

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Mississippi



Children's Defense Fund

2007

Poverty

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

- In Mississippi, among all children, **3 in 10** (30.9 percent or 226,148) were poor.
 - For **Black** children **1 in 2** (49.0 percent or 159,704) was poor.
 - For **Latino** children **2 in 7** (27.5 percent or 3,126) were poor.
 - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 7** (15.2 percent or 56,968) was poor.
- In Mississippi, a **baby is born poor every 37 minutes**.
 - A **Black** baby is born poor every **53 minutes**.
 - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **day**.
 - 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 **100,000 children (12.6%)** were **uninsured** in Mississippi.
- In 2004, **4,956 babies (11.6%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Mississippi. This included:
 - 15.5% of Black, non-Latino babies;
 - 7.4% of Latino babies; and,
 - 8.7% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **20.9%** of two-year-olds in Mississippi **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, **27.5% of 3-year-olds** and **44.3% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Mississippi.
- In 2005, **26,657 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Mississippi. Of these:
 - 82.7% were Black, non-Latino;
 - 1.1% were Latino; and,
 - 14.1% 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 **2,812 children in foster care** in Mississippi.
- In 2004, there were **5,674 victims of child maltreatment** in Mississippi.

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 Mississippi:
 - 93% of Black, non-Latino and
 - 69% 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 Mississippi:
 - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 14.6 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 6.4 suspensions.
 - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 6.5 suspensions.
 - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 6.0 suspensions.
 - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 3.6 suspensions.
- In Mississippi, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
 - Brookhaven School District (36 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
 - Picayune School District (33 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
 - Natchez-Adams School District (32 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Mississippi, **12.4% 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 Mississippi, there were **11,372 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **528 youth in residential placement in Mississippi** in 2003:
 - 387 (73.3%) were Black, non-Latino and
 - 135 (25.6%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **369 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Mississippi.
- Mississippi spends **1.8 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, **43 children and teenagers** in Mississippi **died of firearm injuries**, including: **23 homicides**, 15 suicides, and 5 unintentional and undetermined shootings.