Cradle to Prison Pipeline Pennsylvania



Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

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

- In Pennsylvania, among all children, **1 in 6** (16.7 percent or 460,616) **was poor**.
  - For **Black** children **2 in 5** (40.2 percent or 150,286) were poor.
  - For **Latino** children **2 in 5** (39.9 percent or 68,733) were poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 9** (10.7 percent or 224,466) was poor.
  - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **3 in 7** (42.8 percent or 1,026) were poor.
  - For **Asian** children **1 in 8** (13.0 percent or 8,311) was poor.
- In Pennsylvania, a **baby is born poor** every **19 minutes**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **57 minutes**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **2 hours**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **41 minutes**.
  - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **week**.
  - An **Asian** baby is born poor every **23 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 **272,000 children (9.1%)** were **uninsured** in Pennsylvania.
- In 2004, **11,804 babies (8.2%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Pennsylvania. This included:
  - 13.5% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 9.3% of Latino babies; and,
  - 7.1% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **22.7%** of two-year-olds in Pennsylvania **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, **12.8% of 3-year-olds** and **23.1% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in **Pennsylvania**.
- In 2005, **32,282 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in **Pennsylvania**. Of these:
  - 35.6% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 13.4% were Latino; and,
  - 47.8% 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 **21,768 children in foster care** in Pennsylvania.
- In 2004, there were **4,647 victims of child maltreatment** in Pennsylvania.

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 Pennsylvania:
  - 85% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 81% of Latino; and,
  - 58% 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 Pennsylvania:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 19.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 11.2 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 4.8 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 2.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 3.2 suspensions.
- In Pennsylvania, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Coatesville Area School District (47 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - Aliquippa School District (42 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Harrisburg (37 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Pennsylvania, **7.1% 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 Pennsylvania, there were **101,608 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **4,341 youth in residential placement in Pennsylvania** in 2003:
  - 2,262 (52.1%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 423 (9.7%) were Latino; and,
  - 1,506 (34.7%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **440 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Pennsylvania**.**
- Pennsylvania spends **3.4 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, **132 children and teenagers** in Pennsylvania **died of firearm injuries,** including: **87 homicides**, 39 suicides, and 6 unintentional and undetermined shootings.