

# Cradle to Prison Pipeline Illinois



Children's Defense Fund

2007

## Poverty

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

- In Illinois, among all children, **1 in 6** (16.4 percent or 524,729) was **poor**.
  - For **Black** children **3 in 8** (38.4 percent or 218,201) were poor.
  - For **Latino** children **2 in 9** (22.2 percent or 138,303) were poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 12** (8.2 percent or 147,605) was poor.
  - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **1 in 6** (16.4 percent or 848) was poor.
  - For **Asian** children **1 in 15** (6.8 percent or 7,727) was poor.
- In Illinois, a **baby is born poor every 15 minutes**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **40 minutes**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **50 minutes**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **54 minutes**.
  - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **week**.
  - An **Asian** baby is born poor every **18 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 **369,000 children (10.8%)** were **uninsured** in Illinois.
- In 2004, **15,200 babies (8.4%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Illinois. This included:
  - 14.6% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 6.7% of Latino babies; and,
  - 7.3% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **23.3%** of two-year-olds in Illinois **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, **24.2% of 3-year-olds** and **44.2% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Illinois.
- In 2005, **39,640 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Illinois. Of these:
  - 50.0% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 28.0% were Latino; and,
  - 23.9% 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 **21,608 children in foster care** in Illinois.

- In 2004, there were **29,150 victims of child maltreatment** in Illinois.

### 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 Illinois:
  - 91% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 86% 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 Illinois:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 11.4 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 4.7 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 3.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 3.3 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 1.3 suspensions.
- In Illinois, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Thornton Township High School District 205 (72 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - Community High School District 218 (37 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Bremen Community High School District 228 (35 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Illinois, **10.0% 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 Illinois, there were **37,470 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **2,715 youth in residential placement in Illinois** in 2003:
  - 1,467 (54.0%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 303 (11.2%) were Latino; and,
  - 930 (34.3%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **868 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Illinois.
- Illinois spends **2.8 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, **143 children and teenagers** in Illinois **died of firearm injuries**, including: **123 homicides**, 17 suicides, and 3 unintentional shootings.