Cradle to Prison Pipeline
New Mexico



Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

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

- In New Mexico, among all children, **1 in 4** (26.0 percent or 124,303) **was poor**.
  - For **Black** children **3 in 8** (35.7 percent or 3,865) were poor.
  - For **Latino** children **1 in 3** (31.9 percent or 78,930) was poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 8** (12.1 percent or 17,875) was poor.
  - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **3 in 8** (37.3 percent or 22,025) were poor.
- In New Mexico, a **baby is born poor** every **hour**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **day**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **2 hours**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **9 hours**.
  - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **7 hours**.

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 **86,000 children (16.6%)** were **uninsured** in New Mexico.
- In 2004, **2,306 babies (8.1%)** were born at **low birthweight** in New Mexico. This included:
  - 14.7% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 8.2% of Latino babies; and,
  - 8.0% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **25.4%** of two-year-olds in New Mexico **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, **14.7% of 3-year-olds** and **28.6% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in **New Mexico**.
- In 2005, **7,451 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in **New Mexico**. Of these:
  - 2.1% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 60.6% were Latino; and,
  - 18.3% 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 **2,100 children in foster care** in New Mexico.
- In 2004, there were **6,150 victims of child maltreatment** in New Mexico.

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 New Mexico:
  - 76% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 86% of Latino; and,
  - 64% 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 New Mexico:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 7.8 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 6.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 4.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 8.2 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 2.3 suspensions.
- In New Mexico, **12.1% 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 New Mexico, there were **9,696 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **606 youth in residential placement in New Mexico** in 2003:
  - 42 (6.9%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 123 (20.3%) were Latino; and,
  - 123 (20.3%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **312 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in New Mexico**.**
- New Mexico spends **4.7 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, **28 children and teenagers** in New Mexico **died of firearm injuries,** including: **11 homicides** and 17 suicides.
- In 2005, **36.7%** of New Mexico's high school students were **involved in a physical fight.**
- In 2005, **10.4%** of New Mexico's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.**
- **24.5%** of New Mexico's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.