

# Cradle to Prison Pipeline Delaware



Children's Defense Fund

2007

## Poverty

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

- In Delaware, among all children, **1 in 7** (14.5 percent or 27,780) was **poor**.
  - For **Black** children **1 in 4** (24.7 percent or 11,702) was poor.
  - For **Latino** children **1 in 3** (33.5 percent or 5,945) was poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 13** (7.7 percent or 8,967) was poor.
- In Delaware, a **baby is born poor every 5 hours**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **10 hours**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **18 hours**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **17 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 **22,000 children (10.5%)** were **uninsured** in Delaware.
- In 2004, **1,023 babies (9.0%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Delaware. This included:
  - 13.8% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 6.2% of Latino babies; and,
  - 7.4% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **18.4%** of two-year-olds in Delaware **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, **10.0% of 3-year-olds** and **24.2% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Delaware.
- In 2005, **2,197 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Delaware. Of these:
  - 52.2% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 29.5% were Latino; and,
  - 20.8% 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 **814 children in foster care** in Delaware.
- In 2004, there were **1,581 victims of child maltreatment** in Delaware.

## 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 Delaware:
  - 85% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 78% of Latino; and,
  - 54% 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 Delaware:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 18.9 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 8.5 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 8.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 6.8 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 3.4 suspensions.
- In Delaware, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Seaford School District (27 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - Red Clay Consolidated School District (24 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Colonial School District (22 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Delaware, **10.4% 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 Delaware, there were **7,449 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **333 youth in residential placement in Delaware** in 2003:
  - 231 (69.4%) were Black, non-Latino and
  - 78 (23.4%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **14 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Delaware.
- Delaware spends **2.3 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, **9 children and teenagers** in Delaware **died of firearm injuries**, including: **7 homicides**, 1 suicide, and 1 unintentional shooting.
- In 2005, **30.3%** of Delaware's high school students were **involved in a physical fight**.
- In 2005, **6.2%** of Delaware's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property**.
- **16.6%** of Delaware's high school students **carried a weapon 2 or more times** in the preceding month.