

# Cradle to Prison Pipeline Missouri



Children's Defense Fund

2007

## Poverty

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

- In Missouri, among all children, **1 in 5** (19.0 percent or 256,046) was poor.
  - For **Black** children **3 in 7** (41.8 percent or 79,593) were poor.
  - For **Latino** children **2 in 7** (28.4 percent or 14,123) were poor.
  - For **White**, non-Latino children **1 in 7** (14.2 percent or 148,605) was poor.
  - For **American Indian/Alaska Native** children **2 in 9** (21.1 percent or 894) were poor.
  - For **Asian** children **1 in 9** (10.9 percent or 2,056) was poor.
- In Missouri, a **baby is born poor every 32 minutes**.
  - A **Black** baby is born poor every **2 hours**.
  - A **Latino** baby is born poor every **8 hours**.
  - A **White**, non-Latino baby is born poor every **56 minutes**.
  - An **American Indian/Alaska Native** baby is born poor every **week**.
  - An **Asian** baby is born poor every **3 days**.

## 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 **117,000 children (8.0%)** were **uninsured** in Missouri.
- In 2004, **6,429 babies (8.3%)** were born at **low birthweight** in Missouri. This included:
  - 14.0% of Black, non-Latino babies;
  - 6.6% of Latino babies; and,
  - 7.3% of White, non-Latino babies.
- **26.9%** of two-year-olds in Missouri **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, **15.0% of 3-year-olds** and **23.3% of 4-year-olds** were enrolled in **state-funded preschool programs** in Missouri.
- In 2005, **17,451 children** were enrolled in **Head Start and Early Head Start** in Missouri. Of these:
  - 36.0% were Black, non-Latino;
  - 6.4% were Latino; and,
  - 52.5% 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 **11,900 children in foster care** in Missouri.

- In 2004, there were **9,616 victims of child maltreatment** in Missouri.

### 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 Missouri:
  - 86% of Black, non-Latino;
  - 79% of Latino; and,
  - 62% 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 Missouri:
  - For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 15.4 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Latino students enrolled, there were 5.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 White students enrolled, there were 4.6 suspensions.
  - For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled, there were 5.0 suspensions.
  - For every 100 Asian students enrolled, there were 2.2 suspensions.
- In Missouri, the **school districts with the highest rates of suspension for Blacks** are:
  - Raytown C-2 (41 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled);
  - Riverview Gardens (35 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled); and,
  - Jefferson City (32 suspensions of Black students for every 100 enrolled).
- In Missouri, **10.2% 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 Missouri, there were **26,874 juvenile arrests** in 2005.
- Of the estimated **1,413 youth in residential placement in Missouri** in 2003:
  - 621 (43.9%) were Black, non-Latino;
  - 45 (3.2%) were Latino; and,
  - 729 (51.6%) were White, non-Latino.
- There were **372 youth under age 18 incarcerated in adult correctional facilities** in Missouri.
- Missouri spends **2.4 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, **61 children and teenagers** in Missouri **died of firearm injuries**, including: **38 homicides**, 21 suicides, and 2 unintentional shootings.
- In 2005, **29.8%** of Missouri's high school students were **involved in a physical fight**.
- In 2005, **9.1%** of Missouri's high school students were **threatened or injured with a weapon on school property**.
- **19.4%** of Missouri's high school students **carried a weapon** 2 or more times in the preceding month.