

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Maine



Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

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

- In Maine, among all children, **1 in 6** (17.5 percent or 46,872) **was poor**.
 - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 6** (16.3 percent or 40,880) was poor.
- In Maine, a **baby is born poor every 3 hours**.
 - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **3 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 **20,000 children (6.9%)** were **uninsured** in Maine.
- In 2004, **895 babies (6.4%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Maine.
- **24.2%** of two-year-olds in Maine **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, **18.8% of 3-year-olds** and **41.3% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Maine.
- In 2005, **3,955 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Maine. Of these:
 - 4.2% were Black, non-Latino;
 - 2.1% were Latino; and,
 - 84.6% 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 **2,999 children in foster care** in Maine.
- In 2004, there were **4,235 victims of child maltreatment** in Maine.

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 Maine, 65% 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 Maine:
 - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 6.8 suspensions.

- For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 3.7 suspensions.
 - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 5.1 suspensions.
 - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 6.8 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 2.4 suspensions.
- In Maine, **6.2% 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 Maine, there were **7,112 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **222 youth in residential placement in Maine** in 2003, 207 (93.2%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **4 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Maine.
- Maine spends **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, **10 children and teenagers** in Maine **died of firearm injuries**, including: 10 suicides.
- In 2005, **28.2%** of Maine's high school students were **involved in a physical fight.**
- In 2005, **7.1%** of Maine's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.**
- **18.3%** of Maine's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.