

# Cradle to Prison Pipeline Nebraska



Children's Defense Fund

2007

## Poverty

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

- In Nebraska, among all children, **1 in 7** (14.8 percent or 62,915) **was poor**.
  - For **Black** children **3 in 5** (59.6 percent or 12,764) were poor.
  - For **Latino** children **3 in 10** (30.0 percent or 13,940) were poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 11** (9.2 percent or 30,767) was poor.
  - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **1 in 3** (32.1 percent or 1,545) was poor.
- In Nebraska, a **baby is born poor every 2 hours**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **11 hours**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **8 hours**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **4 hours**.
  - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **6 days**.

## 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 **29,000 children (6.4%)** were **uninsured** in Nebraska.
- In 2004, **1,854 babies (7.0%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Nebraska. This included:
  - 11.8% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 5.9% of Latino babies; and,
  - 7.0% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **16.1%** of two-year-olds in Nebraska **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, **13.3% of 3-year-olds** and **20.6% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Nebraska.
- In 2005, **5,080 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Nebraska. Of these:
  - 14.6% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 25.0% were Latino; and,
  - 54.1% 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 **6,091 children in foster care** in Nebraska.
- In 2004, there were **4,785 victims of child maltreatment** in Nebraska.

## 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 Nebraska:
  - 90% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 88% of Latino; and,
  - 60% 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 Nebraska:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 6.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 4.0 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 2.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 18.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 2.3 suspensions.
- In Nebraska, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Omaha Public Schools (13 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled) and
  - Lincoln Public Schools (11 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Nebraska, **7.0% 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 Nebraska, there were **15,219 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **672 youth in residential placement in Nebraska** in 2003:
  - 186 (27.7%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 69 (10.3%) were Latino; and,
  - 363 (54.0%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **49 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Nebraska.
- Nebraska spends **2.4 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, **15 children and teenagers** in Nebraska **died of firearm injuries**, including: **4 homicides**, 9 suicides, and 2 unintentional shootings.
- In 2005, **28.5%** of Nebraska's high school students were **involved in a physical fight**.
- In 2005, **9.7%** of Nebraska's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property**.
- **17.9%** of Nebraska's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.