as much per prisoner as per public school pupil.**

Community Violence

Between 1979 and 2004, gunfire killed 101,413 children and teens in America, destroying countless families and communities.

- In 2004, **40 children and teenagers** in Kentucky **died of firearm injuries,** including: **18 homicides**, 20 suicides, and 2 unintentional shootings.
- In 2005, **29.6%** of Kentucky's high school students were **involved in a physical fight.**
- In 2005, **8.0%** of Kentucky's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.**
- **23.1%** of Kentucky's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.